

ALLIANCE FOR BAKERY STUDENTS AND TRAINEES



#ABSTConference2026 Announcement

It is with great regret that the ABST Committee has made the difficult decision to postpone the 2026 Annual ABST Conference.

As you know, the ABST is a not-for-profit organisation that exists to support education, professional development, and the future of the bakery industry. The conference has always provided an important platform for students, lecturers, colleges, and industry professionals to come together to share knowledge, build connections, and celebrate emerging talent within the sector.

Over recent years, the Committee has worked hard to respond positively to feedback received from both lecturers and students. In recognition of the pressures on time and budgets, we reduced ticket prices and condensed the conference into a two-day format to minimise disruption to weekends and make attendance more accessible for everyone involved. Despite these efforts, participation, competition entries, and overall engagement have continued to decline.

While we fully appreciate the many challenges currently facing educational institutions, it has become increasingly apparent that the value and importance of the ABST Conference is not always being fully communicated to students as part of their professional development and future opportunities within the bakery industry. The conference offers students invaluable exposure to the wider industry, networking opportunities with leading employers and professionals, and the chance to showcase their skills and passion for the craft. We rely heavily on lecturers and colleges to encourage students to engage with these opportunities and to reinforce the long-term benefits that involvement in ABST can provide.

In addition, the viability of the conference depends greatly on early commitment from colleges and attendees. As costs continue to rise year on year, timely registrations and confirmations are essential to allow the Committee to plan responsibly and meet the financial commitments required by venues and suppliers. Unfortunately, the level and timing of engagement this year has left us unable to deliver the event to the standard expected.

The ABST Committee is made up entirely of volunteers who dedicate a significant amount of time and effort to ensure the conference remains a meaningful and worthwhile experience for all attendees. It is therefore particularly saddening that, for the first time in the organisation's 100-year history, we have had to make this decision.

Although the conference will not take place in 2026, the ABST Committee remains fully committed to supporting students throughout the year. We will continue to provide opportunities for industry engagement, networking, educational events, and professional development wherever possible, as we remain passionate about encouraging and supporting the next generation of bakery professionals.

We are currently working with the venue to transfer arrangements to 2027 and remain hopeful that the conference will return next year stronger than ever. However, this will require renewed support, early commitment, and active encouragement from colleges, lecturers, students, and the wider bakery community.

We would like to thank all colleges and students who have already booked and paid for this year's event. Your commitment and support are greatly appreciated. We will be contacting you over the coming days with details regarding the refund process.

The conference has always provided a pivotal platform for students, colleges, and industry to come together to share knowledge, build connections, and celebrate emerging talent within the sector. Many successful careers have been born from networking opportunities and introductions made at the ABST Conference, making this postponement all the more disappointing for everyone involved.

We sincerely appreciate the continued support of everyone who has championed ABST over the years and very much hope to welcome you back for ABST 2027.

Best wishes,

Sam White

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