

Job title: Category Technical Manager - Ambient Grocery & Frozen

Core information

Location: Bracknell head office ▾	Lines of business or shared capability area:
Reports to: Head of Technical	
People Management: Yes ▾	
Assignment Management: Yes ▾	
Partnership Level: Partnership level 5 ▾	Manager's Partnership level: Partnership level 4 ▾
Number of direct reports: N/A	Partnership level(s) of direct reports: Partnership level 6 ▾

About the John Lewis Partnership

The Partnership is the UK's largest employee-owned business and home to our two well-loved retail brands – John Lewis and Waitrose, as well as expanding into new areas beyond retail.

We aren't an ordinary business, though. The Partnership is different because everyone who works here isn't just an employee. We are Partners, with a shared responsibility for our success, and we share the rewards when we're successful.

Everything we do is powered by our unique Purpose: **Working in Partnership for a happier world.** Our Purpose inspires our principles, drives our decisions and acts as our guide, so that everything we do contributes to Happier People, Happier Business and a Happier World.

Critical purpose of the role

Responsible for leading a team of expert Technical Managers and Technologists in the technical management of a defined range of new and existing Waitrose products and their manufacture (at external manufacturers and/or farms) to ensure the quality, safety, legality and compliance to relevant brand standards and provenance of those products and their components.

- To manage and deliver product development programmes; to secure and develop the brand reputation of Waitrose
- To identify and implement within the department and supply chain, technical innovation to drive improved business efficiency and growth
- To develop and implement technical and sourcing standards that maintain and enhance the Waitrose and Partners Brand reputation
- Lead and manage a team of Technical Managers and Technologists to reach their full potential and to be a role model for our Partnership values
- Facilitate cross functional working across category PODs, demonstrating appropriate stakeholder engagement

Through your Profession you will have the opportunity to develop and stretch personally and professionally to achieve your potential.

The Partnership has adopted a hybrid working approach with agile and flexible working practices, meaning you'll be able to work a mixture between the office, supply base and home based upon your personal needs whilst balancing the needs of the business. The expectation is that there will be 3 days per week in the office, supplier visits as required.

Primary Outcomes & Accountabilities

Commercial Delivery

- Lead and develop the technical relationship with Waitrose suppliers across a category
- Lead team to maintain Waitrose Product Pathway content accuracy

Matrix Working

Working with dotted lines and shared KPIs to ensure Category Pod (Buying, Brand Development, Space and Value and Supply Chain) delivers its

- indirect Shared KPIs in line with Waitrose Quality and Technical and relevant brand standards
- Liaise directly with the Ethical & Sustainability team to deliver the Ethical & Sustainability Strategy for the area with the Category Pod
- Manage supplier performance against Waitrose Quality and Technical and relevant brand standards
- Manage technical elements of New Product Development (NPD) programmes and Product Tender programmes for the category alongside other Managers, Product Technology, Buying and Brand Development functions
- Work with the Brand Innovation and Strategy & Change teams to identify opportunities for technical innovation in product ranges and supply chains to create growth and efficiency, and improve brand equity

Commercial Sustainability

- Ensure Joint Business Plans and Category Plans are balanced and sustainable

Policy & Compliance

- Lead team and suppliers to meet and exceed technical, quality and ethical standards
- In collaboration with Regulation, Policy & Compliance, Ethical & Sustainability team and other relevant teams, continually review and identify areas of risk and opportunity to develop and implement appropriate technical, legal and brand strategies, policies and standards
- Team maintain records and data to support legal due diligence

Leadership

- Lead and manage a team of Technical Managers and Technologists using Partnership Values to develop their potential and deliver the Waitrose Quality and Technical Strategy
- To facilitate efficient and effective collaborative working within a Category Pod
- Crisis management to protect brand reputation and minimise risk to customers including leading product

Measures of success

- Product Quality: ratings and reviews & customer complaints %
- Supplier compliance to Waitrose Technical and Brand standards
- On time compliance to NPD critical path
- Compliance of products to specification
- Records and data available to
 - support legal due diligence
 - requirements
- Ethical & Sustainable measures

Indirect

- Gross sales growth
- Market share
- Core margin %
- Total wastage
- Customer metric on distinctiveness
- NPD Hurdle rate
- Adherence to NPD process

Partner

- Sought and delivered Feedback for self and others; immediate, planned 1 to 1, 360 Degree, ARP
- Completion of all legal compliance documentation on Workday
- Quality & strength of talent pool; consistent line of communication to resource planning function, enabling succession planning and career development for Partners



incidents for branded and own label lines, with follow up activity for own label incidents

Skills

- People management & Building Effective Teams
- Implementation of Business Strategy
- Leading Change
- Prioritisation
- Influencing & Negotiating

Qualifications & Experience (where applicable)

Essential

- Relevant Food Science degree or equivalent formal qualification
- HACCP level 3 and Lead Auditor training
- Relevant specialist training e.g allergens, microbiology, pesticide management, cosmetics
- Extensive technical experience within the food or non food industry and practiced within the last 2 years
- Recent experience in line management of a team, and driving improvement through data driven insights

Desirable

- Good commercial understanding

Version	Created/updated by	Date
	<i>S Ronald</i>	<i>14/06/2026</i>