

JOB DESCRIPTION

Catering Assistant



DEPARTMENT	Catering
REPORTS TO	Line managed by the Catering Supervisor/ Catering Manager or Hospitality Manager but takes direction and instructions from any member of the Catering Management Team
RESPONSIBLE FOR	N/A
WORKING PATTERN	Average of 20 hours per week worked over 5 days out of 7 across a 3-week rota, evenings and weekends (your employment contract will give full details)
ISSUE/REVISION DATE	February 2026

THE ROLE

The role involves providing the highest standards of presentation and service within a customer focused workplace. This role requires a professional and friendly manner and the ability to work flexibly in various hospitality environments including but not limited to the School's Central Dining Hall and Shepherd Churchill Room, School meeting rooms and various other School buildings, sports pavilions and events venues.

EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Here is an insight from employees in the team on what they enjoy about working at Harrow.

CATERING FOR EVENTS

- **Variety.** This role isn't just about providing school meals. The department also caters for high-end events such as weddings, private parties, sports events, buffets, afternoon teas etc., which provides variety and interest.
- **Fine dining.** Chefs hone their skills producing food that is beautiful and accomplished, to surpass the expectations of our most exacting clients.
- **High-profile events.** Harrow School is a sought-after destination for well-known clients that include nationally recognised sporting organisations and internationally renowned guest speakers.

CREATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

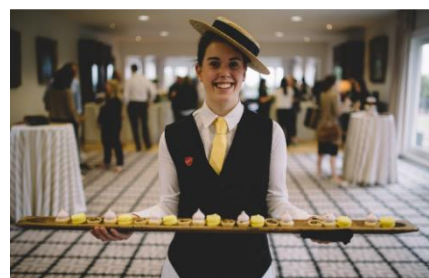
- **Homemade food.** This is not a role where food is mostly bought in and simply heated up or served straight from the box for the staff and pupils. Approximately 80% of the food is created from scratch, because the School prides itself on nutritious, home-made food for the boys.
- **Menu design.** The catering managers encourage and expect input and creativity during the regular meetings to discuss menus for the School and events. The Kitchen Assistants and Chefs of all levels of seniority give feedback on whether the menu was easy to prepare and serve. The team are free to use high-end ingredients to experiment with new trends and produce menus that would not be out of place at some of the finest hotels in London.

WORK LIFE BALANCE

- **Shift patterns.** The role is an average of 40 hours per week, but staff are not generally expected to work double shifts that last all day and continue until the kitchen closes. You will work either an early shift or a late shift, but not both. The shift patterns support each other with prep for the next shift and it is generally considered to be a well-run, efficient kitchen.
- **Seasonal workflows.** Although it is busiest during term time, the workload eases during half terms and school holidays. The team takes advantage of these quieter periods that you don't get in a standard hotel/restaurant by getting jobs done that make the department more efficient, making preparations for the busy times, receiving training or taking holidays.
- **Christmas closure.** Whereas most catering establishments are at their busiest during the festive period, the team at Harrow always have time off over Christmas. The boys leave site in early December, and although events take place in December, many staff take time off, and the School is completely closed every year for at least 5 days that incorporates the Christmas and New Year period.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT after probation

- **Professional training.** Our kitchen team are well trained in health, safety and best practice. Our chefs have the opportunity to complete the Level 3 Food Safety certificate funded by the School and important for kitchen professionals in the industry. Staff with no catering qualification who display a passion for food and a commitment to their own development are sometimes supported to complete an accredited apprenticeship by partnering with a local catering college.
- **Work experience.** Our well-connected catering managers often release kitchen staff to spend a week during the School holidays working in the kitchens of famous Michelin starred hotels/restaurants in central London. It gives staff a rare insight into other renowned fine dining establishments and they bring back techniques and ideas to enhance the professionalism of the School's kitchen and menus. Our staff can also spend time working with our suppliers to better understand their challenges and the other areas of the supply chain before the food is delivered to us.
- **Specialised courses.** Our chefs attend courses to develop the skills of their own specialism, e.g. patisserie, butchery.



BACKGROUND

Harrow School is one of the world's most famous schools. Founded in 1572 by a local yeoman farmer, John Lyon, under a Royal Charter granted by Queen Elizabeth I, it is located on a 324-acre estate encompassing much of Harrow on the Hill in north-west London. Around 830 boys aged 13 to 18, who come from all over Britain and across the world, live in the School's 12 boarding Houses, and there are about 120 academic staff and over 500 support staff.

All members of staff work to a single, unifying purpose: to prepare boys with diverse backgrounds and abilities for a life of learning, leadership, service and personal fulfilment.

The Catering Department produces over 3,000 meals per day during term time and over 25,000 packed meals per year. Meals are served in a Central Dining Hall and in an exclusive masters' dining room called the Shepherd Churchill Room. The School also caters for sports teas, open days, parents' meetings, departmental dinners, meetings and working lunches in various locations throughout the estate. In addition, it runs a tuck shop, known as the Hill Café, which provides hot and cold snacks for the boys.

