

SSMTC07 Cutting Machine Operator

1. Job role

TCF sub-sector	Cut and Sewn Products (Non-Garment)
Functional area	Textile Fabrication - Fabric Preparation and Cutting
Job role	SSMTC07 Cutting Machine Operator
Job role description	Operates manual, semi-automated and automated cutting machinery within the cut and sewn non-garment sector of the Textile, Clothing and Footwear (TCF) industry to accurately prepare materials and components for fabrication and sewing operations. This role is identified within the Production Operations function of the non-garment cut and sewn products occupational framework. The Cutting Machine Operator supports production of a broad range of technical and industrial sewn products including upholstery systems, automotive interiors, transport seating, technical textile assemblies, tarpaulins, industrial covers, furniture components, bags, marine products and specialised fabricated textile systems. The role involves preparing and cutting a variety of materials including woven and nonwoven textiles, coated fabrics, composites, leather, foams, reinforcements and technical fabrics using cutting technologies such as straight knife cutters, band knives, die cutting systems, CNC cutting equipment, laser cutters and automated nesting systems. The Cutting Machine Operator is responsible for ensuring dimensional accuracy, material optimisation, correct alignment with patterns and specifications, and efficient workflow into sewing and fabrication departments. The role requires detailed understanding of material behaviour, grain direction, tension control, pattern matching and safe operation of cutting equipment. The position works closely with cutting supervisors, production teams, CAD and marker planning personnel, sewing departments and quality staff to maintain production schedules, minimise waste and ensure consistent product quality.
Performance expectations	- Producing accurately cut components to technical specifications - Maintaining efficient operation of cutting machinery and equipment - Minimising material waste and cutting defects - Supporting production schedules and workflow continuity

	- Ensuring alignment between cut parts and sewing requirements - Maintaining safe operation of cutting machinery - Following quality, safety and operational procedures - Maintaining material traceability and production records - Supporting operational efficiency and productivity targets
Specialisation	Manual cutting, CNC cutting systems, automated nesting, technical textile cutting, leather cutting, composite material preparation and production cutting operations
Application in other TCF sectors	Automotive interiors, furniture and upholstery manufacturing, marine fabrication, industrial textiles, defence textiles, transport interiors, technical textile manufacturing and architectural fabric systems

2. Key tasks and critical work functions

Key tasks	- Operating straight knife, band knife, die cutting and automated cutting systems - Preparing and positioning materials for cutting operations - Reading markers, specifications and cutting instructions - Aligning materials according to grain, pattern and technical requirements - Monitoring cutting accuracy, blade condition and machine performance - Performing routine cleaning, maintenance and blade replacement - Inspecting cut components for dimensional accuracy and defects - Managing material flow to sewing and fabrication departments - Recording production and traceability information - Following workplace safety and operational procedures
Critical work functions	- Ensuring dimensional accuracy and consistency of cut components - Preventing cutting defects, material damage and waste - Maintaining efficient workflow between cutting and sewing operations - Supporting quality outcomes and production targets - Ensuring safe operation of cutting equipment and machinery - Maintaining traceability and specification compliance - Supporting material optimisation and operational efficiency - Contributing to overall production reliability and product quality

3. Technical skills

Cutting machinery operation	Operating manual and automated cutting systems
Material handling	Managing textiles, leather, foams and technical materials
Pattern interpretation	Reading markers, specifications and cutting layouts
Dimensional accuracy	Ensuring correct tolerances and component sizes
Machine maintenance	Performing cleaning, blade changes and basic servicing

Material optimisation	Reducing waste and improving yield efficiency
Quality inspection	Checking cut parts for defects and compliance
Documentation	Maintaining production records and traceability

4. Generic Skills

Attention to detail	Maintaining cutting precision and quality
Communication	Working with supervisors and production teams
Problem solving	Resolving cutting and workflow issues
Teamwork	Supporting integrated production operations
Time management	Meeting schedules and throughput requirements
Adaptability	Responding to changing materials and production demands
Reliability	Maintaining consistent operational performance
Professionalism	Following operational and safety standards

5. Emerging skills

Emerging skills	• AI-assisted nesting and cutting optimisation systems • Advanced CNC and laser cutting technologies • Industry 4.0 integration and digital workflow systems • Smart manufacturing and production analytics • Sustainable material utilisation and waste reduction practices • Integration of CAD, PLM and automated cutting systems
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6. VET Qualifications and Skill Sets

Entry-level preparation	MST20722 Certificate II in Apparel, Fashion and Textiles or equivalent
Advanced development	MST30222 Certificate III in Manufactured Textile Products

7. Job progression

Possible job progression	Cutting Room Assistant → Cutting Machine Operator → Senior Cutter → Cutting Supervisor → Cutting Manager
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8. Classification

Australian Qualifications Framework	Level 2-3
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Skill Levels	Skill Level 4-3
Open Source Classification of Occupations for Australia (OSCA)	Cutting Machine Operator – Cut and Sewn Products (Non-Garment)



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