

Working with Wool – Career Information

There are many exciting career opportunities spanning across the wool industry requiring differing levels of education and training.

There are several ways to access this information so that you are able to find out the job description, how much education/training is required to qualify and where the education/training is available in your state.

Firstly, the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs has a comprehensive website <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au> to access this information. Instructions of how to do so are included within each of the career descriptions listed below.

The Department of Education, Science and Technology also have an expansive website at <http://www.dest.gov.au> - to search wool industry related careers choose the sitemap from the homepage and then choose education. You will find a menu including Australian Careers Directory, Career Information, Education Network of Australia (EDNA), Higher Education, School Education, Which College Which University? One path can be followed from Which College Which University that gives you the choice of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Science, Business Administration and Economics and Veterinary Science. From there you can access courses and their location.

Another way is available via the Education Network of Australia option. From there choose Education and Training Providers, then Training Packages and Courses, then Course Lists. This responds with a list of institutions and their web addresses so you can access and view the individual courses at the relevant institution. You can also access the EDNA website directly via <http://www.edna.edu.au>

The Australian Light Manufacturing Industry Training Advisory Board is the peak national body responsible for training and assessment in the Furnishings and Textiles, Clothing and Footwear Industries. Their website is <http://www.almitab.org.au> and the contact person is Jack Cunningham, Tel (03) 9358 1311.

Other sites of interest include:

<http://www.thegoodguides.com.au>

<http://postgrad.grad.com.au/>

<http://eserv.library.uwa.edu.au/toolbox/list.asp?Topic=122>

The following outlines some of the career opportunities available in the wool industry.

Farmer or farm manager

Farmers and farm managers undertake farming operations to raise livestock, cultivate crops and other agricultural products.

A farmer can be a self-employed person (who either owns or leases the land he or she farms) or an employee who is paid a salary to manage a farm or group of farms.

Farmers and farm managers may perform the following tasks:

- Manage the business capital, plans and strategic direction of the business.
- Manage the financial aspects of the business by controlling income and expenses.
- Decide or advise on the kind of crops to be grown, the area to be sown or planted, and the livestock to be raised.
- Plan the type of farming activities to be undertaken, estimate operating costs and order supplies such as seed, fertiliser, livestock fodder and farm equipment.
- Recruit, coordinate and direct farm workers on crop growing and livestock raising.
- Plant, spray, fertilise, harvest and sell crops.
- Handle, load and transport livestock for showing, slaughter or sale.
- Clean and maintain buildings, sheds, pens, equipment and facilities to maintain health standards and high quality of produce.
- Monitor animal health and seek veterinary advice when necessary.
- Ensure food supply, water and protection from the weather for livestock.
- Ensure temperature, ventilation and lighting conditions are comfortable and maintained for livestock kept indoors.
- Observe and record produce quality, livestock body weight and condition, and adjust feeding programs if required.
- Plan activities to minimise environmental degradation, monitor environmental effects of farming activities and repair existing damage through programs such as tree planting etc.

Farmers and farm managers may specialise in enterprises such as cropping. Others work with animals such as beef or dairy cattle, sheep, pigs or poultry. Many farmers and farm managers conduct mixed farming operations.

Farmers may work on large or small enterprises, or they may need to travel between a number of properties to manage activities. They spend much of their time working outdoors.

Personal requirements:

- Good at planning.
- Ability to analyse and solve problems.
- Good organisational and supervisory skills.
- Good communication skills.
- Responsible approach and attitude.
- Enjoy working outdoors in all kinds of weather conditions.
- Ability to endure isolation and limited social contact.
- Ability to handle animals with confidence and patience.
- Mechanical aptitude.
- Aptitude for working with computers.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Farm hand

Farm hands assist farmers and graziers with growing crops and/or feeding and raising livestock.

Farm hands may perform the following tasks:

- Cultivate soil, sow crops and control weeds by slashing, rotary hoeing or chemical spraying.
- Plant ground crops between rows of trees and bushes to control weeds and soil temperatures.
- Construct wire trellises to support vines, berries and fruit.
- Take part in harvesting operations, which may involve the use of tractors, harvesters, forklifts and hand tools.
- Feed livestock and poultry.
- Prepare milking machinery and assist with all milk harvesting operations.
- Clean and sterilise milking machines.
- Clear away animal waste and hose out operational areas.
- Shear and perform other tasks involved in the breeding and raising of livestock such as dipping, branding, crutching, gelding, marking and assisting with artificial insemination.
- Ride horses or motorbikes to muster sheep or cattle.
- Maintain and repair farm buildings, bores, fences, machinery, troughs, windmills and other equipment.

Farm hand work can be physically demanding. During lambing or calving, mustering, harvesting farm hands may be required to work long and irregular hours. The employer on the property may provide accommodation.

Farm hands perform a variety of duties, depending on their area of specialisation.

