

# National Apprenticeship - Occupational Profile

Apprenticeship  
Title

**Butcher**

NFQ Level

**5 Major**

Duration

**2 Years**

Typical tasks/  
responsibilities

On completion of the apprenticeship, butchers will prepare and place meat cuts and products in display counters, so they appear attractive and catch the shopper's eye. This will mean the apprentice butcher will demonstrate the skills of 'shaping', 'lacing', and 'tying' roasts using boning knives, skewers, and twine. In addition to developing culinary skills, craft butchers will be able to wrap, weigh, label and price cuts of meat.

As the butcher role has evolved, greater responsibility will be placed on apprentices to learn general business and customer service skills. Increased attention will be paid to marketing principles and practices.

Knowledge

- Summarise the development of the meat sector leading up to the modern day, including its values, culture, traditions and connection to membership bodies and professional institutions.
- Discuss the principles of butchery; including the selection, procurement, provenance and handling of livestock leading to welfare and associated lairage and slaughter practices, including Halal and Kosher
- Examine the principles of waste minimisation, saleable yield and predictive costing methods
- Describe the meat and poultry marketplace including the supply chain/traceability functions and key legislative and enforcement agencies that regulate the retail and/or process environments
- Define the principles of meat and poultry species including knowledge associated with carcass by-products, primal, joints and muscles
- Identify various craft and knife skills used for cutting, boning, trimming and mincing of meat including the use of relevant mechanical equipment as required
- Explain the importance of cold storage, stock control and safe movement of meat and/or poultry in the butchery environment
- Define stock control, product pricing, quality assurance and meeting the expectations of customers and/or contractors
- Examine health and food safety including hygiene both in personal terms and as part of the wider food sales/production environment
- List methods for weighing products, controlling temperature, wrapping, sealing, packing, labelling and stock control of meat and poultry products for wholesale or retail sale
- Discuss employment, rights and responsibilities, including equality, team working practices and the importance of continuous personal development

- Examine the need for traceability in the procurement and supply of meat
- Describe the butcher's role in the audit and inspection process
- Contribute to the development of a marketing plan
- Examine the principles of customer service

## Skills

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- Prove full awareness and adherence to health and safety regulations and/or additional requirements that may apply to their employer's food business
  - Demonstrate the principles of butchery; including the selection, procurement, provenance and handling of livestock leading to welfare and associated lairage and slaughter practices
  - Use machinery (as permitted) and other relevant cutting equipment including the ability to sharpen knives
  - Carry out a range of primary and secondary butchery skills involving the use of steak and boning knives, hand saws, cleavers, banding needles and other relevant hand tools used in the process of primal cutting, boning, slicing, dicing, rolling, trimming and filleting as used in their employers' business
  - Produce Meat and/or poultry products (as required) such as sausages/pies made to the specifications of customers or for sale to the public
  - Produce meat to the specific volume, size & weight to meet the needs of national/local consumers and customers in a timely and accurate fashion
  - Apply hand/eye co-ordination along with physical agility and manual handling of carcasses through the manufacturing and butchery process
  - Complete a marketing plan for a craft butcher shop

## Competencies

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- Take appropriate personal operational responsibility for both health and food safety and the application of safe working practices when using knives, hazardous tools and/or related equipment
  - Display a willingness to learn, solve problems and acquire new skills that will be applied in the working environment
  - Be punctual, reliable, diligent and respectful towards customers, peers and colleagues at all times
  - Show attention to detail, carrying out duties in a diligent way and taking account of efficiencies and understanding how these support the profitability of the business
  - Maintain the vision and ethos of the business, including performance levels whilst taking pride in work and fostering positive relationships with customers and colleagues. Communicate enthusiastically and with personality to customers offering excellent service
  - Advise domestic and commercial customers on the preparation and cooking of red and white meat products

## Industry/industries served by this apprenticeship

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Butcher Shops  
 Multiples / supermarkets  
 Convenient stores  
 Meat Processors & Processing Factories