

MERCURY

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Sous Chef at the Mercury in Colchester.

The Mercury is Essex's only full-time producing theatre, and last year saw us welcome over 118,000 audience members to shows and a further 20,000 who come to events in our café bar and piazza. Since our refurbishment we have a spacious, café bar area, onsite kitchen, increased seating in the auditorium, and a range of hireable meeting, workshop and activity spaces. Our café bar offer includes casual dining, a wide selection of cakes, pastries, snacks and light meals, alongside a range of teas, coffees, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages. Additionally, we cater for conferences and special events at the theatre when required.

The Mercury provides a social and safe space for multiple voices, giving people with different backgrounds and experiences the opportunity to take part in a creative process and start to realise their own creative potential and, most importantly, to connect.

We are a family friendly employer and the hours of operation for the kitchen reflect this with the kitchen open to orders between 11:00am - 2:30pm and 5:00pm – 7:30pm on the days we are open to the public.

Our commitment to our local community is strong and, where possible, ingredients will be locally sourced and all coffee is Fairtrade.

In this pack you will find:

- Job description and person specification
- Information about how to apply

Further information about the Mercury can be found on www.mercurytheatre.co.uk

To apply for this post, please send:

- a letter of no more than 2 sides of A4, or a link to a video of no more than 4 minutes, explaining what attracts you to this position, and evidence of your ability to meet the job description and person specification.
- Your CV.
- Names and contact details for two employment/professional referees, one of which must be your current or most recent employer. We shall not take up references unless candidates are invited to a second interview.

Applications should be submitted to via [this Staffology link](#) by **10:00am on Tuesday, 2 June 2026**. Interviews will take place in person at the Mercury on Thursday, 11 June 2026.

We warmly encourage applications from people who identify as having a protected characteristic.

We look forward to receiving your application,



Steve Mannix
Chief Executive

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Job Description

Job Title	Sous Chef
Department	Operations
Responsible to	Chef
Responsible for	Kitchen Team
Key working relationships	Commercial and Operations Director Head of Customer Experience Customer Experience Supervisors Customer Experience Team

Purpose of the Post

The Sous Chef works closely with the Chef in planning, scheduling and delivering catering for all events and activities across the Mercury's programme, on time and within budget.

The Sous Chef will assist in the planning of menus and will prepare, cook and present food to the highest standards. The Sous Chef is responsible for ensuring that statutory food hygiene record keeping and cleaning are clear up to date and accurate.

Main Duties

- With the Chef, to be responsible for the planning and arranging of all catering requirements for the café bar, conferences and events.
- Ensure all food is prepared, cooked and served to the highest standard.
- Assist the Chef to determine how much to order and maintain an appropriate supply, within agreed budget and stock control limitations under guidance of the Head of Customer Experience.
- Prepare and follow menus to ensure adequate yield of foods and avoid waste.
- Receive and store food deliveries properly.
- Work with the hires team to provide excellent catering and buffet for conferencing and events.
- Ensure portion control is maintained to a high standard.

Financial and Human Resources

- Work with the Chef in budgetary planning, costing, monitoring spending and control of agreed amounts on catering materials and labour, and other catering items.
- Work with the Chef on the maintenance and financial control of all catering department stocks.
- Work with the Head of Customer Experience to maintain appropriate food hygiene record keeping, stock control, allergen information and pricing on the Theatre's till systems, website and mobile app.
- Assist the Chef to monitor and coordinate apprentice training and staff development for the kitchen team.

Health and Safety

- Ensure health and safety, and food safety standards methods are adhered to by the department and liaise with management team as necessary on any issues identified.
- Ensure accurate and regular food safety standard records are maintained.
- Ensure risk assessments relevant to the kitchen are up to date and acted on.
- Contribute to maintenance of a clean, tidy and safe working environment.
- Maintain the hygiene of kitchen equipment and related areas.

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General Duties

- Manage time effectively meeting deadlines as directed by the Chef and Head of Customer Experience.
- Maintain a working knowledge of the Mercury Theatre's programme, including hire activities.
- Participate actively as a member of the Operations team.
- Attend and contribute to staff meetings and training sessions.
- Maintain positive and effective relationships with colleagues across the organisation.
- Adhere to all Mercury Theatre policies included Safeguarding, Health and Safety, and environmental policies.
- Maximise income and minimise expenditure whilst ensuring high quality delivery.
- Undertake any further duties as may be reasonably requested.

This job description is a guide to the nature of the work required of this position. It is neither wholly comprehensive nor restrictive and does not preclude change or development that might be required in the future. It does not form part of the contract of employment.

Person Specification

Professional Competencies Essential

- Proven experience in a similar role with relevant qualification relating to the food and beverage industry.
- Strong food presentation skills with the ability to approach the presentation and cooking of food to suit a range of customers budgets and taste with equal enthusiasm and quality expectation.
- Experience of preparing buffets for small and large commercial events.
- Excellent attention to detail.
- Strong communication skills.
- High level of people management and the ability to build and maintain excellent professional relationships.
- Excellent knowledge of current production food safety health and safety regulations and good practice.
- Experience of successfully working within teams.
- Excellent IT skills.

Personal Qualities

- Self-disciplined, organised and self-motivating.
- Proven experience of good relationships with kitchen teams.
- Ability to work as part of a flexible team, responding to instructions, contributing ideas, supporting other team members and taking a lead on projects as required.
- Adaptable and receptive to new ideas and initiatives.
- Ability to work under pressure and manage competing deadlines.
- Good organisational/housekeeping skills.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with an ability to listen, build rapport and communicate with people at all levels.
- Creative flair.

Desirable

- First Aider Qualification.
- Full UK driving license.

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Outline of Terms and Conditions

Salary:	£25,750 per annum
Hours:	37.5 hours per week, although additional hours may be necessary in order to fulfil the post's requirements for which Time Off in Lieu is available. This post will require the successful candidate to work unsocial hours on occasion.
Annual Leave:	Annual leave entitlement is 20 days for each holiday year plus statutory Bank Holidays. When you complete one year of service, your holiday entitlement will increase by one day each year thereafter to a maximum of 25 days per annum.
Probationary Period:	Five months.
Notice Period:	Two months by either party in writing after an initial probationary period during which time the notice period is one month by either party.
DBS Check:	Should your post have regular contact with children and/or vulnerable adults a DBS check will be required.
Pension:	Colchester Mercury Theatre Ltd operates a Stakeholder Pension scheme. Full details of the scheme are available from the Finance Department.
Other Benefits	Discount on drinks and meals in the Mercury's bar including access to the discounted staff menu The company offers an interest free season ticket loan The company encourages attendance at performances with an allocation of tickets to employees (subject to availability and the Mercury's ticket policy A discount on specific Creative Engagement activities.

How to apply

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- a letter of no more than 2 sides of A4, or a link to a video of no more than 4 minutes, explaining what attracts you to this position, and evidence of your ability to meet the job description and person specification.
- Your CV.
- Names and contact details for two employment/professional referees, one of which must be your current or most recent employer. We shall not take up references unless candidates are invited to a second interview.
- A completed Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form (part of the application link)

Applications should be submitted to via [this Staffology link](#) by **10:00am on Tuesday, 2 June 2026**. Interviews will take place in person at the Mercury on Thursday, 11 June 2026.

The Mercury Theatre is an equal opportunities employer and actively promotes diversity in our staff team. We welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of their race, sex, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age. Please let us know if you need this information in a different format by contacting the recruitment team on recruitment@mercurytheatre.co.uk, or by calling 01206577006, ext. 204.