

Technical Chef explained:

I am delighted to advise, while I was overseas in August - September eight more chefs were inducted by the council to the Australian Institute of TechnicalChefs.

This means that eight more senior chefs understand the need to lift industry standards and conditions, follow codes of practice and show professional leadership.

The concept of a professional chef's registration institute continues to roll out across the Australian Commercial Cookery Community by introducing a protected image for chefs at the professional level.



The new age definition of “**professional chef**”, or an accredited AITC member, otherwise conversationally known as “**Tchef**” comes from its protected logo used by accredited members. Accredited members must also be identified on the AITC website with their registered number.

Australia has over the past few years inherited a “**chef**” **identity crisis**. The title “chef” has lost a lot of its original purpose to describe a cookery expert, who is also a supervisor, administrator, has leadership qualities with the values, beliefs and standards at a higher “professional – level”.

The industry and community has grown to misinterpret exactly what the title “**professional chef**” **describes and represents**.

There is unfortunately a common misplaced belief that only a paper qualification is required to certify a person as a “professional chef” and is experienced at the professional-level. **This is not so; a qualification only certifies one has proven competencies required to commercially perform on the job.**

A culinary certificate is an asset one must have to independently verify the holder has the proven competencies. However, there is a **critical second level of personal development** required to validate a chef at the professional-level.



To be acknowledged at the **professional level** chef, a person needs two characteristics:

- **Proven competencies** - Issued by a formal recognised training Institute
- **Combined with**
- **Verified honourable mindset and sufficient experience.** (Defined as “attitude”) - issued by peers

Competencies are usually learnt in a formal training program, or even in some rare cases from substantial experience working with a professional chef; however this still needs documented independent verification. (Official mechanisms are available for this need).



Attitude is a maturing phase that evolves with practical experience, this step is when a qualified chef comes to understand the need to comply with codes of conduct, and, is: courteous, creative, emotionally stable, ethical, honest, maintains standards, honourable beliefs and habits, has a positive outlook and is substantially experienced. This step advances a cook to a professional – level chef (At the chartered level)

What is the difference? Competency is the ability to prepare something efficiently and technically correct, however attitude at work can determine the quality of your professional relationships, affect your productivity level and determine your overall success, including having an impact on factors such as potential pay raises and promotion.



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Attitude is one of the most defining factors in the workplace; therefore a professional chef is a professional cook with attitude and an accredited Tchef is an independent endorsement of the status of a professional cook who is a professional chef.

The traditional learning steps in a commercial kitchen were basically: kitchen assistant, commis cook, and chefs. “Chefs” were essentially titled: “Chef de partie”- “Sous Chef” – “Chef de Cuisine”) and the traditional model defined ones experience and status.

Inevitably and constantly Industrial practices change, the meaning of words change, and community perceptions of a definition of a title change, thus evolution has gradually merged all three traditional stages of development have merged into one common title “chef”

This evolutionary merging results from many influences including training, weakened curriculum, media, marketing hype and has led to the current diluted industrial conditions.



Unfortunately the title “chef” has evolved to be seen by the community, as anyone who is fully qualified or is semi - skilled in cookery. The modern chef does not need to show they have fully completed their development steps and particularly do not need to prove their cookery experience or demonstrate a mature professional attitude.

A person with a cookery qualification is a “professional cook”; in contemporary terms known as a chef. A “professional chef” is a very different level of skill and responsibility. Essentially a professional chef needs more than just cookery competencies.



For the accurate information for employers, colleagues and society in general, there is a need to identify chefs who have achieved both cookery competences at trade level and developed a professional attitude towards their career. This is achieved by separating chefs who may be qualified or semi qualified, from the professional - level chef who has fully achieved a professional - level in experience and practice.

To clarify the current community understanding of a professional-level chef, TChef (A chartered level of chef) has emerged as a peer driven organisation that accredits chefs based on evidence of their competency and additionally confirms their mature professional development, attitude and status.



Members are bound by strict codes of conduct by adding a finishing touch to a qualification and confirms the professional as a leader who operates at minimum agreed standards.

As “chef” nor “professional-chef” is a legally protected name, **anyone may call themselves – Chef- Executive Chef - Master Chef or any other title** suggesting they are a chef (as unfortunately is their right) TChef offers an effective mechanism that separates genuine professionals based on evidence and from unconfirmed claims to be a chef.

Actions speak louder than words, particularly in an environment where anyone can claim to be a professional chef. It’s not what a chef says who they are! The new way forward is to see what a chef does to prove who they are.

We challenge you to become a TChef and be completely acknowledged as a fully sanctioned professional chef. We strongly suggest a visit to the AITC website to see chefs who support the TChef mission and start your application today.