



# WORK AS A CHEF *in Australia*





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## HIGH QUALITY OF COURSES IN AUSTRALIA

Food has risen to an art form in Australia, taking chefs along the ride to fame and glory. Always loved cooking? If you've got a bit of a flair for flavour, you might have imagined yourself at the helm of your own kitchen, artfully garnishing a plate with one hand and balancing a flaming wok with the other. A career as a chef can open many doors. The hospitality industry in Australia is always growing, and the career opportunities on offer can take you anywhere. From an upscale resort in far-north Queensland to a winery in South Australia or a tiny laneway in inner Melbourne: the world is your freshly-shucked, locally-sourced oyster. But beneath a chef's passion and creativity there lies dedication and an extraordinary amount of hard work. So how do you get from being handy in the kitchen to a darling of the culinary world?

If you're just starting to explore the idea of a culinary career, you may need to field some important questions first, like:

- What kind of work will I do in the kitchen?
- How much does a chef earn in Australia?
- Are chefs in demand in Australia?
- What qualifications do you need to become a chef?
- How long does it take to become a chef?
- What is the kitchen hierarchy?
- What other types of culinary jobs are there?





## LET'S GET COOKING.

**Today, we'll cover all these questions and more. This comprehensive guide to becoming a chef will take you from the research and discovery phase, through to concrete next steps for starting out in the industry.**

But First: What Does the Word 'Chef' Really Mean?

A chef is a professional cook who oversees food preparation and manages all aspects of a kitchen, including the other cooks. The word 'chef' comes from the French phrase 'chef de cuisine', which means the 'boss of the kitchen'. In Australia, the word 'chef' is sometimes used to refer to a professional cook; confusingly, it's also sometimes used to refer to a head chef or chef-manager. Chefs are trained through formal qualifications or an apprenticeship, and usually have several years of experience as a cook. As they gain expertise, chefs will master a broad range of techniques in all areas of cookery, and often specialise in a particular cuisine. Chefs most commonly work in commercial kitchens such as restaurants or catering companies, but they can also be found in private households and institutions like schools and hospitals.

## WHAT DO CHEFS DO?

A chef is more than a cook – they don't just cook food, they make it possible for an entire restaurant to function. Depending on the chef's level of seniority, they can be responsible for an entire process of creating dishes, from researching and planning a menu to sourcing produce, organising the kitchen, designing the presentation of each dish. Some chefs are in charge of a particular section, such as desserts or soups, according to the kitchen hierarchy.





# CHEF DUTIES

**Cooking and preparing food**

**Demonstrating cooking techniques and procedures**

**Developing a menu**

**Maintaining hygiene standards**

**Estimating the costs of each meal**

**Designing an efficient kitchen workflow**

**Purchasing ingredients**

**Supervising other cooks and kitchen staff**

**Hiring and training staff**

**Using and maintaining kitchen equipment**

## **Job Prospects are Strong & Getting Stronger**

Australia has a huge hospitality industry, and it's growing all the time. Over the past 5 years, demand for chefs has skyrocketed, and the Australian Government predicts strong growth, with another 81,000 job openings over the next 5 years.





## CHEF SALARY



# \$49,000

## TYPICAL CHEF SALARY

**The average salary for a chef varies greatly, depending on their position in the kitchen hierarchy, but a typical salary across all roles lies between \$43,000-\$55,000.**

So what does this mean? Don't be a chef for the money – do it for the love. Cooking is a moderately-paying career path, and most people get into it because it gives them great creative satisfaction, variety and excitement, not stacks of cash.

That is, unless you become a celebrity chef. You never know, right?

### **Is Being a Chef Right For You?**

The hospitality industry can be tough, and it takes a particular kind of person to flourish in the heat of the kitchen. But if you happen to be that kind of person, you may find yourself madly in love with your career.





## BEING A CHEF

Not many jobs can provide the level of excitement and challenge that a career as a chef can. No two days in the kitchen are the same, with creativity and problem-solving skills required in equal measure.

## TRY WORKING IN A KITCHEN FIRST

Before you go to culinary school, before you apply for an apprenticeship, before you decide that cooking is the love of your life... work as a kitchen hand for a while. **Seriously, work in a kitchen.**

It's the only way to get a feel for what being a chef is really like. Being a kitchen hand is fast-paced, physically challenging work, as you're essentially the support role that makes sure everyone else can do their job properly. In this role, you'll get to know fairly quickly whether you absolutely thrive or wilt in the kitchen environment. That way, if you choose a foray into the culinary world, it will be based on a true, grounded love for cooking rather than illusions.

