

SSLPR26 Saddle Fitting Specialist

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	Leather Goods Manufacturing
Functional area	Saddle Production
Job role	SSLPR26 Saddle Fitting Specialist
Job role description	Assesses and fits saddles to horses and riders to ensure correct balance, comfort and performance. Works with saddlers and production teams to adjust saddles and provide expert advice on fit, flocking, structural alignment and suitability.
Performance expectations	- Ensure optimal saddle fit and rider balance. - Identify pressure points and fit issues accurately. - Provide expert advice to customers. - Recommend adjustments or modifications. - Maintain safety and equestrian welfare standards. - Document fitting assessments accurately.
Specialisation	- English saddle fitting. - Western saddle fitting. - Corrective and therapeutic saddle fitting. - Performance and competition fitting.
Application in other TCF sectors	Specialist role unique to saddlery; transferable skills in technical product assessment and custom fitting services.

2. Key tasks and critical work functions

Key tasks	- Assess horse conformation and rider position. - Evaluate saddle balance and panel contact. - Identify pressure distribution issues. - Recommend tree, panel or flocking adjustments. - Collaborate with saddlers on modifications. - Provide customer education on saddle care and fit. - Document fitting outcomes and recommendations.
Critical work functions	- Accurate anatomical assessment. - Protection of horse welfare and rider safety. - Precision in measurement and evaluation.

	• Clear communication with clients and workshop. • Professional judgement and ethical advice. • Compliance with equestrian standards.
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3. Technical skills

Equine anatomy knowledge	Understand horseback conformation and musculoskeletal structure.
Saddle construction knowledge	Understand tree, panel and flocking components.
Fit assessment techniques	Evaluate balance, clearance and pressure distribution.
Measurement tools	Use templates and fitting gauges accurately.
Flocking adjustment awareness	Identify when reflocking is required.
Customer consultation	Conduct structured fitting consultations.
Documentation	Record fitting assessments and recommendations.
Safety protocols	Apply safe handling practices around horses.

4. Generic Skills

Communication	Explain fitting assessments clearly to clients.
Attention to detail	Detect subtle fit and balance issues.
Problem solving	Recommend appropriate corrective solutions.
Professional judgement	Provide ethical and evidence-based advice.
Customer service	Maintain professional and client-focused interactions.
Time management	Manage fitting appointments efficiently.

5. Emerging skills

Emerging skills	• Digital saddle pressure mapping systems. • 3D saddle fitting analysis tools. • Data-driven performance optimisation. • Advanced therapeutic fitting techniques. • Sustainable material considerations in saddle design.
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6. VET Qualifications and Skill Sets

Entry-level preparation	MST30519 Certificate III in Leather Production.
Advanced development	ACM40921 Certificate IV in Equine Care or equivalent.

7. Job progression

Possible job progression	Saddler → Saddle Fitting Specialist → Senior Technical Specialist → Workshop Manager / Technical Director.
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8. Classification

Australian Qualifications Framework	AQF Level 3.
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Skill Levels	Skill Level 3.
Open Source Classification of Occupations for Australia (OSCA)	399435 Leather Goods Maker OSCA Specialisation Saddler.



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