

## **Programme of Professional Courses**

The professional courses are organised on two levels:-

- First: for those who have not yet developed professional competence;
- Second: for those who already have good experience as professional chefs (at least two years) and who intend to specialise.

### **Professional Courses at the First Level**

These courses provide instruction on cookery in various fields; restaurants, agriturismo, pizzeria, fast-food, bars, takeaways and catering services for hospitals, social services and canteens.

### **Introduction**

At the first level, the employee is able to work:

- a) on the basic and semi-finished stages of dishes;
- b) in support of the qualified (professional) chef on finished dishes;
- c) on managing the cleaning and sterilising of equipment;
- d) on the storage and conservation of ingredients;
- e) on the administration of the work place;
- f) on catering for events, banquets, or in permanent roles;
- g) in canteens.

Working in the profession at this level does not require a specific qualification. Employers, however, value experience of working in the sector and a qualification such as a course of instruction or a professional training course or an apprenticeship. Especially valued is experience in restaurants at the medium to high level (in Italy or abroad) and attendance at refresher courses.

Solid experience of up to 2 or 3 years in various kitchen activities, will give the assistant chef the opportunity to become a professional and to specialise in a particular aspect of cookery.

### **Course Objectives - to be able to:**

- 1 Work as an assistant or independently;
- 2 Work as a kitchen employee;
- 3 Work in the broad refreshment sector;
- 4 Prepare and conserve semi-finished dishes;
- 5 Create simple dishes;
- 6 Assist and collaborate in the preparation of dishes;
- 7 Equip the work place;
- 8 Guarantee the hygiene and cleanliness of the work place;
- 9 Work in safety in the broad field of refreshment;
- 10 Carry out self-evaluation of work quality.

### **Learning Activities**

To prepare and to keep fresh (or conserve) semi-finished preparations.

- a) Making and keeping fresh semi-finished preparations for later use in finished

dishes;

b) Preparing raw vegetables, kept fresh using refrigeration, for later use in making dishes:

- choosing vegetables of a quality and quantity suitable for the course dishes;
- cleaning, peeling, cutting and cooking them.

c) Preparing meat, kept fresh using refrigeration, for later use in making complex dishes.

- choosing meat of a quality and quantity suitable for the course dishes;
- using appropriate utensils to prepare the meat for subsequent treatment.

d) Preparing fish products, kept fresh using refrigeration, for later use in making complex dishes:-

- choosing fish products of a quality and quantity suitable for the course dishes;
- using appropriate utensils and techniques to prepare the products for subsequent treatment;

e) Preparing suitable sweet and savoury pastry:-

- choosing ingredients of a quality and quantity suitable to the course dishes;
- preparing pastry both sweet and savoury using suitable techniques and utensils.

f) Preparing sauces and condiments:-

- choosing ingredients of a quality and quantity suitable for the course dishes;
- using suitable techniques and utensils.

g) Conserving ingredients and semi-finished preparations ready for use in finished dishes;

- applying methods for the conservation of ingredients and semi-finished preparations.

h) Recognising merchantable quality (merceologia) in:-

- vegetable products: cereals, pulses, vegetables;
- meat: red, white, game;
- fish products;
- pastry: egg mixes, puff, shortcrust, brisè; dough for bread and pizza;
- sauces and condiments;
- sensory characteristics eg aroma, colour etc; caloric rating; methods of conservation and recognising any resulting alterations.

### Techniques

a) Cutting - it is important to use the correct knife:-

- the coltellino for peeling and cutting vegetables using small strokes;
- the trinciante for cutting and dicing vegetables, salumi and for thin slicing meat;
- the coltella, a straight knife with a long, thin blade, for slicing cooked meats such as roasts, joints, roast beef and various salamis,
- the coltella, a serrated knife, used mainly for bread and crumbly cakes and pastries;
- the Scortichino or buschè that has a short, rather thin blade but is strong and suitable for boning or trimming and cleaning various types of meat;

Before starting, organise the work space. Place the chopping board (in white, washable material) on a damp cloth so that it is firm and still. The knife must be clean, dry and sharp. Arrange the ingredients in an orderly fashion around the board.

