

SSLPR3 Leather Production Operator – Curing and Storage

1. Job role

TCF sub-sector	Leather Production
Functional area	Leather Production
Job role	SSLPR3 Leather Production Operator – Curing and Storage
Job role description	Responsible for receiving, handling, curing and storing raw hides and skins prior to beamhouse processing. The role involves safe operation of material handling equipment, curing systems and storage infrastructure, ensuring hides are preserved correctly to prevent deterioration, contamination or quality loss. The operator works in physically demanding environments and must apply strong practical machine-operating skills and understanding of hide preservation techniques.
Performance expectations	• Safely unload, inspect and grade incoming hides • Apply curing processes (salting, stacking, drainage) to preserve hide integrity • Operate forklifts, conveyors and lifting equipment safely and efficiently • Maintain correct storage conditions (temperature, airflow, stacking method) • Minimise spoilage, contamination and handling damage • Comply with WHS, manual handling and biosecurity requirements
Specialisation	May specialise in bulk raw hide receipt, brine-curing systems, cold storage handling or automated hide handling systems.
Application in other Textile, Clothing and Footwear (TCF) sectors	• Textile wet processing facilities (scouring, dyeing and finishing plants) where bulk fibre or fabric receipt, staging and controlled storage are required prior to processing • Technical and industrial textile production involving roll handling, palletised raw materials and batch traceability systems • Footwear manufacturing operations where leather uppers and components require controlled storage, material staging and inventory tracking • Leather goods manufacturing environments requiring hide or panel storage, grading and internal logistics coordination • TCF warehousing and distribution centres using warehouse management systems (WMS), barcode scanning and digital inventory control

2. Key tasks and critical work functions

Key tasks	• Receive and inspect raw hides for defects or spoilage • Operate forklifts and lifting devices to move heavy loads • Stack, palletise and store hides in accordance with curing procedures • Apply and monitor salting or brining processes • Maintain drainage areas and prevent cross-contamination • Clean and maintain curing and storage areas
Critical work functions	• Safe operation of heavy material-handling equipment • Effective hide preservation and curing control • Prevention of bacterial growth and quality degradation • Workplace safety in wet, slippery and high-risk environments • Coordination with beamhouse scheduling to ensure timely supply

3. Technical skills

Forklift and load-handling operation	Operate forklifts and pallet-moving equipment in confined and wet environments; manage load stability and safe stacking heights.
Conveyor and lifting systems operation	Operate mechanical lifting frames, hoists or conveyor systems used in raw hide transfer and positioning.
Curing system operation	Apply correct salting ratios, stacking techniques and drainage practices to preserve hides and prevent heat build-up.
Cold storage and environmental control awareness	Monitor and maintain storage conditions to prevent bacterial degradation and hide damage.
Manual handling and ergonomics	Apply safe lifting techniques and mechanical aids to reduce injury risk when handling heavy hides.
Equipment inspection and basic maintenance	Conduct pre-start checks on forklifts and handling equipment; identify faults and report mechanical issues promptly.
Biosecurity and contamination control	Apply hygiene procedures to prevent contamination between batches and maintain compliance with industry standards.
Basic production documentation*	Record delivery volumes and storage movements accurately; digital systems use is emerging but not central to role. *Digital production systems are emerging but remain a secondary requirement for this role.

4. Generic Skills

Teamwork	Works closely with receival staff, warehouse teams and beamhouse operators.
Communication	Reports damaged hides, safety hazards or equipment faults clearly and promptly.
Problem solving	Identifies spoilage risks and responds to storage or handling issues.
Learning	Adapts to improved curing methods and storage technologies.
Initiative	Supports spoilage reduction and safe workflow improvements.
Service / customer orientation	Understands that early-stage hide preservation directly affects final leather quality.

5. Emerging skills

Emerging skills	• Use of electronic work orders and digital receival systems to confirm incoming hide volumes, grading categories and storage allocation • Interaction with visual display units (VDUs) and handheld scanning devices to track hide movement, storage location and batch identification • Operation of semi-automated hide handling systems, conveyors and mechanical stacking equipment designed to reduce manual handling risks • Application of reduced-salt, brine-based or alternative preservation techniques aimed at improving environmental sustainability • Monitoring of cold storage and environmental control systems using digital temperature and humidity displays • Increased traceability requirements linking curing batches to beamhouse scheduling and export documentation • Adaptation to warehouse management systems (WMS) and integrated production planning software • Greater awareness of biosecurity, contamination control and waste management standards driven by regulatory and customer requirements
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6. VET Qualifications and Skill Sets

Entry-level preparation	No qualification.
Intermediate / trade-level development	No qualification.

7. Job progression

Possible job progression	Curing Operator → Senior Operator → Team Leader – Curing and Storage → Production Supervisor
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8. Classification

Australian Qualifications Framework	AQF Level 2-3
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Skill Levels	Skill Level 4
Open Source Classification of Occupations for Australia (OSCA)	Mapped to Manufacturing Process Worker / Storeperson (industrial context).



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