

Tips for Taking Your Restaurant Online - Complete Hospitality Training

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Details:

A dish that leaves the pass and is eaten twenty minutes later in someone else's kitchen is a different product from the one served at table four. Taking a restaurant online is not a marketing decision with an operational tail; it is an operational decision that happens to arrive through a marketing channel. The venue that thinks about it that way makes better choices about which platform to join, which items to list and what the kitchen does at seven on a Friday.

One thing worth saying plainly at the top: the regulatory material behind this page is food safety and employment law , not marketing. The commercial judgements below are practical guidance. The food safety and award sections are grounded and cited at the end.

Margin is the first question, not the last

Third-party delivery platforms charge the venue a commission on every order, and that commission comes out of a margin already set by food cost and labour. Before signing up, the operator needs the actual contribution margin of each dish, not the theoretical food cost percentage, recalculated with the platform fee removed. Some items survive that arithmetic and some do not. Delivery-only pricing, a shorter delivery menu, or a direct ordering channel the venue controls are all responses to the same problem, and each carries its own cost in acquisition, subscription or staff time.

The volume argument deserves scrutiny as well. Lower-margin orders are worth having when they use capacity that would otherwise sit idle. Orders that land in the middle of the dine-in peak and slow table service can cost more than the commission line suggests.

The capability to do that arithmetic may already be in your kitchen. SITHKOP010 Plan and cost recipes is a core unit of SIT30821 Certificate III in Commercial Cookery, so every cook completing that qualification has been assessed on costing a recipe. And SITXFIN009 Manage finances within a budget , core in the Certificate IV in Hospitality and the Diploma of Hospitality Management, requires the holder to take account of impacts on customer service levels and colleagues when evaluating a change, which is exactly the trap a delivery channel sets. See improving the bookkeeping in your business .

Check the award before you change the business

This is the step nobody takes. Award coverage follows the premises and the nature of the business, not the job title , and there are four awards in play, each covering its industry to the exclusion of any other modern award .

| Award | Code | What it covers | | --- | --- | --- | | Hospitality Industry (General) | MA000009 | Hotels, pubs, motels, resorts, casinos, caterers , accommodation | | Registered and Licensed Clubs | MA000058 | Not-for-profit registered clubs | | Restaurant Industry | MA000119 | Standalone restaurants, cafes, night clubs, reception centres, roadhouses | | Fast Food Industry | MA000003 | Food and beverages sold primarily to be consumed away from the point of sale , takeaway, food courts |

Read the MA000003 definition again with a delivery business in mind. Clause 4.2 turns on food sold primarily to be consumed away from the point of sale , and it expressly excludes coffee shops, cafes, bars and restaurants providing primarily a sit-down service . A restaurant with tables that also delivers

is still providing primarily a sit-down service. A delivery-only kitchen with no dining room is a different proposition, and the award question should be answered rather than assumed.

Why that question is worth real money: the Level 4 floor

This is not a theoretical distinction, and here is the sharpest reason why.

Under MA000009, MA000119 and MA000058, a relevant AQF Certificate III or higher that the employee actually uses at work sets a minimum classification of Level 4. The fast food award, MA000003, has no equivalent provision. The qualification argument works in a pub, a restaurant, a cafe and a registered club, and fails in a food court .

So if a delivery-only or food-court format moves your business from MA000119 to MA000003, your qualified cooks lose the Level 4 floor entirely. That is a structural change to your wage model, and it is invisible if you only think of the move as a marketing channel.

| Award | Clause | What the definition says | | --- | --- | --- | | MA000009 | cl 18.1 | AQF Certificate III or higher relevant to the classification, and the employee makes use of the skills and knowledge derived from those competencies | | MA000119 | cl 18.1 | Identical wording | | MA000058 | cl 18.3 | "AQF Certificate III qualifications relevant to the classification" — no "or higher", and the Fair Work Commission may require the employee to demonstrate they utilise the relevant skills | | MA000003 | — | No equivalent note. No Level 4 floor |

Dispute routes differ: MA000009 clause 40 , MA000119 clause 34 , or for MA000058 referral to the Fair Work Commission .

There is a further point in the hospitality award, MA000009 , worth knowing if your kitchen staff are qualified. Level 4 is that award's reference point — the standard weekly and hourly rate from which its apprentice percentages are calculated — and it is attached to cook (tradesperson) grade 3 . The cook stream reaches grade 3 by apprenticeship, trade test or "the appropriate level of training" , so a relevant Certificate III, used at work, is a route to a tradesperson grade without serving an apprenticeship .