Then holding the knife firmly, glide the blade over them applying pressure. The ingredients must be cut for even cooking and also to improve their appearance. The various cutting techniques require dexterity, precision, practice and particular caution in the use of knives.

b) Use of the correct saucepans and containers - every preparation requires a specific frying pan, saucepan or casserole. During practice we provide guidance about this equipment, its characteristics and how to use and to clean it.

(Note: should there be a new form of work in the refreshment field we can, on request,

provide guidance on which and how much equipment to acquire to suit the type of kitchen, the number of chefs and the level of quality to be offered to the client).

c) Quality in presentation - in a restaurant, dishes are carefully presented because appearance is important along with the flavour and the aroma. All the cookery exercises conclude with serving. Creative presentation depends more on style than on technique. It prompts the mouth to water which also aids the digestion.

d) Techniques for the treatment of raw vegetables, meat, fish products (marinated or pickled);

e) Techniques for the dissection of meat; cleaning and filleting of fish products;

f) Techniques for cooking sauces;

g) Procedure, techniques and utensils to make dough; working the dough, rolling or wire-cutting; cutting the pasta;

h) Identifying good quality in vegetables, meat, fish products, sauces/condiments, dough;

i) Elements of chemistry (chemical-physical implications in the formation of dough; technological parameters; the maturation of the dough)

j) Recipe book for sauces and condiments;

k) Characteristics and methods for conservation (techniques and equipment);

l) Understanding conservation processes and how to control risks and frequent errors;

m) Devising simple gastronomic preparations, understanding their characteristics and techniques to apply.

### Skills

a) Choosing ingredients (raw and semi-finished) of a quality and quantity suitable for preparing simple dishes;

b) Identifying ingredients (raw and semi-finished), assisted by technical information, needed to create the course dishes;

- selecting raw and semi-finished material on the basis of quality;

- using a quantity of raw and semi-finished material sufficient to make the course dishes.

c) Preparing simple dishes using appropriate techniques and utensils:-

- mixing (cold and hot) ingredients using appropriate techniques and utensils according to the recipe;

- cooking the ingredients, separately or together as required by the recipe, using the techniques indicated and in correct time and temperature;

- making adjustments, guided by the instructing chef, if the quality is not quite right;

d) Recognising the merchantable quality of food (mercelandia):-

- rice, pasta, broths and soups, cheese and eggs;

- elements of the science of diet;
- base recipes;
- starters hot and cold;
- first courses;
- main courses of meat;
- main courses of fish products;
- various dishes based on eggs or cheese;
- cookery procedures and techniques for the preparation of simple dishes.

### Tasks

- a) Preparing the work place following the guidance of the instructing chef on food hygiene and safety at work.
- b) Preparing raw ingredients:-
  - wash, peel, and cut the vegetables;
  - clean and gut the fish products;
  - clean, bone, soften and cut or mince the meat.
- c) preparing semi-finished preparations - mix the ingredients to make juices, sauces, condiments and cream;
  - work the ingredients to make dough;
  - use methods to keep the semi-finished preparations fresh.
- d) Assisting and collaborating in the preparation of dishes following instructions;
- e) Completing simple tasks for the chef ( handing over utensils, lighting and turning off the ovens etc).
- f) Completing simple gastronomic preparations;
- g) Preparing simple dishes following guidance from the instructing chef using semi-fished preparations;
- h) Applying different cookery techniques suitable to varying contexts;
- i) Cleaning the kitchen and equipment in accordance with hygiene rules and standards using suitable cleaning agents:-
  - cleaning the work place;
  - sterilising the work place;
  - cleaning the equipment area;
  - sterilising the equipment area;
  - putting the equipment back in the right place.

### Evaluating the results

#### Assisting and collaborating in making dishes

Outcomes generally expected from the course: assisting and collaborating in making dishes and completing tasks requested by the chef.