**Find a restaurant that you connect with in some way, with an ethos or cuisine that excites you, and start working at the bottom of the ladder.**





## WHAT IS LIFE IN THE KITCHEN LIKE?

Once you've worked in a kitchen for a while, you will start to realise some things about professional cooking.

### LONG HOURS

Being a chef is not a 9 to 5 job. Head chefs, in particular, are famous for regularly working 12-hour shifts to accommodate morning deliveries, afternoon preparation, and lunch and dinner services. It's not uncommon for cooks and kitchen staff at all levels to work long hours. Kitchens open long before dinner is served, and close long after.

### FAST-PACED

The kitchen can be a hectic place during food service. You'll need to be quick on your feet with good spatial awareness to move around the others working near your space. If you thrive in busy environments, you'll love this.

### CLOSE-KNIT

Because you're working so closely with the other staff, they will become like family to you. A working kitchen is like a well-oiled machine. Everyone has their part to play, and high-pressure environments forge strong friendships. This is not a job for lone-wolf types.

### HANDS-ON

Cooking for a living is not for the faint of heart. You must be able to handle lots of physically demanding, high-pressure work, and keep your cool around very hot cooktops. On the other hand, if you prefer physical work and you've always dreaded the thought of a cubicle, hands-on work like this could be very satisfying.



## CHEF RANKINGS AND THE KITCHEN HIERARCHY

The kitchen hierarchy most commonly seen in kitchens is a legacy from the french 'brigade' system. We break it down and show you the average duties and salaries for each position.

When you start off working in a kitchen, it's most likely your first job will be as a kitchen hand – a job which mostly involves cleaning and assisting everyone else in the kitchen. As you gain experience and skills, you will start moving up the ranks.

**The chef ranking system can be confusing at first, but once you get to grips with the way the kitchen works, it will start to make sense. The different rankings of chef are listed here from highest to lowest.**





## 1. EXECUTIVE CHEF

**Executive Chef duties:**  
(sometimes also known as Chef/Owner)

- May own restaurant
- May manage several restaurants
- Develop menu direction
- Supervise food preparation
- Share knowledge and train kitchen staff
- Assign responsibilities for food preparation to cooks
- Deal with complaints and customer feedback
- Prepare food alongside other chefs
- Manage all food and beverage operations



**\$80,967**

TYPICAL SALARY

## 2. HEAD CHEF

**Head Chef duties:**  
(also known as Chef de Cuisine)

- Specialise in one type of cuisine
- Manage kitchen operations
- Prepare, cook, and present food
- Planning the menu
- Inventory and purchasing
- Budget management
- Manage and train kitchen employees
- Oversee hygiene and sanitation standards



**\$64,107**

TYPICAL SALARY



### 3. SOUS CHEF

**Sous Chef duties:**  
**also known as Second-in-Command)**

- Manage day-to-day operations of kitchen
- Manage, direct and discipline kitchen staff
- Oversee quality control
- Assisting with creative menu development
- Manage daily food inventory and costs
- Generate business reports
- Deal with suppliers
- Substitute for head chef or other chefs when needed
- Help with daily food preparation



**\$59,055**

TYPICAL SALARY

### 4. CHEF DE PARTIE

**Chef de Partie duties:**  
**(also known as Line Chef or Station Chef)**

- Responsible for preparing one type of food
- Season and cook elements of each dish
- Garnish and present dishes for serving
- Operate kitchen equipment and appliances
- Monitor cleanliness and sanitise kitchen areas
- Taste and keep records of food products



**\$54,361**

TYPICAL SALARY



## 5. KITCHEN CHEF

### Kitchen Chef duties:

- Help to plan menu
- Prepare salads, sandwiches, stuffings, sauces
- Cutting up vegetables, fruits, and meats
- Plate up and garnish meals
- Supervise kitchen assistants and waiters
- Ordering and bookkeeping



**\$22/HR**

TYPICAL PAY

## 6. CHEF ASSISTANT

### Chef Assistant duties:

- Ordering and inventory of supplies
- Clean and maintain kitchen, including appliances, tools and equipment, and storage areas
- Estimate type and quantity of food items to order for daily service and functions
- Basic ingredient preparation, such as chopping and pre-cooking



