



## National Unit specification: general information

**Unit title:** Stringed Instruments: Finishing (SCQF level 6)

**Unit code:** H1Y1 12

**Superclass:** LJ

**Publication date:** September 2012

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 02

### Summary

This enables candidates to identify and describe finishes used in the instrument making industry, and apply a finish to a stringed musical instrument. Candidates will prepare an instrument surface for varnishing (including grain filling where necessary), apply varnish, level the surface and burnish the varnished surface to a matt or gloss finish. They will also gain an understanding of the tools and materials required to undertake the task and of the safety requirements applicable to preparing and varnishing an instrument. Application techniques such as spraying and French polishing will be taught together with the health and safety requirements associated with finishing.

This is an optional Unit within the National Certificate in Stringed Musical Instrument Making and Repair at SCQF level 6 but can also be taken as a freestanding Unit.

### Outcomes

- 1 Identify instrument finishes
- 2 Describe instrument finishes
- 3 Varnish an instrument surface

### Recommended entry

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ *Stringed Instruments: Finishing (SCQF level 5)*

## General information (cont)

**Unit title:** Stringed Instruments: Finishing (SCQF level 6)

### Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 6: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6\*)

*\*SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

### Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following Core Skills component:

Complete Core Skill                      None

Core Skill component                      Critical Thinking at SCQF level 5

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

## **National Unit specification: statement of standards**

### **Unit title:** Stringed Instruments: Finishing (SCQF level 6)

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

#### **Outcome 1**

Identify instrument finishes.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) The association between particular instrument finishes and the period historically in which they were utilised is identified.
- (b) Finishes are correctly identified in relation to different types of stringed instrument.

#### **Outcome 2**

Describe instrument finishes.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Compatible solvents are correctly described for different finishes.
- (b) Varnish application processes are correctly described for different finishes.
- (c) Compatibility between different varnishes is accurately described.

#### **Outcome 3**

Varnish an instrument surface.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) An instrument surface is correctly prepared for varnishing.
- (b) Varnish is applied using an appropriate technique.
- (c) The varnish surface is polished to an appropriate finish.
- (d) Appropriate tools and materials are used in the correct manner to suit each task whilst adhering to safety regulations and guidelines.

## National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

**Unit title:** Stringed Instruments: Finishing (SCQF level 6)

### Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Product and Performance evidence produced under supervised conditions is required to demonstrate that the candidates have achieved all of the Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Written and/or oral evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates can identify when the following finishes are likely to have been used historically and which type of instrument they would have been used on:

- ◆ Acid catalyst lacquer
- ◆ Cellulose Lacquer
- ◆ Water borne lacquer
- ◆ Spirit varnish
- ◆ Oil varnish
- ◆ Wax
- ◆ Oil
- ◆ Polyurethane
- ◆ Acrylic lacquer

Written and/or oral evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates can describe the compatible solvents, the methods of application and the compatibility with each other, for the following finishes:

- ◆ Acid catalyst lacquer
- ◆ Cellulose Lacquer
- ◆ Water borne lacquer
- ◆ Spirit varnish
- ◆ Oil varnish
- ◆ Oil

Product evidence is required for Outcome 3 in the form of an instrument surface that has been prepared, varnished and burnished to a standard acceptable for school instruments.

Performance evidence will be required to demonstrate that:

- ◆ Candidates use the appropriate tools and materials in the correct manner to suit each task
- ◆ Candidates adhere to health and safety regulations and guidelines, with regard to the workshop environment and use of hand-tools and the use and disposal of varnishing materials

## National Unit specification: support notes

### Unit title: Stringed Instruments: Finishing (SCQF level 6)

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

### Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

Candidates completing this Unit will be working towards aspects of the following National Occupational Standards (NOS) from Creative and Cultural Skills:

- ◆ Craft: CR13 Select and use techniques, materials, tools and equipment for craft
- ◆ Craft: CR14 Prepare and maintain materials, tools and equipment for craft
- ◆ Craft: CR15 Use safe working practices and spaces for craft
- ◆ Craft: CR16 Complete the craft making process
- ◆ Craft: CR17 Document and record craft work and work practice
- ◆ Craft: CR51 Maintain and repair craft work
- ◆ Craft: CR52 Restore, conserve and reconstruct work in craft
- ◆ Craft: CR56 Make sure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety

This is an optional Unit within the National Certificate in Musical Instrument Making and Repair at SCQF level 6, but is also available as a freestanding Unit.

