Magdalene College
CAMBRIDGE

Head of Catering (including Housekeeping)
Job Description

The College

Magdalene College is one of 31 Colleges in the University of Cambridge and was re-founded by Thomas, Lord Audley in 1542. The College occupies a delightful riverside site and has an eclectic range of buildings dating from the fifteenth to the twenty-first centuries, including the Pepys Building, one of the more attractive in Cambridge. The College is home to a community of some 80 Fellows and 500 students, around 450 of which are housed in College-owned or College-managed accommodation. The College employs around 110 staff.

The College exists to provide and promote undergraduate and graduate education within the University of Cambridge, and also to provide and promote academic research. In support of these objectives, the College has various permanently endowed trust funds held for special purposes in connection with the development of College facilities, for scholarships and bursaries and for other educational purposes.

Further information is available from the College’s website http://www.magd.cam.ac.uk/

Purpose of the Job

The College seeks to appoint a full-time professional principally responsible for the catering services across the College. The Head of Catering will report to the Senior Bursar although there will be a wide range of relationships to maintain throughout the College.

The position is responsible for the strategic direction and the provision principally of catering, with oversight for the domestic housekeeping services of the College, and including support to the successful conference business. All services are to be delivered in a manner to provide an excellent standard of customer satisfaction to all user groups.

Applicants will need to demonstrate excellent background in aspects of catering services, in particular a thorough knowledge of catering prepared at a range of different levels and first-hand experience of running an operation.
Catering, Housekeeping and Conferencing and related functions at the College

The College provides a wide range of catering services to its members (students, alumni and Fellows) and staff as well as to external conference clients. Daily cafeteria meals are provided for students as well as Formal Hall dining during the university teaching term. In addition daily lunch along with High Table dining is prepared for the College’s Fellowship. There are regular formal College catering events on a weekly basis during the teaching term as well as a range of high-profile dinners throughout the College’s academic calendar.

The College has had a thriving conference business, although the pandemic has had a detrimental impact on business. Conferencing has been developed over the years supports all major types of events from weddings; residential conferences; summer schools; and banqueting. The conference business takes place usually outside of the term, and provides a significant financial contribution to the College’s academic mission and is principally delivered over the summer vacation period.

The Catering team obviously prepare the food for the aforementioned catering occasions as well as staffing the student cafeteria whilst the Buttery Team serves members of the College and conferences customers. The domestic Housekeeping department is responsible for the cleaning and furnishing of student bedrooms and maintaining the common areas across the College. A summary of some key statistical information (pre-pandemic) is given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Catering</th>
<th>Conference</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student meals</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2500 cafeteria meals per week</td>
<td>Weddings</td>
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<tr>
<td>550 Formal hall meals per week</td>
<td>Summer Schools</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Residential conferencing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Banqueting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Day meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fellows</td>
<td>Up to 20 per year</td>
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<tr>
<td>200 lunches per week</td>
<td>7000 bed-nights or 1/3 of total turnover</td>
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<tr>
<td>140 dinners per week</td>
<td>Summer and Easter vacation period / ¼ of total turnover</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provision of lunch and dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Held throughout the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure £2m pa</td>
<td>Total Staff 51 permanent staff and up to 20 casual staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catering charges to College members £750,000</td>
<td>Kitchen 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charges to conferences (including accommodation) £850,000</td>
<td>Buttery 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conference 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Housekeeping 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Catering and the Traditions of the College

The College has a long history of dining in Hall under candlelight which forms an important element of the cultural fabric of the College. Traditionally the College holds formal hall every day during the teaching term but this has necessarily been reduced during the pandemic and a significant recovery phase is required. All members of the College value the social dining experience and this means the provision of formal hall dining is central to the provision of the catering service.

In addition the College has regular dinners at different times of the year signifying important occasions in the College’s calendar usually linked to academic achievements or to historical patrons of the College.

The College Wine Steward has responsibility for the management of the wine cellar and works closely with the Buttery Team which provides dedicated support to the College Wine Steward, and in particular provides high quality wine for the High Table.

Alumni and Development Activities

The College has a successful fundraising team and a thriving alumni programme of events which are regularly supported by the catering team. The events take different forms from small intimate dinners to larger scale luncheons or garden parties. Close coordination and planning with the Development team is essential.

Academic Outreach Work

The College also has a programme of academic experiences for young people with aspirations for higher education and the Catering and Housekeeping teams are key in supporting these in-college events which take place at different times of the year. Examples include residential visits for Sixth Form students and University Open Days.

Conferences

As described above the College provides a range of conference events principally over the long summer vacation period. Working closely with the Conference and Events Manager, the provision of a high level of catering and accommodation services for a wide range of clients is essential. Careful planning across various departments in College is essential.
Facilities

The College has a range of modern and high quality catering and conference facilities. At the heart of the College is the dining Hall together with the other principal rooms. The Buttery and Kitchen teams and are also based here. There is a modern fully-equipped production kitchen which was completely refurbished less than 10 years ago. There is a separate satellite/secondary kitchen at the centre of the College’s conference centre in Cripps Court.