"The appropriate level of training" is defined in MA000009 clause 2 , and completion is only one of three limbs:

| Limb | Route | Available today | | --- | --- | --- | | (a) | Completing a training program meeting the requirements of a qualification, or one or more units of competency, from a training package | Yes | | (b) | Assessment by a qualified skills assessor as having skills at least equivalent to those attained in such a program | Yes | | (c) | Having done the work of that classification for at least 3 months, as at 30 June 2010 | No — closed |

Limb (c) is a closed transitional provision anchored to 30 June 2010. It is not a rolling three-month test and cannot be newly satisfied. That matters because misreading it runs in the employer's favour — it gets used to argue a long-serving cook already has the appropriate level of training and so needs neither training nor reclassification.

Two scope cautions. Clause 2 and the grade names above are MA000009's own ; do not carry either into MA000119, MA000058 or MA000003 without reading that award's definitions and classification schedule. And clause 2 is a different mechanism from the Certificate III Level 4 floor in the table above, which turns on holding and using a relevant qualification.

Classification structures and pay tables differ between awards, and classifications are not interchangeable. Rates reset every 1 July, so use the Fair Work Ombudsman's Pay and Conditions Tool rather than any figure in an article.

Kitchen workflow when delivery competes with dine-in

A kitchen built around a service rhythm has to absorb a second, unpredictable queue. The questions are concrete: who reads the tablet, who calls the order, where packing happens, and what becomes of a table order sitting under the lamp while a courier is waited on. Workable answers include a packing bench away from the pass, a cap on concurrent delivery orders during peak, and a delivery menu that removes the hardest items at the busiest times. What does not work is assuming the existing brigade absorbs it without a plan.

There is a supervisory competency for exactly this. SITXMGT004 Monitor work operations, core in the Certificate IV in Hospitality and the Diploma of Hospitality Management, requires the supervisor to proactively consult colleagues about ways to improve efficiency and service levels, including the potential for new technologies and other innovations, to assess current workloads and schedule work to maximise efficiency and customer service quality within budget constraints, and to take follow-up action to monitor the effectiveness of solutions. Adopting a delivery platform is a new technology being introduced into a workflow, and the unit's view is that it is consulted on and then reviewed, not announced.

Food safety does not stop at the door

This is where the page stops being advice and becomes law.

Standard 3.2.2A of the Food Standards Code commenced 8 December 2023, and its categories are activity-based, not premises-based. Category one is a caterer or food service operation that processes unpackaged potentially hazardous food into food that is both potentially hazardous and ready to eat — restaurants, cafes, pubs, fast food, bakeries. Category two is the retail sale of ready-to-eat potentially hazardous food the business did not make, where slicing, weighing, repacking, reheating and hot-holding do not count as making it.

If your venue has a kitchen and cooks, it is category one, and category one carries the substantiation records duty that category two does not. Three of the required record types bear directly on delivery:

| Record | Why delivery makes it harder | | --- | --- | | Cooling and reheating within specified timeframes | Batch-cooking for a delivery queue creates cooling steps a dine-in kitchen never had | | Display under temperature control | Food staged and waiting for a courier is on display in the relevant sense | | Transport under temperature control | The step that simply does not exist in a dine-in business |

Those records must be kept for 3 months after being made and be accessible at the premises. A business may demonstrate compliance by other means, in which case an authorised officer may then require records. Full detail is on understanding Standard 3.2.2A.

Temperature control remains a food safety obligation once food leaves the premises. Hot food held below temperature while it waits for a courier is the same hazard it would be in the kitchen, and the business is responsible for the condition in which food is handed over. That means insulated packaging suited to the item, holding practices that do not park food on a bench, and a rule for what happens when a courier is late.

The units that actually cover transport, packaging and reheating

This is the part most operators do not know exists. The training package has specific units for the operations a delivery channel introduces, and several sit as Group A electives in SIT30821 Certificate III in Commercial Cookery:

| Unit | What it covers | | --- | --- | | SITXFSA007 Transport and store food | The transport step, as a food safety competency | | SITHCCC026 Package prepared foodstuffs | Packaging, with SITXFSA005 as a prerequisite | | SITHCCC032 Prepare food using cook-chill and cook-freeze | Batch production for later service | | SITHCCC033 Re-thermalise chilled and frozen foods | Bringing it back up safely |

And SITXFSA006 Participate in safe food handling practices , core in SIT30821, requires demonstrating correct methods of controlling food hazards at each of nine critical control points : receiving, storing, preparing, processing, displaying, serving, packaging , transporting and disposing. Packaging and transporting are two of the nine. It also requires procedures to calibrate a temperature probe , which is the single most useful piece of equipment discipline a delivery kitchen can adopt.

If you are building a delivery operation, that list is your training plan. See Certificate III in Commercial Cookery and Certificate IV in Kitchen Management .

