

The Scottish Local Authority

# COOK OF THE YEAR AWARD 2025

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Participation Pack

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# NATIONAL CHAIR OF ASSIST FM'S LETTER

**The Local Authority Cook of the Year is back for 2025! We are on the hunt for the best of the best to fly the flag for Local Authority Caterers.**

We are very grateful to our sponsor, **Brakes** for their support of our organisation and for their continued sponsorship.

The winning dishes from this competition will also be featured at our Annual Conference in May 2025 hosted by the Crowne Plaza Glasgow. The competition itself will be judged based on the best starter, main course and dessert on the day at The Cook School Scotland.

The winning individuals will then have the opportunity to cook alongside the Crowne Plaza Chefs and produce their dishes for the Conference Gala Dinner. The Scottish Local Authority Cook of the Year Working Group has aimed to keep the mechanics of the competition as straightforward as possible and has enlisted the help of relevant experts when refining the judging criteria. We would urge you to read all of the competition rules and judging criteria carefully as some changes have been made to ensure a consistent approach throughout every stage of the competition.

The cook must demonstrate in their menu sustainability and the use of economically responsible purchasing.

Each cook must submit a three-course meal which should be based around your everyday school menu and the winning entries will be taken forward and produced and cooked by the award-winning chefs for the ASSIST FM dinner in May at the Famous Crowne Plaza in Glasgow.

The criteria for the competition: -

**Starter** – This should show elements that children and young adults would enjoy and would be able to be served in a school setting

**Main Course** – Sustainability and the use of quality ingredients to showcase your dish

**Dessert** – Seasonal dish that makes good use of the Scottish larder

There will be a winner for the best starter, best main course and best dessert. Then the overall winner will have their menu presented at the awards dinner as mentioned above.

We want to support all nominees in their journey to the cook school - our head judge Donald McInnes would be happy to discuss any ideas you have ahead of your submission.



*Nicky*

**NICKY JOINER,**  
National Chair,  
Assist FM









# COMPETITION PROCEDURE

## STAGE 1

Complete the registration form (**Form 1**) to notify ASSIST FM via Melanie Arthur of your intention to participate by Friday 13th December 2024.

## STAGE 2

Local authority internal heats (where necessary - this is if you have multiple entrants in your local authority area - for the ASSIST FM Competition only one member of staff can be nominated from each local authority).

## STAGE 3

Entrant details (**Form 2**) and recipes (**Form 3**) for all entries to Melanie Arthur by close of business on Friday 24th January 2025.

## STAGE 4

Scottish Local Authority Cook of the Year Semi-Finals/Final at Cook School Scotland (Date TBC) The top 3 dishes will be announced and will go forward to produce their dish at the Annual Conference Gala Dinner in May 2025.

## STAGE 5

The winner of the Scottish Local Authority School Cook of the Year will be announced at the ASSIST FM Conference Gala Dinner in May 2025.

# COMPETITOR RULES

1. The competition is open to all catering staff within your local authority.
2. Contestants may work in more than one kitchen.
3. Prepare, cook and serve two plated portions of a starter, main course and dessert with the starter being a pre-plated starter and the dessert being a cold-served dessert. Vegan or Vegetarian options may be used.
4. Each dish should complement one another.
5. The three courses should be balanced and incorporate seasonal, local or Scottish produce.
6. Each course should be able to be adapted to increased volume for a dining experience and large corporate events.
7. Competitors can show their skill set and flare and are asked to produce a typed full menu of the plates being served with a description of ingredients, origin, and locality if using Scottish or local, and a full list of allergens.
8. The final will be held in Cook School Scotland and the winning starter, main course and dessert will be chosen by the judges and be represented at the ASSIST FM Conference in May 2025.
9. The winning chef/chefs will have the opportunity to cook alongside the chefs in the Crowne Plaza Glasgow and produce their dishes for the evening conference dinner.
10. The budget is set by the Crowne Plaza Glasgow.
11. All entry forms must be fully completed which must include detailed recipes with full methodology and accurate food costs for each stage of the competition.
12. Internal heats can take place within each Local Authority; finalists will be short listed to a maximum of 10 pairs.
13. Entrants must bring their own knives, light equipment or specialist items, and uniform or chef whites.
14. 4 hours will be allocated for the competition with 1 hour of prep time beforehand.
15. The starters, main and dessert will be presented on the hour with 15/20 minutes intervals between to allow judging and service to take place.
16. The judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into during the competition.
17. Judges may ask questions during preparation over the course of the competition.











# JUDGING RULES

For **Stages 4** and **5**, the judges will be appointed by ASSIST FM. For any queries or advice contact Donald McInnes: [Donald.McInnes@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:Donald.McInnes@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

**The criteria for marking will be based on the following:**

## PRESENTATION

- Visually appealing, original and creative
  - Easily adapted and produced for the Conference Gala Dinner
- 

## TASTE

- Correct seasoning
  - Good combination of flavours and texture
- 

## PRACTICAL

- Mass production suitability - how would the dishes be replicated on a large scale
  - Catering, technical and cooking skills - method followed
  - Good hygiene practices e.g. Temperature controls, kitchen hygiene
- 

## CREATIVITY

- Originality of dishes

The Scottish Local Authority

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**CONTACT:**

Melanie Arthur

[Melanie.Arthur@fife.gov.uk](mailto:Melanie.Arthur@fife.gov.uk)