Food Safety, Hygiene and Environmental

Compliance with all relevant food hygiene and health and safety legislation is essential and maintaining a good working relationship with the local authority’s environmental team is also important for the College. The post-holder will have a pivotal role in ensuring compliance with relevant standards and regulation across all activities, and ensuring relevant risk assessments are in place and COSHH documentation is being followed. Promotion and support of environmental and sustainability initiatives with the departments.

The Role of Head of Catering (including Housekeeping)

The Head of Catering will report to the Senior Bursar and is responsible for the College’s catering, conferences, food service and domestic teams.

A brief organisation chart is given below:

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Senior Bursar
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    /         \   
Head of Catering (including Housekeeping)
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    /           \ 
Catering  Buttery  Housekeeping  College Wine Steward
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Catering department: Head Chef has operational responsibility, Chefs, Kitchen Porters

Buttery team: Head of Catering has operational responsibility, Senior Butlers, Buttery Assistants, Casuals

Conference Office: Working closely with the Conferences and Events Manager
Housekeeping: Oversight with the Head of Housekeeping. Head of Housekeeping has operational responsibility

College Wine Steward: The Buttery team working closely with and supporting the College Wine Steward

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership and Management

- Overall strategic direction, in conjunction with the Senior Bursar, for the Catering and Housekeeping functions
- Lead, manage and support the Catering Teams, with oversight of the Housekeeping departments. Daily operational responsibility for the Buttery team.
- Preparation of termly/annual staffing resource plans and to ensure detailed staffing rotas for all departments are efficient and effective
- To provide direct front of house services and in particular attending the high profile dinners and events
- Staff development and training, including undertaking annual appraisals
- Ensure all departments provide high and consistent service standards in a team-centred approach. To monitor and review the quality of services with the aim of achieving continuous improvement.
- To actively seek feedback from customers on the quality the services provided.
- To ensure support to the College Wine Steward is in place

Financial Management

- To develop and maintain future business plans for the operational service areas.
- To prepare annual income and expenditure budgets, in conjunction with the Senior Bursar and Assistant Bursar.
- Working with the Conference and Events Manager, to forecast conference income for the future in a manner to aid long term financial planning.
- To carefully control departmental expenditure, including staffing, food and beverage purchases and other supplies. To ensure appropriate suppliers, are effectively used and reviewed regularly
- To use all resources available (financial, human and physical) effectively and efficiently
- To ensure financial procedures are robust and work efficiently and effectively

Functions
- Catering, support to Conference, Buttery and Housekeeping teams
- College Bar
- Licensee for the College
- Food hygiene and safety

Committees and Representative Bodies

- College Conference Committee (member)
- College Health & Safety Committee (attendance)
- Catering Managers Committee (for all colleges)
- Heads of Departments meeting (internal management)
- Fellows Catering Committee (secretary)
- Student Catering Committee (secretary)
- College Sustainability Group (member)

Key Contacts

**Internal**

- All catering/ conference/ buttery /domestic staff/ College Office
- College Officers, in particular Senior and Assistant Bursars, Development Director, President, Master and Senior Tutor, and Wine Steward.
- Members of the Fellowship
- Heads of department
- Students, in particular Student presidents

**External**

- Other college catering managers/ bursars
- Conference Cambridge [http://www.cambridgeconferencing.com](http://www.cambridgeconferencing.com)
- Customers
- College suppliers (food, equipment, beverages, other supplies)
- Agencies for provision of temporary staff

The above is not an exhaustive list and other requirements may emerge as necessitated by changing roles within the College and its overall objectives

**Person Specification**

Without being too prescriptive, it is expected that the successful candidate will have broad range of relevant sector experience, skills and knowledge to carry out the role successfully.

**Knowledge, Experience and Education:**

- Significant experience at a senior level in some or all of catering / conference / hotel/ hospitality sectors
• A substantial level of experience in providing catering for differing events/occasions
• Experience of supporting the delivery of catering services to commercial business through conferences and events
• An experienced senior manager, demonstrating leadership of large and varied teams
• A track record of positive change and evidence of making substantial contribution to the organisation
• A good standard of general education
• Experience of financial planning, cost management and monitoring progress against plans and implementing robust financial procedures directly relating to catering services

Personal Skills and Abilities:

• Proven leadership and management skills
• High level of interpersonal skills so to develop effective working relationships within and outside the organisation
• Capable communicator, both verbally and in writing
• Highly numerate and is able to analyse information and to present key findings in written and graphical form
• Independent working style and is able to generate own ideas to solve problems
• Must be able to work under pressure with a range of competing deadlines and ability to prioritise workloads
• Well organised and is capable at forward planning
• High degree of political awareness at different levels in the organisation
• Responsive to change and adaptable
• Innovative and a forward-thinking approach.

Salary and Conditions

• The salary is £48,000 to £52,000, depending on experience.
• Benefits:
  o Joining the College’s auto enrolment pension scheme with generous additional contributionary options on completion of probationary period
  o 33 days’ holiday per year, including public holidays
  o Free meals when College kitchens are open
  o Free parking
  o Use of gym
  o Conference bonus (non-contractual)

• 40 hours per week, or as required for a senior management position. There will be a need to attend College events in the evenings and at weekends.

The appointment is subject to an initial probationary period of six months

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