Sheep station hands muster stock for branding, shearing, crutching, dipping and yarding for sale. They also maintain fences, bores, troughs and windmills.

Personal requirements:

- Able to undertake manual, and sometimes heavy, work.
- Able to handle animals with confidence and patience.
- Able to work for long hours, out-of-doors, in all kinds of weather conditions.
- Able to endure isolation and limited social contact.
- Mechanical aptitude.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Jackaroo or Jillaroo

Jackaroos (male workers) and jillaroos (female workers) are station employees who undertake a range of activities on cattle and sheep stations.

Jackaroos and jillaroos may perform the following tasks:

- Care for livestock and treat minor injuries and illness.
- Maintain station equipment and inspect, repair or replace fences, gates and yards.
- Assist with light household duties.
- Use and maintain vehicles and heavy machinery.
- Undertake farming work such as cultivation and haymaking.
- Undertake clerical and administrative tasks.

- Participate in local meetings and take part in community affairs.

Jackaroos and jillaroos spend most of their time working outdoors. In some States, they receive free board and lodging. Depending on the number of people employed, they may live in the house of the owner or manager. Some camping out may be necessary.

Personal requirements:

- Ability to deal confidently with people.
- Good communication skills.
- Well organised.
- Ability to make accurate observations.
- Mechanical aptitude.
- Ability to endure isolation and limited social contact.
- Ability to undertake manual and often heavy work.
- Interest in animals and their welfare.
- Ability to handle animals with confidence and patience.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Agricultural advisor

Agricultural advisors assist farmers, agricultural businesses, rural industries and government in the production, processing and distribution of farm products.

An agricultural advisor may perform the following tasks:

- Visit farms to inspect livestock and crops.
- Advise farmers on improving the production of crops and livestock.
- Advise farmers on alternative agricultural enterprises.
- Advise farmers on issues such as livestock and crop disease, control of pests and weeds, soil improvement, animal husbandry and feeding programs.
- Promote and implement sustainable horticultural practices and quality management processes.
- Perform business and administrative functions such as preparing estimates, quotes, tenders, budgets and financial reports.
- Organise the selling of plants including quality checks, distribution, wholesaling, marketing and international trade arrangements.
- Act as consultants to horticultural industries, banks, fertiliser firms, machinery companies, marketing authorities, cooperatives and private marketing firms.
- Undertake research into local and overseas markets.

Personal requirements:

- Interest in farming, plants and horticulture.
- Good communication and liaison skills.
- Able to cope with varying roles and tasks.
- Able to work in a team environment.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Agricultural scientist

Agricultural scientists study commercial plants, animals and cultivation techniques to enhance the productivity and sustainability of farms and agricultural industries.

An agricultural scientist may perform the following tasks:

- Act as consultants in the application of science to the practice of agriculture.
- Carry out research programs on the breeding, nutrition and disease resistance of plants and animals.
- Provide technical information to farmers and commercial firms trading in agricultural commodities and produce.
- Study the effects of agriculture on the environment by collecting and analysing samples of soil, ground water and plants.
- Carry out experimental programs in controlled environments to develop better environmental management methods.
- Assist farmers in the planning and monitoring of agricultural activities, and in the diagnosis and treatment of problems (e.g. nutrient disorders in plants and livestock; weed and plant disease management).
- Train and coordinate the work of technicians and field workers.
- At senior levels, supervise and coordinate research teams, prepare funding applications and communicate the results of research.
- Prepare policy advice and assist in putting government policy into practice.

An agricultural scientist may specialise as one of the following:

Agricultural Biotechnologists use techniques such as genetic engineering to improve the quality and diversity of plant and animal products.

Agricultural Microbiologists are involved in the identification and control of disease organisms, often working in specialised areas such as food technology and environmental management.

Animal Scientists conduct experiments in controlled breeding or in embryo manipulation. They investigate the nutritional values of different feeds and the environmental conditions necessary to improve productivity and quality of animal produce.

Farm Advisors or **Extension Officers** advise farmers on stock and crop production. They may specialise in areas such as beef and sheep, crop, dairy, fruit production, water use, farm economics or land management.

Soil Scientists study the biology, chemistry, physics and hydrology of soil systems, and conduct research and advise on matters relating to conservation and management. .

Agricultural scientists may work in laboratories, offices, in the field or in a combination of these. Some work alone but most work as a member of a team. This can be alongside other scientists and farmers and often with other people involved in providing services to the agricultural industry.

Personal requirements:

- Good at science and able to analyse and solve problems.
- Interested in agriculture and/or the environment.
- Able to make accurate observations.
- Good oral and written communication skills.
- Well organised with supervisory ability.
- Able to work in a team environment.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Animal Technician

Animal technicians help veterinary, medical, pharmacy, agricultural and general scientists and students to care for and monitor animals used for research, breeding and scientific purposes.

