

CS06 Director / Manager – Product Design and Development

1. Job role

TCF sub-sector	Cross sector
Job role	CS06 Director / Manager – Product Design and Development
Job role description	Leads the design and technical development of textile, clothing and footwear products from concept through to production. Responsible for translating market requirements and brand direction into commercially viable products that meet technical specifications, quality standards and manufacturing capability.
Performance expectations	• Deliver commercially successful product ranges aligned with brand strategy and market demand • Translate customer and market requirements into technically feasible product designs • Ensure product designs are optimised for manufacturing efficiency and cost performance • Lead product development cycles from concept to approved production sample • Coordinate design, technical development and sampling processes • Ensure product quality, compliance and performance standards are achieved • Support innovation in materials, construction techniques and sustainable product design • Maintain close collaboration with operations, sourcing and commercial teams
Specialisation	Apparel design and technical garment development, footwear design and component engineering, textile product development and material innovation.
Application in other TCF sectors	The skills used in this senior management role are largely transferable across different sectors of the textile, clothing and footwear (TCF) industry, and they are also broadly applicable to other manufacturing processing and production industries that operate complex supply chains, product development cycles and market-driven production systems.

2. Key tasks and critical work functions

Key tasks	• Lead seasonal or ongoing product development programs • Interpret market trends, customer requirements and brand strategy • Oversee design, pattern development and technical specification processes
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	• Coordinate product sampling, prototype testing and product approval • Select materials, trims and components aligned with product requirements • Work with supply chain teams to source materials and components • Ensure technical documentation supports production requirements • Monitor product development timelines and cost targets
Critical work functions	• Alignment of product design with manufacturing capability and supply chain capacity • Integration of market intelligence into product development strategy • Development of technically sound and commercially viable product designs • Assurance of product quality, safety and compliance with standards • Collaboration across design, production, supply chain and commercial functions

3. Technical skills

Product design and development	Develop and manage design and technical development of products.
Pattern engineering and technical design	Develop patterns and product specifications.
Material and component selection	Evaluate fabrics, leather and trims.
Product sampling and prototyping	Manage sample development and testing.
Product lifecycle management systems	Use PLM systems to manage product data.
Manufacturing process knowledge	Understand production methods and constraints.
Cost and specification management	Ensure product designs meet cost and specification targets.

4. Generic Skills

Creative thinking	Develop innovative product concepts.
Communication	Communicate design requirements to teams.
Collaboration	Work with manufacturing and supply chain teams.
Problem solving	Resolve product construction challenges.
Project management	Coordinate product development timelines.
Market awareness	Understand consumer trends.

5. Emerging skills

Emerging skills	• 3D digital product development and virtual sampling • Digital pattern engineering and automated grading systems • Sustainable material selection and circular product design • Product lifecycle management (PLM) system integration • Digital collaboration with offshore manufacturers • AI-assisted design and trend forecasting tools
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6. VET Qualifications and Skill Sets

Entry-level preparation	MST50122 Diploma of Apparel, Fashion and Textiles or equivalent
Advanced development	MST60122 Advanced Diploma of Apparel, Fashion and Textiles or equivalent or bachelor's degree in Fashion Design, Industrial Design or related discipline.

7. Job progression

Possible job progression	Designer → Senior Designer → Product Development Manager → Director - Product Design and Development → Chief Product Officer
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8. Classification

Australian Qualifications Framework	AQF Level 6-7
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Skill Levels	Skill Level 1
Open Source Classification of Occupations for Australia (OSCA)	Product Design Manager - Manufacturing context



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