

New Zealand Cake Decorators
Competition 2026
Rules and Guidelines for Competitors

Entries:

- Entry forms must be received by 1 April 2026.
- Competitors may enter only one item per class.
- All entries must be new work for this competition.
- Entries to be staged between 10.00am and 12 noon on Friday 15 May 2026.
Any late entries are at the discretion of, and must be approved by the organising committee.
If possible, make sure your entry is covered.
- Entries can only be removed after the conference closing ceremony on Sunday 17 May 2026.

Schedule:

This schedule is to be read in conjunction with the details for each section:

- All work must be that of the competitor only.
- Only edible products to be used as decoration for Celebration and Anything Goes cakes e.g. rice paper, polenta, gelatine, coconut, cachous, piping gel etc.
- Internal supports are permitted in all classes but must be noted on the Competition Information Sheet
- Cold Porcelain work is only accepted in the Cold Porcelain class/s in the Flower section and Floral Spray section.
- Cake dummies may be used but entry must be achievable in real cake. Real cakes will not be cut.
- Wire must not be inserted directly into any cake – a flower pick or substitute is acceptable. Note on Conference Information Sheet to advise judges of use.
- Base area of both Celebration and Anything Goes Cake must be larger than 27cm x 27cm. There is no maximum base or height restriction.
- Cakes may be covered in edible medium of competitors choice e.g. sugar paste, ganache, buttercream etc.
- Competition Information Sheet can be found on the website www.nzcakeguild.org.nz, please fill in prior to arrival (or ask your steward to help you on arrival if unsure).

Judging:

- Judging will start at 12.30pm. Late entries will only be accepted at the discretion of the organisers.
- To assist competitors, it is advisable to read the NZCDG Inc Judges Manual. Each branch has a copy, and it is available on our website.
- The stewards make every effort to ensure your entry is to schedule prior to judging. Please make sure you have read and re-read the schedule.
- The judge's decision shall be final, and no correspondence will be entered into.
- The entry receiving the highest points in each section will receive the appropriate trophy/shield.

General:

- Whilst all reasonable care will be taken of competitors' entries, the organisers cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage which may occur.
- The organisers reserve the right to use any photographs taken during the exhibition.
- No entry shall display any sign or motif which indicates an ownership origin. At the completion of the judging, ownership of an entry will be displayed.
- It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure their entries are collected at the closure of conference on Sunday 17 May. Any unclaimed entries will be removed from the venue and no responsibility for the security of the items will be taken.

Definitions:

To assist you, below are some definitions you may find useful to help clarify the schedule. Please do not hesitate to ask the competition organisers if you need further clarification.

Sugar Paste: edible paste of competitor choice.

Cold Porcelain: nonedible paste of competitor choice.

Dummies: the use of an inedible medium to mimic a real-life cake. Polystyrene is commonly used; oasis and tuna cans (empty!) have also been used. Whatever you use it must be achievable in real-life cake (or rice krispie).

Cleats: may be a set of runners under the board or other suitable material used to raise the base board enabling ease of handling and improve presentation. May be painted, covered with material or cake board paper. Any cleats should not be obvious. Cleats are not required when using a cake stand.

In Moderation: the limiting, controlling, or restricting of something so that it becomes or remains moderate, minimal and not dominating. If in doubt, please contact the organisers.

Mould/Mold: where the medium is pressed or poured into a former and released to reveal a ready-made decoration.

NAS – Not As Schedule: where an entry has been deemed as not following the schedule. Often this is due to the entry not fitting within the stated exhibit area and missing or incorrect requirements etc. You will be given an opportunity to rectify the issue but will still need to have staged your entry by the close off time.

Tips:

- Be careful of fingerprints, glue marks, ensure even thickness of cake covering and watch for pencil or tool marks.
- Make sure your work is clean.
- If height restriction applies, this is measured from the table upwards.
- Remember, your entry will be viewed from every angle

Schedule Explanations and Tips Conference Flower

Lisianthus Flower

(Sugar Paste and Cold Porcelain)

- Any variety.
- Stem must be between 20cm and 25cm in length from the base of the calyx.
- Flower will be displayed in a supplied stand.

Celebration Cake

- A celebration cake for a wedding.
- Must have a monogram.
- Base size must be larger than 27cm x 27cm, there is no maximum base or height restriction.
- Can have single or multi tiers, must be achievable in real cake.
- All decorations including toppers must be handcrafted and edible.
- Handwork only – no manufactured ornaments permitted.
- Moderate use of tulle, ribbon, wire, braid, cotton thread, raffia and stamens are permitted.
- Cake covering is competitor's choice as long as it's edible. Cleats must be used.

Anything Goes Cake

- Entry is design of competitor's choice suitable as a 'groom's cake'.
- Base size must be larger than 27cm x 27cm, there is no maximum base or height restriction.
- Can have single or multi tiers, carved etc, must be achievable in real cake.
- All decorations including toppers must be handcrafted and edible.
 - Cleats must be used.
- Moderate use of tulle, ribbon, wire, braid, cotton thread, raffia and stamens are permitted.
- Cake covering is competitor's choice as long as it's edible.

Floral Spray

(Sugar Paste and Cold Porcelain)

- A spray suitable to place on a hat or fascinator.
- Must contain handmade feather or feathers. All other foliage, flowers and other natural plant materials (e.g. berries, seedpods, nuts etc) to be of competitors choice. Colour/s of competitor's choice.
- All to be made from sugar paste or cold porcelain.
- Colour/s of competitor's choice.
- To be displayed on a suitable hat or fascinator. Must be attached securely. Hat/fascinator will not be judged but must compliment spray. No size restriction. Hat/fascinator can be displayed on a stand of competitor's choice or directly on the table.