Animal technicians may perform the following tasks:

- Monitor and record, on a daily basis, the health status and behaviour of animals in their care.
- Prepare food and water and care for laboratory, field or zoo animals.
- Maintain zoo exhibits, holding or breeding areas and equipment.
- Assist in return-to-the-wild programs.
- Carry out experiments using animals, and record the results under supervision and in accordance with relevant codes of practice and the organisation's animal experimentation ethics committee.
- Take samples of animal body fluids, faeces or tissues for analysis or veterinary inspection.
- Inspect and test animals for worm infestation and disease.
- Observe animals' reactions to tests.
- Make routine calculations and prepare graphs.
- Clean and disinfect cages and facilities, and sterilise equipment.
- Establish and maintain breeding programs.
- Help in fertility testing with sheep, cattle or poultry research.
- Assist in the selection and grading of animals for breeding programs.
- Help with injections, surgery, dressings and care of animals after operations.
- Assist with the production of animal experimentation protocols.
- Humanely put animals down and/or handle animals that have died.
- Carry out post-mortem examinations on dead animals.

Animal technicians may specialise as field assistants.

Field Assistants care for large animals such as sheep and cattle used for research purposes, in outside pens and paddocks.

Personal requirements:

- A keen interest in animals, their welfare and conservation.
- Ability to handle animals with confidence and patience.
- Ability to make accurate observations.
- Free from allergies aggravated by animal hair, feathers, fur and dust.
- Ability to undertake manual and sometimes heavy work.
- Good oral and written communication skills.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Agricultural Technical Officer

Agricultural technical officers provide complex technical support and advise on aspects of agriculture such as research, production, servicing and marketing.

Agricultural technical officers may perform the following tasks:

- Work with agronomists using small plot experiments to compare plant varieties and test the effects of various treatments on growth and yield.
- Work with soil scientists to study techniques of irrigation and analyse symptoms of plants used in experiments with soil treatments.
- Work with plant breeders to produce new strains and to select superior products.
- Work with animal breeders using artificial insemination techniques to produce offspring that mature earlier.
- Record and interpret experimental data in field experiments.
- Interpret aerial photographs and prepare maps showing soil and vegetation patterns.
- In laboratories, assist in the chemical analysis and culture of micro-organisms which cause disease to plants and animals.
- Carry out research and provide advice on various technical issues.

Agricultural technical officers may work in laboratories, in the field, or in a combination of the two. They usually work as a member of a team with other scientists.

Personal requirements:

- Good at science and able to analyse and solve problems.
- Interest in agriculture and the environment.
- Able to make accurate observations and recordings.
- Able to work in a team environment.
- Enjoy working outdoors.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Agricultural Engineer

Agricultural engineers study and advise on the use of engineering science and technology in agricultural production and management of natural resources. They apply their engineering knowledge and skills to solve problems relating to sustainable agricultural production, the environmental impacts of intensive agriculture, and the post-harvest handling of agricultural products.

An agricultural engineer may perform the following tasks:

- Plan, supervise and manage the building of irrigation, drainage, flood and water control systems.
- Design, develop and manage the manufacture of agricultural machinery, equipment and instrumentation, such as sensing, measuring and recording devices.
- Plan and supervise the construction of farm and other related buildings such as controlled environments (intensively housed livestock, greenhouses, nurseries, aquaculture) and storage facilities (grain silos and dryers).
- Supervise ground preparation, seeding and harvesting, spray technology, post-harvesting (processing and packaging) and transport equipment.
- Supervise the cleaning, grading, milling, mixing, food processing, packaging and distribution of produce.
- Perform environmental impact assessments.
- Analyse, advise and plan for effective soil conservation and the control of water logging and soil salinity.

- Prepare and present reports.
- Conduct research, and study the results of work on farms, forests and research stations.

Agricultural engineers may work indoors or outdoors, in a forest, laboratory or design office, or on a farm or research station. Their work involves the use of computers.

Personal requirements:

- Ability to identify, analyse and solve problems.
- Good oral and written communication skills.
- Aptitude for computing and design.
- Ability to work without supervision and accept responsibility.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Stock agent

Stock and station agents advise and represent farmers and graziers in business transactions such as the buying and selling of livestock, wool, fertiliser, farming and grazing land, equipment and merchandise.

Stock and station agents may perform the following tasks:

- Study market trends and prices.
- Arrange transport of stock to saleyards.
- Take prospective buyers to inspect properties for sale.
- Assist in selecting livestock, commercial and stud stock.
- Value livestock and advise on different marketing options for stock.
- Arrange the drafting, penning and auction of livestock.
- Arrange clearing sales of machinery and plant equipment no longer required.
- Advise and assist clients in the management of agricultural or pastoral companies, stock or farming problems.
- On a commission basis, conduct sales of wool on behalf of clients.
- Sell a wide range of agricultural products.
- Write reports on business transactions.
- Arrange finance for the buying of livestock or property.
- Act as agents for insurance companies.
- Arrange private sales between sellers and buyers.