**\$20/HR**

TYPICAL PAY



## 7. KITCHEN HAND

### Kitchen Hand duties:

- Cleaning dishes, cookware, and utensils
- Sweeping and mopping
- Clearing tables and bringing dirty dishes to the kitchen
- Maintaining a clean kitchen
- Helping with station setup for cooks
- Helping with basic food preparation, such as washing and chopping ingredients
- Laundering linens



**\$19/HR**

TYPICAL PAY

## CULINARY QUALIFICATIONS

The type of qualification you should pursue depends on what kind of chef you want to become. Getting qualified can take anywhere from 6 months to 3 years, but you'll need at minimum a Certificate III in Culinary Arts to work professionally. Working in a restaurant is not the only path available to you as a chef.

It's worth considering other routes such as baking or patisserie, both of which are experiencing a boom and urgently in need of skilled, talented people to fill the workforce gaps. **You will need, at minimum, to have completed one of these qualifications to become a chef in Australia:**

**Chef – Certificate III, IV or Diploma in Commercial Cookery (SIT30813)**

**Pastry chef – Certificate III, IV or Diploma in Patisserie (SIT31016)**

**Baker – Certificate III in Retail Baking (Bread) (FDF30610)**





## APPRENTICESHIP

It's also highly recommended to gain your qualification through an apprenticeship, as cookery is an extremely hands-on profession. You'll get a much better start through learning on the job, working your way up, and gaining industry contacts as you go. To gain an apprenticeship, you will usually need to have completed at least Year 10 or equivalent.

It's also usually a good idea to gain your VCE or equivalent. Since your job will involve a lot of business and communication skills, as well as calculating for cooking temperatures and quantities, you'll need strong Mathematics and English skills.

## SHOULD YOU TAKE ON A CHEF APPRENTICESHIP?

While you don't have to complete an apprenticeship to become a chef, it's a smart move – and will greatly improve your chances of starting out on the right foot. You'll be able to gain work experience while you complete your qualification, all while getting paid.

So, you've had a taste of being a chef – and you've decided it's the perfect path for you. What are you waiting for? Start making a wishlist of kitchens nearby (and further afield!) you'd like to work in and explore the qualifications available to you.

**Your culinary adventures await.**





## MIGRATE AS A CHEF

### CHEF – ANZSCO 351311

**Description:** Plans and organises the preparation and cooking of food in a dining or catering establishment.

**Skill Level:** 2

**Specialisations:** Chef de Partie, Commis Chef, Demi Chef, Second Chef, Sous Chef.

## OCCUPATION LISTS

This occupation is on the following skills lists:

- 489 (S/T) Occupations List
- 482 TSS Visa Medium Term List
- 407 Training visa occupations list
- 482 TSS Visa Regional Occupation List
- 189 Skilled Independent and Family Sponsored 489 Occupations List and 485 Graduate Work Stream
- 190 State/Territory Sponsored
- 186 ENS Visa Occupations List
- 491 – Skilled Work Regional (provisional) visa (subclass 491)
- 494 – Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional (provisional) (subclass 494) – Employer sponsored stream



## GROUP: 3513 CHEFS

**Description:** Plan and organise the preparation and cooking of food in dining and catering establishments.

Cooks, Fast Food Cooks and Kitchenhands are excluded from this unit group. Cooks are included in Unit Group 3514 Cooks. Fast Food Cooks and Kitchenhands are included in Minor Group 851 Food Preparation Assistants.

### Tasks:

- planning menus, estimating food and labour costs, and ordering food supplies
- monitoring quality of dishes at all stages of preparation and presentation
- discussing food preparation issues with Managers, Dietitians and kitchen and waiting staff
- demonstrating techniques and advising on cooking procedures
- preparing and cooking food
- explaining and enforcing hygiene regulations
- may select and train staff
- may freeze and preserve foods

## OCCUPATION LISTS

**Skill Level:** Most occupations in this unit group have a level of skill commensurate with the qualifications and experience outlined below.

**In Australia:** AQF Associate Degree, Advanced Diploma or Diploma (ANZSCO Skill Level 2)

At least three years of relevant experience may substitute for the formal qualifications listed above. In some instances relevant experience and/or on-the-job training may be required in addition to the formal qualification.