Skills:-

- Carrying out activity as part of the kitchen team following guidance given;
- Completing simple tasks requested by the chef during the preparation of dishes on time and by appropriate methods;

- Understanding and anticipating the chef's requirements and completing support tasks opportunistically, using knowledge gained previously.

Working in groups - minimum knowledge:-

- quality indicators applicable to the preparation of the dishes;
- group concepts - position, role, individual and collective behaviour, group dynamics.

### Preparing the work place

Outcomes generally expected: preparing a mobile worktop according to the chef's instructions and suitable for the recipes in preparation.

Skills:-

- arranging on the mobile worktop equipment and utensils;
- finding and positioning equipment, utensils and materials required to make the working of ingredients speedy and accurate;
- placing condiments and basic ingredients ready for making the dishes.

Minimum knowledge

- good practice in organising the mobile worktop;
- understanding of how ovens, hobs and grills and their controls work and of safety;
- characteristics and methods for use of kitchen utensils;
- characteristics and mode of working of kitchen equipment, the lay-out of controls and safety;
- technical terms used in the kitchen.

Guaranteeing hygiene and cleanliness in the work place

Outcomes generally expected: guaranteeing compliance with food hygiene regulations and the application of cleaning methods to secure the hygiene of the work place and equipment.

Skills:-

- Guaranteeing compliance with food hygiene regulations:-
- identifying the principal forms of food poisoning and understanding the possible causes and sources of contamination;
- applying procedures to guarantee adequate hygiene standards in the treatment and use of food;
- strong attention to personal hygiene.
- Cleaning and sterilising the work place:-
- applying appropriate systems and methods for cleaning and sterilising;
- using appropriate cleaning agents;
- applying local directives for the disposal of rubbish;
- monitoring the completion of methods of disinfection and pest control.
- Cleaning and storing equipment used for cooking:
- applying appropriate systems and methods for cleaning and sterilising;
- using appropriate cleaning agents.

Minimum knowledge

- food hygiene regulations;
- principles of hygiene and attention to personal hygiene;
- systems and methods for managing hygiene in the work place; cleaning and sterilising of establishments offering food and drink;
- monitoring of pest control and of rubbish disposal;
- characteristics of cleansing and sterilising products; types of agents for cleaning and sterilising the work place and kitchen equipment.

### Working in safety in food establishments

Outcomes generally expected: following the regulations for safety in the work place.

Skills:-

- Anticipating and reducing professional, environmental and client risks:-
- preventing and reducing risks both professional and environmental;
- preventing gas and electrical risks;
- preventing risks from cutting equipment;
- preventing fire risks.

Minimum knowledge

- safety, accident, fire and work place hygiene regulations.

### **Self-evaluating the quality of performance in the work place**

Outcomes generally expected: evaluating the quality of one's own work ensuring the correct application of regulations and compliance with one's own quality procedures.

Skills:-

- Evaluation of the quality of service provided:-
- understanding and applying the quality procedures of the employer;
- perceiving the level of satisfaction of the internal and external client;
- understanding criticism and proposing means for improvement.

Minimum knowledge

- aspects of managing quality in the provision of a service;
- concepts of quality offered, provided, expected and perceived;
- methods for the evaluation of service quality.

Chef (kitchen assistant) EQF; II 5.2.2.1.1 - 56.10.11 - 56.21.00 - 56.29.10 - 56.29.20 - Code Classification Istat NUP 6. Drawn up on the basis of the European Panel for Qualifications for Lifelong Learning. European Commission 2009.

### **Professional Courses at the Second level**

Courses for professional restaurant chefs.

The European Qualification Framework sets out eight levels of competence that, at each stage, require increasingly complex learning (EQF Chefs in restaurants 5.2.2.1.0).°

The professional qualification of restaurant chef, compared to an assistant chef in the broader field of food and drink establishments, is determined by different ability levels in each of three components:- Knowledge, Skill and Competence. In particular, of the three components, the weight of knowledge is superior for a professional restaurant chef compared to an assistant chef in the broader field of food and drink establishments.