The Food Safety Supervisor

Under Standard 3.2.2A, category one and category two businesses must have a Food Safety Supervisor , appointed before the business engages in a prescribed activity, holding a certificate issued within the immediately preceding five years , and remaining reasonably available , meaning on site or easily contacted, for example by phone. Our scope carries the SITSS00069 Food Safety Supervision skill set for this. See the Food Safety Supervisor course and what food safety certificate do I need .

In New South Wales the certificate must come from a NSW Food Authority approved provider , and we are not on that list , so we cannot issue a NSW Food Safety Supervisor certificate. An NSW-approved RTO issues two separate documents , the national Statement of Attainment and the state FSS certificate, and keeping only the Statement of Attainment does not satisfy the NSW requirement.

Separately, food handler training under the Standard must be completed before a person engages in a prescribed activity and must cover four topics: safe handling of food, food contamination, cleaning and sanitising of premises and equipment, and personal hygiene . It does not have to be nationally accredited, the Standard mandates no refresher period for it, and the business is not required to keep records of it. The accredited unit SITXFSA005 buys portability and proof, not permission. See food handling and why food safety and handling is important .

Items that travel, and items that do not

| Characteristic | Effect in transit | Practical response | | --- | --- | --- | | Crisp or fried elements | Steam softens them in a sealed container | Vent the packaging or leave the item off | | Sauced or dressed dishes | Sauce migrates and the dish arrives wet | Pack sauce separately | | Delicate plating | Arrives rearranged | Redesign the plating for the box | | Items served very hot | Fall out of temperature range quickly | Insulate, or restrict the delivery radius | | Items with a cooling step | Create a record obligation and a hazard | Apply the cook-chill and re-thermalisation disciplines properly |

Testing a dish by ordering it to a nearby address and eating it in a car park is a crude method and a reliable one.

Allergen information has to be right online

An online menu is where a customer with an allergy makes a decision, usually without speaking to anyone. Dietary and allergen information published on a platform or a website has to match what the kitchen actually does, and it has to be updated when a recipe or a supplier changes. Removing the chance to ask a question at the point of order raises the standard the written information must meet.

The kitchen-side competency is SITHCCC042 Produce food to meet special dietary requirements , a core unit of SIT30821. The floor-side one is SITXCCS014 Provide service to customers , core in both Certificate III in Hospitality qualifications, which requires staff to identify customer needs and expectations including customers with special needs .

Two other criteria in SITXCCS014 are unexpectedly relevant to an online channel. Criterion 1.4 requires staff to select a medium of communication appropriate for the customer and the situation — a judgement an ordering platform makes for you, and not always well. And criterion 1.1 requires communication within designated response times . If your venue has not defined how quickly an online

enquiry or a substitution request is answered, nobody can meet a standard. Criterion 3.4 also requires staff to identify and anticipate operational problems and take action to minimise the effect on customer satisfaction , which in a delivery context means noticing the courier is twenty minutes away before the food is plated.

Where to build the capability

Our scope of registration carries 17 current qualifications and 81 current skill sets , built from 579 current units , every component at the extent "Deliver and assess". For this subject:

SITSS00088 Online Engagement for Small Business , which is the skill set aimed squarely at the digital channel itself

SITSS00068 Food Handling and SITSS00069 Food Safety Supervision , for the compliance side

SITSS00082 Essential Business Skills for a Restaurant Manager and SITSS00096 Understanding Financial Concepts for Budgeting , for the margin arithmetic

On the qualification side, we deliver SIT30622 Certificate III in Hospitality (15 units, 6 core), SIT30821 Certificate III in Commercial Cookery (25 units, 20 core , delivered in South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia per our scope records), SIT40521 Certificate IV in Kitchen Management (33 units, 27 core , Victoria and Western Australia) and SIT50422 Diploma of Hospitality Management (28 units, 11 core, Victoria only). Start with a course enquiry or look at workplace training , and confirm current fees and intakes directly. On the wider commercial picture see how to take your restaurant to the next level , and on the channel itself 5 ways social media can impact your hospitality business .

About us

We are Complete Hospitality Training , RTO 3722, CRICOS 04242E. Legal name Complete Hospitality Training (Vic) Pty Ltd , ABN 27 006 947 262 , ACN 006 947 262 . Registered as RTO 3722 since 1 June 1994 , transferred from the Victorian regulator to the national regulator, ASQA, on 8 September 2017 , with the current registration period running 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2032 . Level 3, 28 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne VIC 3000, and 410 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010. Contact melbourne@cht.edu.au or +61 3 9654 1554 .

We link to the relevant course and regulatory sources in this guide. Check those sources for current requirements, and confirm course availability, delivery, fees and entry requirements with us before enrolling.

Source records and further guidance

We link the unit records and regulator guidance relevant to this page below. Check the current source before making an enrolment, licensing or employment decision.

