



Careers in manufacturing: textiles, clothing and footwear

Machinists

Textile, clothing and footwear (TCF) production machine operators operate machines to process raw hides and skins; raw textile fibres; and dye, weave and knit fibres for use in textile and footwear production.

Tasks include:

- preparing machines for operation by selecting and installing attachments and components for specialised functions
- setting and operating controls used to regulate processing operations
- starting machines and monitoring operations to detect faults and ensure effectiveness of operation
- loading drums with hides and skins, textiles, and dyeing and tanning solutions
- cutting and machining leather and synthetic shoe uppers, and making shoes using moulded and cement construction techniques
- threading loom shuttles with cross-yarn arms
- positioning and feeding machines with fibre packages
- repairing broken yarns by tying and splicing ends
- examining finished products for defects and variations, reporting faults in machines, and carrying out quality control procedures.

Machinist occupations within the textiles, clothing and footwear sector include:

- TCF mechanic
- Sewing machinist/digitised embroiderer
- TCF operator
- Cotton ginner.

TCF mechanic

TCF mechanics set up, adjust and maintain the machines used in textile, clothing and footwear manufacturing industries.

Textile mechanics may:

- set up machines using tools and instruments
- trial machines to ensure they operate correctly
- diagnose and fix faults on textile equipment
- inspect yarns and fabrics produced
- repair or replace faulty parts
- run a shift
- adjust machine settings to meet design specifications.

Relevant qualifications:

- Certificate III in Engineering – TCF Mechanic
- Certificate IV in Engineering

Sewing machinist/digitised embroiderer

Sewing machinists/embroiderers operate industrial sewing machines to sew and finish garments and soft furnishings, such as curtains.

Tasks include:

- threading machines, inserting bobbins and positioning parts to be sewn
- starting, stopping and controlling speed of machines with pedals and knee levers to coordinate actions of presser feet, clothes guides, blades and other attachments, and guiding parts under needles, following edges, seams and markings
- changing needles and adjusting, securing and modifying attachments to machines
- finishing items by cutting excess material and threads
- operating computerised embroidery machines.

Relevant qualifications:

- Certificate II in Clothing Production (Intermediate)
- Certificate II in Clothing Production (Complex and Multiple Processes)
- Certificate III in Clothing Production.
- Certificate III in Digitising and Computerised Embroidery.

TCF operator

TCF operators operate a range of machines, including:

- footwear production machines
- hide and skin processing machines
- knitting machines
- textile dyeing and finishing machines
- weaving looms
- yarn carding and spinning machines
- embroidery machines.

Depending on the machine being operated, relevant qualifications include:

- Certificate II in Clothing Production (Intermediate)
- Certificate II in Clothing Production (Complex and Multiple Processes)

- Certificate II in Footwear Production (Intermediate)
- Certificate II in Footwear Production (Intermediate)
- Certificate II in Leather Production
- Certificate III in Leather Production
- Certificate III in Engineering – TCF Mechanic
- Certificate III in Clothing Production

Cotton ginner

Cotton ginning is a process that involves separating the cotton fibres from the cotton seeds. Perfect ginning operation can only be performed if the separation of fibres from seed is effected without any damage to either seeds or to the fibre. A cotton gin is a machine that easily separates the cotton fibres from the seeds.

The cotton is then classed and graded which is a job that takes years of experience. Occupations in cotton processing include assistants and press workers, supervisors and trainers.

Relevant qualifications:

- Certificate II in Cotton Ginning
- Certificate III in Cotton Ginning
- Certificate IV in Cotton Ginning

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