### **Course objectives**

For entry to the profession, a chef is able to:-

- a) prepare food, manage the purchase of provisions;
- b) organise work and tasks;
- c) cook and prepare dishes;
- d) oversee the presentation and garnishing of dishes;

- e) research and order ingredients and create menus;
- f) train others;
- g) use all kitchen equipment;
- h) season food and to introduce new dishes,
- i) clean machinery and equipment;
- j) select suitable ingredients;
- k) set prices for the dishes served;
- l) show dexterity in controlling the hob for different cookery tasks;
- m) taste the food;
- n) clean the work place and dining room.

The professional restaurant chef is able to prepare and distribute, following established practice, meals and drinks taking part in all stages of the dining service as:-

- waiter/head waiter;
- chef;
- barman;
- sommelier or wine expert.

### **1 Competence and knowledge**

- a) identifying and monitoring the characteristics and the quality of both ingredients and semi-finished preparations;
- b) adopting methods to keep ingredients and semi-finished preparations fresh;
- c) the treatment of ingredients and semi-finished preparations;
- d) using equipment to clean and prepare ingredients;
- e) selecting dishes that can form a simple menu;
- f) choosing ingredients required by the recipes;
- g) applying techniques for the preparation of various dishes: starters, first and second courses, side dishes and desserts.

### **2 Preparing dishes**

- a) maintaining order and hygiene in the kitchen and its equipment as required by the food hygiene regulations;
- b) using appropriate techniques for equipping and arranging various kinds of restaurants and events;
- c) employing a communicative style appropriate to the client during service;
- d) applying service techniques at the table: taking orders, serving food and drink, rearranging the table as necessary;

### **3 Service of food and drink**

- a) checking the visual quality of products served and the appearance and functioning of the dining room;
- b) describing the characteristics of the main drinks from the bar (hot, cold, alcoholic, non-alcoholic);
- c) preparing and serving various drinks and snacks;
- d) choosing equipment and glasses for serving drinks.

### **4 Preparation**

- a) drinks and snacks;

- b) choosing methods to provide a service appropriate to the establishment;
- c) providing the service: stages, roles, organisation;
- d) principal components of service in the dining room and bar;
- e) the principal techniques and equipment used in the kitchen, dining room and bar and their functions;
- f) written and spoken English to an elementary technical level;
- g) recognising merchantable quality of goods (merceologia) and nutritional characteristics of provisions ;
- h) principles of cookery and wine (enogastronomia);
- i) criteria and techniques for creating various types of menu;
- j) systems for keeping ingredients, semi-finished preparations and other products fresh;
- k) techniques for the preparation of dishes;
- l) techniques for equipping and laying-out the dining room;
- m) methods of presentation;
- n) garnishing and decorating dishes;
- o) techniques for preparing and serving drinks;
- p) techniques of communication and promotion;
- q) principal laws and regulations on food hygiene;
- r) principal laws and regulations for the management of foodstuffs;
- s) common principles and aspects of law on safety;
- t) safety at work: regulations and behaviour (general and specific).

#### **5 Treatment of ingredients and semi-finished foodstuffs**

- a) cleaning and preparation of foodstuffs;
- b) keeping food, ingredients and semi-finished items fresh;
- c) foodstuffs treated according to food hygiene regulations.

#### **6 Preparing dishes**

- a) preparing simple dishes;
- b) portions and arrangement on the plate;
- c) checking visual and aromatic qualities;
- d) quality of the ingredients and dishes: use by dates, methods of presentation etc;
- e) preparing dishes according to quality standards and food hygiene regulations;

#### **7 Serving food and drink**

- a) equipping the dining room and tables;
- b) presenting the menu;
- c) taking orders;
- d) serving the table;
- e) serving of dishes according to quality standards and food hygiene regulations.

#### **8 Preparation and distribution of drinks and snacks**

- a) equipping the bar;
- b) preparing of drinks and snacks;
- c) serving drinks and snacks;
- d) preparing and serving drinks and snacks according to quality standards and food hygiene regulations.



° The European Qualification Framework (EQF) is an initiative of the European Union to provide a common understanding of professional qualifications in member countries and to promote labour mobility.