

SSFOT08 Footwear Machine Operator (General)

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	SSFOT08 Footwear Machine Operator (General)
Job role description	Operates a range of footwear production machinery across cutting, closing, lasting, assembly and finishing stages. Responsible for maintaining quality standards, meeting production targets and supporting workflow continuity across multiple manufacturing processes.
Performance expectations	- Achieve daily production targets across multiple processes. - Maintain consistent quality standards. - Operate machinery safely and efficiently. - Adapt to different production stages as required. - Minimise material waste and rework. - Maintain accurate production documentation.
Specialisation	- Multi-machine operation across production stages. - Flexible workforce deployment. - Cross-functional production support.
Application in other TCF sectors	Transferable to multi-skilled production roles in leather goods, apparel and related manufacturing sectors.

2. Key tasks and critical work functions

Key tasks	- Operate cutting, closing, lasting and finishing machinery. - Adjust machine settings for different materials and styles. - Inspect components and finished products for defects. - Maintain workflow across production stages. - Record output and production data. - Report equipment or material faults. - Maintain clean and safe workstation.
Critical work functions	- Maintaining flexibility across production stages. - Ensuring consistent product quality. - Supporting efficient workflow transitions.

	• Minimising downtime and production delays. • Applying safe operating procedures. • Identifying defects early in production process. • Supporting productivity and waste reduction goals.
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3. Technical skills

Cutting machine operation	Operate clicker and automated cutting systems.
Closing machinery operation	Operate industrial sewing and assembly machines.
Lasting and assembly processes	Operate lasting and sole attachment equipment.
Finishing techniques	Perform trimming, polishing and presentation tasks.
Material handling	Handle leather, synthetics and textiles appropriately.
Basic machine maintenance	Perform routine checks and adjustments.
Digital production tracking*	Record production data in enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems.
WHS compliance	Follow safety procedures across all machinery types.

*Technical skills identified as emerging skills in TCF industry.

4. Generic Skills

Adaptability	Transition between production stages as required.
Attention to detail	Maintain quality across multiple processes.
Time management	Meet output targets across functions.
Problem solving	Identify and resolve machine or material issues.
Communication	Report production and quality issues clearly.
Teamwork	Coordinate with supervisors and production teams.

5. Emerging skills

Emerging skills	• Automation-integrated production systems. • Digital workflow monitoring platforms. • Cross-functional production analytics. • Sustainable material usage practices. • Data-driven productivity optimisation. • Robotics-assisted manufacturing 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: 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.



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