Candidates should gain knowledge and understanding in the identification of the following finishes both in terms of their use historically and their association with specific types of instrument:

- ◆ Acid catalyst lacquer
- ◆ Cellulose lacquer
- ◆ Water borne lacquer
- ◆ Spirit varnish
- ◆ Oil varnish
- ◆ Wax
- ◆ Oil
- ◆ Polyurethane
- ◆ Acrylic lacquer

The following solvents and finishes should be discussed in terms of compatibility and methods of application:

- ◆ Acid catalyst lacquer/acid catalyst thinners
- ◆ Cellulose lacquer/cellulose thinners
- ◆ Water borne lacquer/water
- ◆ Spirit varnish/methylated spirit
- ◆ Oil varnish/turpentine
- ◆ Oil/turpentine

## National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Stringed Instruments: Finishing (SCQF level 6)

In this Unit candidates are required to prepare, varnish and burnish an instrument surface. They will learn about wood preparation including how to sharpen and use a cabinet scraper. The different types of abrasive material available and the methods used to apply, level and burnish varnish can also be discussed.

Information regarding the aging and/or tinting of timbers through the use of stains, chemicals and ultra violet light cabinets should be discussed, also techniques relating to sprayed finishes.

One of the following finishes is likely to be used and applied with either a brush, French polishing pad (rubber) or spray gun:

- ◆ spirit varnish
- ◆ oil varnish
- ◆ oil finish
- ◆ water based lacquer
- ◆ cellulose lacquer

Candidates should be encouraged to use a similar finish and method of application on their own instrument as would be used on commercial instruments, eg steel strung guitars usually have a spray lacquer finish, violins usually have a brushed spirit or oil varnish finish, etc.

Where candidates have already achieved *Stringed Instruments: Finishing (SCQF level 5)* they could be encouraged to try an alternative finish or method of application to that previously used. Where candidates elect to use the same varnish and application technique as at SCQF level 5, they should be expected to achieve a more professional result in a shorter time and with less tutor input.

Workshop health and safety guidelines should be covered with regard to the workshop environment and to preparation and application of varnishes and the storage and disposal of materials. Candidates are expected to adhere to these at all times.

### Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

Initial tutor input will be required to identify methods, materials and tools used for finishing an instrument. Tutor input will also be required to highlight health and safety issues and practices associated with the use and disposal of materials used.

Practical demonstrations in the workshop covering the preparation of surfaces and application and burnishing of varnish should be followed by individual practical work to prepare, varnish and burnish an instrument surface.

## National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Stringed Instruments: Finishing (SCQF level 6)

### Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

Written and/or oral evidence could comprise be a test or short assignment to identify and describe finishes, their relevant solvents, methods of application and compatibility with each other.

The Unit will ideally be assessed holistically via an instrument surface that has been prepared, varnished and burnished.

Evidence of practical work as detailed in the Performance Criteria, may be recorded by the assessor on an observation checklist, supported by product evidence in the form of a finished instrument surface.

### Opportunities for the use of e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

### Opportunities for developing Core Skills

In this Unit candidates will identify and describe finishes used in the instrument making industry. They will also prepare, varnish and burnish an instrument surface.

Candidates will:

- ◆ read instruction material relating to finishes
- ◆ select and use tools and materials
- ◆ apply a range of techniques
- ◆ identify health and safety issues
- ◆ carry out health and safety procedures

This means that as they are doing this Unit, candidates may develop aspects of the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* and *Communication*.

This Unit has the Critical Thinking component of Problem Solving embedded in it. This means that when candidates achieve the Unit, their Core Skills profile will also be updated to show they have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 5.

## **National Unit specification: support notes (cont)**

**Unit title:** Stringed Instruments: Finishing (SCQF level 6)

### **Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs**

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements)



## History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Clarification of Outcome 1 Performance Criteria (b) on page 3.	28/09/2012

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