

SSMTC02 Product Development Manager

1. Job role

TCF sub-sector	Cut and Sewn Products (Non-Garment)
Functional area	Product Design and Development
Job role	SSMTC02 Product Development Manager
Job role description	Leads and manages the end-to-end product development function for cut and sewn non-garment products within the Textile, Clothing and Footwear (TCF) industry, ensuring that products are designed, engineered, tested and delivered in alignment with customer requirements, technical specifications and regulatory standards. In the Australian TCF industry, this role applies to sectors producing non-garment sewn products such as upholstery systems, automotive interiors, defence textiles, industrial covers, architectural fabric structures, transport interiors and technical textile assemblies. The Product Development Manager is responsible for overseeing the full product lifecycle from concept development through prototyping, validation, production readiness and continuous improvement. The role integrates textile engineering, materials science, fabrication processes and system design to deliver high-performance products that meet durability, safety, environmental and functional requirements. It includes responsibility for ensuring fabrics, reinforcements, seams and assembled systems comply with relevant Australian and international standards. The Product Development Manager leads cross-functional teams including designers, engineers, technicians, production staff, quality specialists and external suppliers. The role requires strong leadership in project planning, resource allocation, technical decision-making and stakeholder engagement to ensure successful product outcomes and alignment with business objectives.
Performance expectations	- Delivering products that meet performance, quality and regulatory requirements - Managing the full product development lifecycle from concept to production - Ensuring compliance of materials, fabrics and structures with relevant standards - Coordinating cross-functional teams and development activities - Managing timelines, budgets and resource allocation

	• Driving innovation and continuous improvement in product design and processes • Maintaining traceability and technical documentation • Minimising development risks, defects and delays • Aligning product outcomes with customer and market requirements
Specialisation	Product lifecycle management, textile engineering, fabrication systems, technical textiles, standards compliance, product validation and commercialisation
Application in other TCF sectors	Automotive interiors, marine fabrication, defence systems, industrial textiles, architectural fabric structures, transport and infrastructure applications

2. Key tasks and critical work functions

Key tasks	• Managing product development projects from concept through to production • Translating customer and market requirements into technical product specifications • Overseeing design, prototyping and validation processes • Selecting and approving materials, fabrics and components • Ensuring compliance with applicable standards and regulatory requirements • Coordinating testing, certification and performance validation • Managing development timelines, budgets and resources • Collaborating with production teams to ensure manufacturability • Maintaining product documentation, specifications and design history files • Engaging with suppliers, clients and stakeholders throughout development
Critical work functions	• Ensuring products meet structural, functional and safety requirements • Maintaining alignment between design intent and final product performance • Preventing design defects and compliance failures • Supporting efficient transition from development to production • Maintaining traceability and accountability across the product lifecycle • Driving innovation while managing technical and commercial risks • Ensuring consistency and reliability of product outcomes • Supporting customer satisfaction and market competitiveness

3. Technical skills

Product development management	Planning and coordinating development activities
Textile and fabrication knowledge	Understanding non-garment sewn product construction
Material specification	Selecting fabrics, reinforcements and components
Standards compliance	Applying Australian and international standards

Testing and validation	Managing product testing and certification
Process integration	Aligning design, prototyping and production
Risk management	Identifying and mitigating technical and project risks
Documentation	Maintaining technical specifications and records

4. Generic Skills

Leadership	Managing teams and development processes
Communication	Coordinating across technical and business stakeholders
Problem solving	Resolving design and development challenges
Decision making	Making informed technical and commercial decisions
Teamwork	Working across cross-functional teams
Time management	Managing deadlines and project timelines
Adaptability	Responding to evolving requirements
Professionalism	Maintaining compliance and organisational standards

5. Emerging skills

Emerging skills	• Digital product development and PLM systems • Advanced textile composites and smart materials • Simulation and digital prototyping technologies • Sustainable product design and lifecycle analysis • Integration of smart and functional textiles • Industry 4.0 integration in product development processes
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6. VET Qualifications and Skill Sets

Entry-level preparation	MST40122 Certificate IV in Textile Design and Technology or equivalent
Advanced development	Bachelor's degree in Textile Engineering, Materials Science, Industrial Design or Mechanical Engineering

7. Job progression

Possible job progression	Product Development Coordinator → Product Development Manager → Senior Manager → Head of Product / Technical Director → Operations or Innovation Director
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8. Classification

Australian Qualifications Framework	Level 5-7
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Skill Levels	Skill Level 1-2
Open Source Classification of Occupations for Australia (OSCA)	Product Development Manager - Non-Garment TCF Sector



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