



What it is National Units in Conservation Masonry?

The 3 National Units in Conservation Masonry were developed by us around 12 years ago to fill the missing gap in qualifications for repair, conservation, restoration of primarily solid wall, stone (and brick) and lime mortared masonry. We had looked at the curriculum's for stonemason apprentices here in Scotland and England and saw that they only dealt with new construction in stone (e.g. stone cladding or geological wallpaper as I call it!) and cutting and dressing stone (which is fair enough) but the great big missing bit was the repair of existing stone and lime walls (usually solid walls), primarily built before 1919. Also, there was no reference to mortar work, whether re-pointing or rendering/ harling and lime washing on historic buildings.

This led us to develop these 3 National Units in Conservation Masonry which would cover the missing elements and could act as 'bolt-on' units for a time served bricklayer, stonemason etc. The Units are a combination of practical exercises and written tests to assess the competence of a candidate. We have accredited Assessors and Internal Verifiers here at Charlestown who carry out assessments of candidates work to strict tolerances. So a candidate either passes or fails, it's a simple as that. Candidates should be working in the industry 'on the tools', i.e. as contractor operatives.

What's covered in these Units?

National Unit 1

Correct proportioning of lime binders and sand to make a complete and properly mixed mortar
Basic repointing with a non-hydraulic lime mortar and pinning stones

National Unit 2

Building and pointing rubblework and brickwork
Harling a section of rubble work
Using lime grouts for wall cores
Repointing and bedding ashlar stonework

National Unit 3

Carrying out complex repairs to decayed masonry including full and part indenting of stone, surface repair of stone on moulded and flat work, applying shelter coats to weathered stone

We are the only training centre to offer the training and assessment of these National Units in the whole of Great Britain. If your operatives were successful in achieving these National Units, you could 'shout about it' that your operatives have a formal qualification, it would set you 'out from the crowd' and get more high value work!