The Catering Department also works closely with Harrow School Enterprises Limited (HSEL), the School's trading arm, providing catering and hospitality services for Easter revision courses, Oxbridge preparation courses, residential summer schools and events including conferences, dinners, afternoon teas and wedding receptions. HSEL's programmes can account for up to 2,000 meals per day outside term time. The operation of summer schools alongside a varied events programme requires the employment of high quality and dedicated staff throughout the year.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

This job description reflects the core activities of the role and is subject to change as the department and the post holder develop. The School expects that the post holder will recognise this and will adopt a flexible approach to work. In addition, the post holder will be expected to undertake such other duties within the scope of the role as may be required by the line manager.

Main duties:

- Ensure excellent service is maintained at all times.
- Serve food and beverages to boys, masters, staff and visitors including serving at plated dinners, lunches, special teas, sports teas, special functions and large events as arranged by the School or visiting parties.
- Ensure menu boards are turned on at service times.
- Ensure set up requirements for daily and special requests are read and understood, checking with supervisors and other team members as appropriate.
- Address immediate customer concerns, questions and needs in order to provide an optimal dining experience.
- Ensure thorough and up to date knowledge and understanding of menu and allergens in order to provide relevant information to customers.
- Set up food counters and coffee/drinks stations, ensuring food is replenished as necessary.
- Set tables and service areas for food and beverage service and hospitality events and clear up during and after service.
- Ensure own area of responsibility is clean, appropriately presented and stocked, noting any damages and items to be replaced
- Ensure high standards of food presentation are achieved.
- Carrying out basic food preparation ie cutting fruit, making pizzas
- Clear rubbish from food areas and ensure food areas are presentable at all times.
- Ensure the cleaning of tables and chairs, floors, all service areas, terrace areas and foyer areas including plate wash areas is completed.
- Operate floor machines and other cleaning equipment.

- Assist with stock control and stock monitoring.
- Assist with food delivery to event/hospitality venues.
- Maintain a high standard of appearance and personal hygiene.
- Follow departmental guidelines, Food Safety, Health & Safety, Manual Handling and COSHH regulations at all times and ensure that incidents are reported in line with departmental procedures.
- Operate a cash and cashless till system.
- Empty food trolleys and clear food trays.
- Load and unload dishwashers and clear away clean cutlery and crockery.
- Clean food trolleys
- To operate large flight dishwashers, washing all items of equipment from the Dining Hall.
- Maintaining and cleaning the wash ware areas to a high standard.
- Undertake regular mandatory and departmental training.
- Carry out ad-hoc duties to support the catering team and services, including covering for colleagues in front and back of house functions.
- Top up and replenish chemicals as required
- Deep cleaning during down times.
- Assist in all catering areas including the kitchen and cover for colleagues as required.

The post holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom s/he is responsible or with whom s/he comes into contact will be to adhere to and ensure compliance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures at all times.

If in the course of carrying out the duties of the post the post holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the School s/he must report any concerns to his/her line manager or the School's Safeguarding Lead.

This position is subject to an enhanced check with the Disclosure and Barring Service in the event of a successful application. Copies of the School's Code of Practice and Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders is available from the HR Team. It is an offence to apply for the role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.



PERSON SPECIFICATION – Catering Assistant

Post holders/candidates will be expected to demonstrate the following:

QUALIFICATIONS, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

ESSENTIAL

- A good level of general education

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

DESIRABLE

- Previous experience in a similar role.
- Experience of working in a frontline customer service environment
- Knowledge of Food Safety legislation(training will be provided).
- Plate/ wine waiting(training will be provided).

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

ESSENTIAL

- Polite, attentive and courteous with excellent customer service skills and the ability to respond appropriately to customer needs
- The ability to work under own initiative and also as part of a team.
- Well organised, with the ability to work calmly, quickly and efficiently, sometimes in a pressurised environment
- Excellent communication skills
- Ability to work flexible hours (including evenings and weekends)
- Attention to detail
- Able to work to high standards, self-develop and continuously improve and perfect front of house skills
- Able to participate in all relevant departmental and skills training.
- Able to demonstrate empathy with people of all ages
- Able to develop a culture of mutual respect with pupils

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

ESSENTIAL

- Professional, hard working with a “can do” attitude
- Enthusiastic and welcoming
- High standards of personal presentation
- Flexible and adaptable
- Initiative and common sense
- Honest, trustworthy and reliable
- Security conscious at all times

SCHOOL VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

All staff are expected to conduct themselves in line with the School's values which are: **Courage, Honour, Humility** and **Fellowship**. While the School's values set out what matters most to us, the behaviours below are intended as a shared set of expectations to refer to, and standards to aspire to, in our dealings with others. They are the practical application of our values.

COURAGE

- We remain optimistic and purposeful in a disrupted world.
- We take responsibility for our decisions, even the hard ones.
- We always challenge poor behaviour in ourselves and others.
We are open to new ideas, and seek fresh challenges.

HONOUR

- We keep our promises.
- We act with integrity – doing the right thing, even when it is difficult or when no one is watching.
- We respect and value our traditions whilst setting them in the context of today.

HUMILITY

- We work hard to serve others within the School and across our wider communities where possible putting their interests before our own.
- We give and seek honest and appropriate feedback, reflect on our failures and learn from them.
- We support each other through challenges and whatever the outcome, we celebrate those that took part.

FELLOWSHIP

- We respect each other and value our differences, knowing that we are more effective and more resilient working together.
- We are kind and inclusive; we value the contribution that each of us makes.
- We role model the behaviours that we would like to see in others; we ask only of others what we would be prepared to do ourselves.