**Occupations in this Group: 351311 Chef**







## CHEF SKILLS ASSESSMENT (ANZSCO: 351311)

### CHEF – ANZSCO 351311

Chefs migrating to Australia are required to complete a skills assessment through Trades Recognition Australia (TRA).

### 485 VISA

Subclass 485 Temporary Graduate (subclass 485) visa: You must have:

- received this qualification while studying in Australia
- held an international student visa
- had your qualification issued by a Commonwealth Register of Institutions and courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) registered training organisation (RTO)
- completed a minimum of 360 hours of employment and/or a vocational placement directly related to your occupation.

Our recommended skills assessment program is **Job Ready Program (JRP)**.

#### TRADES RECOGNITION AUSTRALIA FEES:

Job Ready Employment (JRE fee is only required with the first Employment Registration form) - **\$500**

Job Ready Workplace Assessment (JRWA) - **\$2000**

Subsequent Job Ready Workplace Assessment (if required) - **\$2000**

Job Ready Final Assessment (JRFA) - **\$150**





## CHEF SKILLS ASSESSMENT (ANZSCO: 351311)

### 482 VISA

Visa Temporary Skills Shortage (Subclass 482) - Your country of passport must be in the list below:

Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Fiji, Hong Kong SAR, India, Macau SAR, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, Vietnam, Zimbabwe.

You must have the following:

- Minimum of 5 years full time paid employment (or equivalent part-time employment) in your nominated occupation, or
- Minimum of 3 years full time paid employment (or equivalent part-time employment) in your nominated occupation and a qualification directly related to your occupation.

Our recommended skills assessment program is **Temporary Skills Shortage Skills Assessment Program (TSS). Provisional Skills Assessment - \$300. Some passport holders require a skills assessment for this visa. You are exempt from this skills assessment if you completed your studies in Australia.**

*\*186DE Employer Nomination Scheme Direct Entry Stream. Permanent Visa. All applicants must have a skills assessment. (Same requirements as 482 visa skills assessment).*

## DO YOU QUALIFY FOR THE SKILLED VISA?

The following infographic is based on the immigration points system determined by the Department of Home Affairs (DOHA). It calculates whether you have enough points, and are therefore eligible to immigrate to Australia under one of the Skilled Visa classes. A positive result does not guarantee visa success; it simply means you have the requisite or minimum number of points deemed necessary by the Department of Home Affairs (DOHA). **To confirm your eligibility schedule an appointment with Migration Services.**



# AUSTRALIAN POINTS TABLE



AGE



- 18-24 : 25 Points
- 25-32 : 30 Points
- 33-39 : 25 Points
- 40-44 : 15 Points



ENGLISH



- Competent: 0 Points
- Proficient: 10 Points
- Superior: 20 Points



**SKILLED EMPLOYMENT**  
Last 10 years Outside Australia



- 0-3 years: 0 Points
- 3-4 years: 5 Points
- 5-7 years: 10 Points
- 8-10 years: 15 Points



DIPLOMA/TRADES



- Diploma: 10 Points
- Bachelor/Masters: 15 Points
- Doctorate: 20 Points



AUSTRALIAN STUDY REQUIREMENT



- 92 weeks course: 5 Points



**SPECIALIST EDUCATION  
QUALIFICATION IN AUSTRALIA**



- STEM: 5 Points



**SKILLED EMPLOYMENT**  
Last 10 years in Australia



- 0-1 year: 0 Points
- 1-3 years: 5 Points
- 3-5 years: 10 Points
- 5-8 years: 15 Points
- 8-10 years: 20 Points



STUDY IN REGIONAL AREA



- Australian study requirement in a designated regional area: 5 Points



PROFESSIONAL YEAR



- IT/ Accounting / Engineering: 5 Points



DESIGNATED LANGUAGE



- NAATI Translator or Interpreter paraprofessional : 5 Points



PARTNER STATUS



- No partner: 10 Points
- Australian Citizen Partner: 10 Points
- Partner with positive skills assessment and competent English: 10 Points
- Partner with Competent English: 5 Points



STATE



- 190 Sub Class: 5 Points
- 491 Sub Class: 15 Points

**MINIMUM POINTS REQUIRED FOR A  
PERMANENT VISA APPLICATION: 65**



# PLAN YOUR STAY IN AUSTRALIA

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study pathway to get  
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