SIT30821 Certificate III in Commercial Cookery

SITXFSA005 Use hygienic practices for food safety

SITXFSA006 Participate in safe food handling practices

SITXCCS014 Provide service to customers

SITHCCC026 Package prepared foodstuffs

Food Safety Supervisor certificate requirements (New South Wales)

Food Standards Code — Standards 3.2.2 and 3.2.2A (food safety practices and food safety management tools)

Hospitality Industry (General) Award 2020 (MA000009)

Restaurant Industry Award 2020 (MA000119)

Does food safety responsibility end when a courier collects the order?

No. Temperature control and safe handling obligations apply to the food the business supplies, including the condition it is in when handed over. Packaging and holding practices form part of the food safety system, and transport under temperature control is one of the record types category one businesses must be able to substantiate.

Is my restaurant category one or category two?

If it processes unpackaged potentially hazardous food into food that is both potentially hazardous and ready to eat, it is category one. A restaurant with a kitchen is category one. Category two is retail sale of ready-to-eat food the business did not make.

Which food safety records does delivery add?

In practice three: cooling and reheating within specified timeframes, display under temperature control for food staged for collection, and transport under temperature control. All must be kept for 3 months and be accessible at the premises.

Are there actual units for packaging and transporting food?

Yes. SITXFSA007 Transport and store food and SITHCCC026 Package prepared foodstuffs, which has SITXFSA005 as a prerequisite. SITHCCC032 and SITHCCC033 cover cook-chill, cook-freeze and re-thermalisation. All sit in the Group A electives of SIT30821.

What does SITXFSA006 cover that SITXFSA005 does not?

The whole system. SITXFSA006 requires controlling food hazards at nine critical control points, including packaging and transporting, plus procedures to calibrate a temperature probe. SITXFSA005 is personal hygiene, assessed across at least three occasions each for hand-washing, uniform and PPE use, personal health and hygiene practices, and hygienic food service.

Can Complete Hospitality Training issue a NSW Food Safety Supervisor certificate?

No. New South Wales requires a NSW Food Authority approved provider, and we are not on that list. In that state an approved RTO issues two separate documents, and the national Statement of Attainment alone is not enough.

Does my Food Safety Supervisor need to be on site for delivery service?

They must be reasonably available, meaning on site or easily contacted, for example by phone, and must hold a certificate issued within the immediately preceding five years. A late-night delivery-only shift with nobody contactable would not satisfy that.

Does going delivery-only change which award applies?

It might. MA000003 covers food sold primarily to be consumed away from the point of sale, and expressly excludes venues providing primarily a sit-down service. A restaurant with tables that also delivers is still primarily sit-down; a delivery-only kitchen is a different case. Answer it rather than assuming, because the classification consequences are real.

If we move to a fast food format, do our qualified cooks keep the Level 4 floor?

No. The Level 4 floor exists under MA000009, MA000119 and MA000058, but MA000003 has no equivalent provision. A cook who held a Level 4 minimum in your restaurant does not carry it into a food-court or delivery-only operation covered by the fast food award.

Can a Certificate III reach a tradesperson grade?

Under MA000009, yes. Level 4 is that award's reference point and is attached to cook (tradesperson) grade 3, and the cook stream reaches grade 3 by apprenticeship, trade test or the appropriate level of training — so a relevant Certificate III used at work is a route to that grade without serving an apprenticeship. Do not assume the same grade names under MA000119 or MA000058; each has its own classification schedule.

Our head cook has the experience but no certificate. Is there another route?

Under MA000009 clause 2, limb (b): assessment by a qualified skills assessor as having skills at least equivalent to the training program. Limb (c), three months in the classification, is anchored to 30 June 2010 and is closed, so it is not a rolling test and cannot be newly satisfied.

Should the whole menu go on a delivery platform?

Usually not. Items that lose their character in transit damage the venue's reputation more than the order is worth, and a shorter menu is easier to run alongside dine-in service.

Is a venue's online menu held to the same accuracy expectations as a printed one?

Yes, and arguably higher, because the customer often orders without the chance to ask a question. Allergen and dietary information must reflect current kitchen practice.

Who should decide whether to adopt a platform?

Whoever holds the operational competency. SITXMGT004 requires supervisors to consult colleagues about improvements including new technologies, and then to take follow-up action to monitor whether the solution worked. It is a consulted decision with a review date, not an announcement.

How fast should we answer an online order enquiry?

Whatever your venue has defined as its designated response time. SITXCCS014 assesses communication against that standard, which means a venue that has never set one cannot hold anyone to it.

Is there a short course for the digital side rather than a full qualification?

Our scope carries the SITSS00088 Online Engagement for Small Business skill set. A skill set is a defined group of units and each unit completed still produces a Statement of Attainment. Ask which are currently scheduled.