

SSFOT05 Footwear Machine Operator (Closing)

Disclaimer

These Occupational Frameworks and Skill Profiles have been developed as workforce planning, occupational mapping and skills reference resources for the Australian textile, clothing and footwear (TCF) industry. They are intended to describe the typical functions, responsibilities, skills and capabilities associated with occupations across the industry.

These documents are not intended to replace or override industrial instruments or employment arrangements, including awards, enterprise agreements, employment contracts, position descriptions, classification structures, licensing or regulatory requirements, or other statutory obligations. Where differences arise, the relevant industrial, legislative or regulatory requirements take precedence. The Skill Profiles should be used as complementary reference documents to support workforce planning, career development, training and skills recognition.

1. Job role

TCF sub-sector	Footwear Production
Functional area	Industrial [machine based] production
Job role	SSFOT05 Footwear Machine Operator (Closing)
Job role description	Operates industrial sewing and closing machinery to assemble footwear uppers from pre-cut components. Ensures accurate stitching, alignment and reinforcement in accordance with technical specifications and quality standards prior to lasting and assembly.
Performance expectations	- Achieve daily upper assembly output targets. - Maintain high stitching accuracy and alignment. - Ensure consistency with technical specifications. - Minimise rework and defects. - Operate machinery safely and efficiently. - Maintain accurate production records.
Specialisation	- Flat-bed and post-bed sewing machines. - Specialist stitching and decorative finishes. - Reinforcement and binding operations.
Application in other TCF sectors	Transferable to stitching and assembly roles in leather goods, apparel and textile manufacturing sectors.

2. Key tasks and critical work functions

Key tasks	- Set up and operate closing machinery. - Assemble upper components according to patterns. - Ensure correct seam allowances and reinforcement. - Inspect stitching quality and alignment. - Adjust machine settings for different materials. - Record output and report defects. - Maintain clean and safe workstation.
Critical work functions	- Maintaining stitching precision and durability. - Ensuring seam integrity and alignment. - Supporting workflow continuity to lasting stage.

	- Reducing material waste and rework. - Maintaining consistent production standards. - Adhering to safety procedures. - Identifying material or construction defects early.
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3. Technical skills

Industrial sewing machine operation	Operate flat-bed, post-bed and cylinder-bed machines.
Upper assembly techniques	Apply correct stitching sequences and reinforcement methods.
Thread and needle selection	Select appropriate thread types and machine settings.
Material handling	Handle leather, synthetics and textiles appropriately.
Quality inspection procedures	Inspect seams for strength and visual quality.
Basic machine maintenance	Perform routine adjustments and cleaning.
Digital production reporting*	Record output in enterprise resource planning (ERP) or production tracking systems.
WHS compliance	Follow safety procedures for machinery use.

*Technical skills identified as emerging skills in TCF industry.

4. Generic Skills

Attention to detail	Ensure seam accuracy and consistent workmanship.
Time management	Meet production throughput targets.
Problem solving	Identify stitching or machine faults.
Communication	Report quality or material issues.
Teamwork	Coordinate with cutting and lasting teams.
Reliability	Maintain consistent attendance and performance.

5. Emerging skills

Emerging skills	- Automation-integrated sewing systems. - Digital workflow monitoring tools. - Advanced stitching technology. - Sustainable material handling practices. - Data-driven quality monitoring systems. - Robotics-assisted upper assembly awareness.
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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	No qualification.

7. Job progression

Possible job progression	Possible job progression: Closing Machine Operator → Senior Production Technician → 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)	731432 Footwear of Footwear Production Machine Operator.



Skills Insight is a Jobs and Skills Council funded by the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.