



National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Stringed Instruments: Fretted Instrument Setting-Up
(SCQF level 6)

Unit code: H1Y7 12

Superclass: LJ

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Summary

This Unit enables candidates to set up a fretted instrument and test it for playability. The practical work includes making a nut, saddle and fitting a set of instrument tuners and a set of strings. Candidates will gain knowledge and understanding of concepts relating to scale length, neck relief, string compensation and string height.

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

This Unit is suitable for candidates with no previous experience of stringed instrument setting up who wish to set-up a newly constructed instrument or repair an old one.

Outcomes

- 1 Make a nut.
- 2 Make a saddle.
- 3 Fit a set of tuners.
- 4 Fit a set of strings.
- 5 Tune instrument and test for playability.

Recommended entry

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have basic woodworking skills. This may be evidenced by attainment of the following qualifications or equivalent skills level:

- ◆ *Stringed Instruments: Woodworking Skills* (SCQF level 5)

General information (cont)

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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 4

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

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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

Make a nut.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Specifications for making a nut are accurately assessed.
- (b) The nut is correctly fitted into the nut slot.
- (c) The string positions and height are correctly cut.
- (d) The nut is correctly shaped.
- (e) Processes are performed using appropriate tools.
- (f) Health and safety requirements are adhered to.

Outcome 2

Make a saddle.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Specifications for making a saddle are accurately assessed.
- (b) The saddle is correctly fitted into the saddle slot.
- (c) The strings positions and height are correctly cut.
- (d) The saddle is correctly shaped.
- (e) Processes are performed using appropriate tools.
- (f) Health and safety requirements are adhered to.

Outcome 3

Fit a set of tuners.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Tuner holes are cleaned or plugged and re-drilled where necessary.
- (b) Tuners are correctly secured in place.
- (c) Processes are performed using appropriate tools.
- (d) Health and safety requirements are adhered to.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 4

Fit a set of strings.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Strings are connected correctly at the headstock.
- (b) Strings are connected correctly at the bridge or tailpiece.
- (c) Processes are performed using appropriate tools.
- (d) Health and safety requirements are adhered to.

Outcome 5

Tune instrument and test for playability.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Instrument is correctly tuned to standard pitch.
- (b) String separation at the nut and saddle is correctly tested and adjusted where necessary.
- (c) String height is correctly tested and adjusted where necessary.
- (d) String relief is correctly tested and adjusted where necessary.
- (e) String compensation is correctly tested and adjusted where necessary.
- (f) Processes are performed using appropriate tools.
- (g) Health and safety requirements are adhered to.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence Requirements for this Unit

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

A combination of product and performance evidence is required. The evidence may be gathered from more than one instrument.

Product Evidence will include the following minimum, which must be correctly fitted to a standard acceptable within the musical instrument repair industry for school instruments:

- ◆ one nut
- ◆ one saddle
- ◆ one set of tuners
- ◆ one set of strings

Performance evidence is required which demonstrates that:

- ◆ Candidates can tune an instrument to a standard pitch of A440 Hz using an appropriate tuning method
- ◆ Candidates can test an instrument set-up (nut/saddle/tuners and strings) for playability to a standard acceptable within the musical instrument repair industry for school instruments
- ◆ Candidates use the appropriate tools and machinery in the correct manner to suit each task
- ◆ Candidates adhere to health and safety regulations and guidelines which apply to the workshop environment and use of hand-tools and machinery

National Unit specification: support notes

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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 Stringed Musical Instrument Making and Repair (SCQF level 6), but can also be taken as a freestanding Unit.

Candidates will gain practical skills in fretted instrument setting-up and become acquainted with the requirements relating to correct playing action and intonation.

Candidates will become familiar with methods of adjusting neck relief and intonation. Detailed information will be given on neck relief, playing action, scale length and intonation. Information regarding correct methods of tuning instruments should be given. Workshop health and safety requirements must be adhered to.

Specialist tools such as nut files, thickness gauges and string winders can be identified. A range of materials and their suitability for making nuts and saddles may also be discussed.

Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

This is a workshop based Unit. However, there should be tutor input on the subject of instrument set-ups relating to the following:

- ◆ fitting nuts, saddles, tuners and strings
- ◆ scale length
- ◆ neck relief
- ◆ intonation
- ◆ playing action
- ◆ tuning
- ◆ new instruments
- ◆ old instruments

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Demonstrations detailing all aspects of fitting nuts, saddles, tuners and strings should be given prior to practical sessions. Specialised software can be used to produce scale tables and to test intonation and tuning.

Good examples of previously completed candidate work could be shown and/or instruments from industry presented to illustrate good practice and standards of craftsmanship.

Parameters used in industry for set-ups should be given which relate to neck relief, string height and string compensation/intonation.

This Unit may be integrated with the following Units for candidates wishing to make an instrument:

- ◆ *Stringed Instruments: Manufacture of an Instrument Neck* (SCQF level 6)
- ◆ *Stringed Instruments: Manufacture Instrument Body Components* (SCQF level 6)
- ◆ *Stringed Instruments: Assembly of Instrument Body and Neck* (SCQF level 6)

Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

After the initial set-up, formative assessment should be given to enable candidates to perform adjustments prior to any final assessment.

Product and Performance Evidence may be recorded on a checklist.

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 fit a nut, saddle, tuners, set of strings and test an instrument for playability. Candidates will:

- ◆ read instruction material relating to setting-up
- ◆ measure, mark and lay out, select and use tools
- ◆ identify health and safety issues
- ◆ use software programs

This means that as candidates are doing this Unit they may develop aspects of the Core Skills of *Communication, Numeracy, Problem Solving* and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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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 4.

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

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Core Skills Component Critical Thinking at SCQF level 4 embedded.	08/10/212

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