

**Name: Kyle Jackson**  
**Course studied: Levels 1-3**  
**Chef de partie at the Cock and Bull**

Award winning chef Kyle Jackson (22) started his culinary journey in 2012, applying for the Introduction to Professional Cookery course after leaving Bridge of Don Academy, where he discovered his passion for food. Three years later, Kyle had completed all levels of his qualification and was even named Student of the Year 2015.

Now, Kyle is working as a chef de partie at Balmedie's Cock and Bull restaurant, and he credits North East Scotland College as being a big part in helping him achieve success.

"My college career has played quite a big part in the preparation for the professional kitchen," he said.

"The lecturers at college all want the best for you. They want you to do your best and do well and succeed. I know I still look back on my time at college, especially when I'm in work, and I think, 'Oh, we did that at college,' or 'I was shown how to make that this way.' I'd really like to just thank each and every one of the lecturers that helped me in my career."

Alongside his studying, Kyle worked as a chef at the Rox Hotel in Aberdeen, where he honed his skills in the kitchen, before moving on to work in three more of the city's most popular restaurants.

"I've been lucky in that I've had the opportunity to work with several of the best chefs in Aberdeen," he said. "I spent a little over a year and a half at the Rox Hotel, working with good chefs, learning a lot, being able to take part in competitions, and succeed in my career."

"I then spent time working at the prestigious Chester Hotel IX restaurant, which is highly decorated with two AA Rosettes, working with great chefs, producing exceptional food."

Kyle went on to join the kitchen team at Granite Park, where he was presented with some brilliant opportunities – including a chance to enter the North East Scotland Seafood Chef of the Year 2016 competition, which he went on to win with a menu of pan seared cod, wild garlic and langoustine tortellini, truffle pea puree, asparagus and samphire, and a classic lemon beurre blanc sauce.

"I practiced a lot for the competition, making sure I could do all the elements of the meal in the one hour time slot. It's not easy making fresh egg pasta, whilst filleting a whole cod and preparing fresh langoustines, but I managed!" he said.

The competition finals were held in the NESCol training restaurant, where Kyle competed with seven other chefs. Their food was judged by renowned members of the Federation of Chefs Scotland: Joe Queen, David Littlewood (Kildrummy Inn) and the late Alan Gibb, executive chef of the Gleneagles Hotel.

Recently Kyle moved to the Cock and Bull, where he was encouraged to enter more competitions, including North East Scotland Pastry Chef of the Year, which he won in June 2018.

He hopes to continue his success as a chef in the North East of Scotland. His advice to anyone hoping to study professional cookery and work in the industry is this:

"My advice is to work hard. Working as a chef is no walk in the park, no nine to five, Monday to Friday job. The hours are long, strenuous and demanding. But if you knuckle down, do the work and get on with it, it can be very rewarding.

"Without college, I wouldn't be half the chef or the man that I am today! If you are looking to apply to the professional cookery courses, if you truly have a passion and drive to become a chef, then I would highly recommend it!"

