

SSFOT07 Footwear Machine Operator (Finishing)

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 – Australia
Functional area	Industrial [machine based] production
Job role	SSFOT07 Footwear Machine Operator (Finishing)
Job role description	Operates finishing machinery and performs manual finishing tasks to prepare completed footwear for final inspection and dispatch. Responsible for trimming, cleaning, polishing, edge finishing, final quality presentation and packaging preparation in accordance with specifications.
Performance expectations	- Achieve daily finishing output targets. - Maintain high presentation and quality standards. - Ensure consistency of colour and surface finish. - Minimise rework and cosmetic defects. - Operate finishing equipment safely. - Prepare footwear for final inspection and packaging.
Specialisation	- Edge trimming and polishing. - Surface treatment and conditioning. - Final inspection and presentation preparation.
Application in other TCF sectors	Transferable to finishing and presentation roles in leather goods, apparel and accessory manufacturing sectors.

2. Key tasks and critical work functions

Key tasks	- Operate trimming and finishing machinery. - Remove excess materials and clean surfaces. - Apply polishes, dyes or surface treatments. - Inspect finished footwear for cosmetic defects. - Prepare footwear for final quality inspection. - Pack footwear in accordance with brand standards. - Record output and report defects.
Critical work functions	- Maintaining high cosmetic and presentation standards. - Ensuring product consistency and brand quality. - Identifying and rectifying minor defects.

	• Supporting efficient final production flow. • Reducing rework and waste. • Adhering to safety procedures for chemicals and equipment. • Maintaining accurate production records.
--	---

3. Technical skills

Finishing machinery operation	Operate trimming, buffing and polishing equipment.
Surface treatment techniques	Apply conditioners, dyes and protective coatings.
Edge finishing methods	Trim and smooth edges to specification.
Visual quality inspection	Identify cosmetic defects and inconsistencies.
Packaging standards	Prepare footwear according to brand and retailer requirements.
Chemical handling awareness*	Handle finishing products safely and responsibly.
Digital production reporting*	Record production data in enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems.
WHS compliance	Follow safety procedures for machinery and finishing chemicals.

*Technical skills identified as emerging skills in TCF industry.

4. Generic Skills

Attention to detail	Ensure consistent presentation quality.
Time management	Meet finishing throughput targets.
Problem solving	Identify minor defects and corrective actions.
Communication	Report finishing or quality issues.
Teamwork	Coordinate with assembly and quality teams.
Reliability	Maintain consistent attendance and performance.

5. Emerging skills

Emerging skills	• Automation-integrated finishing systems. • Sustainable surface treatment technologies. • Low-impact chemical application processes. • Digital quality tracking systems. • Data-driven defect analysis. • Advanced product presentation standards.
-----------------	--

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: Finishing Operator → Senior Production Technician → Production Supervisor.
--------------------------	--

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.