

SSFOT09 Footwear Machine Operator (Lasting and Assembly)

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	SSFOT09 Footwear Machine Operator (Lasting and Assembly)
Job role description	Operates lasting and assembly machinery to shape footwear uppers over lasts and attach soles in accordance with technical specifications. Ensures correct fit, alignment, bonding and structural integrity prior to finishing and quality inspection.
Performance expectations	- Achieve daily lasting and assembly output targets. - Ensure correct fit and shape of lasted footwear. - Maintain bonding strength and sole alignment. - Minimise rework and defects. - Operate machinery safely and efficiently. - Maintain accurate production records.
Specialisation	- Toe and heel lasting operations. - Cemented and direct-attach sole assembly. - Heat activation and bonding systems.
Application in other TCF sectors	Transferable to assembly and forming roles in leather goods, safety footwear and technical product manufacturing sectors.

2. Key tasks and critical work functions

Key tasks	- Set up and operate lasting machines. - Position uppers accurately on lasts. - Operate sole pressing and bonding equipment. - Apply adhesives and heat activation processes. - Inspect alignment and bonding integrity. - Adjust machine settings for different materials. - Record output and report defects.
Critical work functions	- Maintaining accurate shaping and fit. - Ensuring sole attachment strength and alignment.

	• Supporting workflow continuity to finishing stage. • Reducing rework and material waste. • Ensuring compliance with safety procedures. • Identifying bonding or structural defects early. • Maintaining consistent production standards.
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3. Technical skills

Lasting machine operation	Operate toe, side and heel lasting equipment.
Sole attachment processes	Apply cemented, stitched or direct-attach methods.
Adhesive application	Prepare and apply adhesives correctly for bonding strength.
Heat activation systems*	Operate heat-setting and bonding equipment.
Fit and alignment assessment	Check shape, tension and structural integrity.
Basic machine maintenance	Perform routine equipment checks and adjustments.
Digital production tracking*	Record production data in enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems.
WHS compliance	Follow safe handling procedures for adhesives and machinery.

*Technical skills identified as emerging skills in TCF industry.

4. Generic Skills

Attention to detail	Ensure accurate fit and bonding quality.
Time management	Meet production throughput targets.
Problem solving	Identify bonding or alignment issues.
Communication	Report machine or material defects.
Teamwork	Coordinate with closing and finishing teams.
Reliability	Maintain consistent attendance and performance.

5. Emerging skills

Emerging skills	• Automation-integrated lasting systems. • Advanced bonding technologies. • Digital workflow monitoring tools. • Sustainable adhesive systems. • Data-driven quality monitoring. • Robotics-assisted 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: Lasting 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.