Stock and station agents may specialise in livestock buying and/or selling, auctioneering, property and merchandise sales, arranging finance and insurance, pastoral inspections, and stud stock or wool. They may be classified as grain merchants, wool buyers or wool merchants.

Stock and station agents usually travel extensively by car, work long hours and are often required to contact clients during the evening.

Personal requirements:

- Initiative and self-motivation.
- Good organisational skills.
- Good communication skills.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Agricultural economist

Agricultural and resource economists study and apply economic principles to the use and management of resources in the agricultural, pastoral, fishing and forest industries.

An agricultural and resource economist may perform the following tasks:

- Undertake research into factors that affect farm costs and market returns, such as the availability of farm credit, the way farms are established and operated, the potential cash return from crop sales, and the distribution of farms in a particular region.
- Explore ways of raising the incomes and efficiency of primary producers.
- Conduct economic studies into areas such as livestock production, forestry, field crops, wool, cotton, fruit and wine-making, or the general rural market.
- Examine and report on existing or alternative methods of grading, processing, storage, sale, marketing and transport of agricultural products.
- Monitor, review and report on rural conditions and domestic and overseas agricultural, economic and political developments that affect the efficiency of the agricultural sector.
- Advise on the proper use of natural resources.
- Conduct analyses and make recommendations to government and industry organisations on economic issues and policies affecting the supply, demand and price of agricultural produce and resources.

Personal requirements:

- An analytical mind and able to think logically.
- Good oral and written communication skills.
- Good at maths.
- Organisational skills.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Shearer

Shearers cut wool from sheep using power driven handpieces that are fitted with combs and cutters. Shearers may be shearing over the board or using mobile shearing sheds which include roller systems.

Shearers may perform the following tasks:

- Select shearing combs to suit the type of sheep and wool.
- Take sheep from catching pens and hold firmly while shearing fleece in one piece.
- Treat any severe sheep skin cuts.
- Return shorn sheep to let-out pens for counting and checking.
- Shear stud animals with hand shears or special combs.
- Clean and sharpen combs and cutters.

Expedition shearers work in a team and may be responsible to an overseer or shearing contractor. These shearers travel long distances from property to property to work during the shearing season. Others may work in their own district and travel daily to the shearing shed, returning to their own homes each day.

Accommodation is usually provided in shearers' quarters either on the property or in a nearby town. Shearers supply their own work clothes, combs and cutters.

Personal requirements:

- Ability to work as part of a team.
- Can work quickly and consistently with hands for long periods.
- Good hand-eye coordination.
- Willing to live in remote areas.
- Able to handle sheep with confidence.
- Physically fit.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Shearing shed hand, or rouseabout

Shearing shed hands assist shearers, perform routine duties in shearing sheds and handle the fleeces after they have been shorn from the sheep.

Shearing shed hands may perform the following tasks:

- Assist station hands to pen sheep for shearing.
- Pick up the fleece after it is removed from the sheep and throw it onto a large table for skirting; that is, to remove dirty, stained or coloured pieces from the wool.
- Remove inferior and stained wool from fleeces as directed by a wool classer.
- Grade the wool skirted off fleeces.
- Roll the fleece into bundles and pass it to a wool classer for classing.
- Transfer fleeces into wool presses to form solid bales.
- Sweep the shed floor to help keep the fleeces clean and avoid contamination.

Shearing shed hands may need to travel long distances from property to property to work during the shearing season. Accommodation is usually provided in shearers' quarters either on the property or in a nearby town. Some work within their own district and travel daily to the shearing shed, returning to their own homes each day. Shearing shed hands may specialise as wool pressers.

Personal requirements:

- Able to work fast for long periods.
- Able to work as part of a team.
- Able to travel from property to property for work, sometimes in remote areas.
- Able to undertake manual work.
- Good physical fitness and strength.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Wool classer

Wool classers sort, classify and grade wool into various types so that it can be sold at the best market price.

Wool classers may perform the following tasks:

- Classify wool according to various characteristics (i.e. length, colour, evenness, burr content, strength and quality).
- Ensure that the wool is prepared to industry agreed standards.

- Advise on the wool and its preparation for sale.
- Advise on sheep classing and selection.
- Instruct and supervise workers involved in wool handling.
- Instruct wool pressers and supervise the pressing, weighing and branding of bales of wool.
- Maintain and supervise records of wool characteristics.
- Analyse and advise on laboratory and on-farm test results.
- Liaise with wool brokers and advisory institutions.
- Implement quality management systems.
- Prepare documents that describe wool qualities.

A wool classer may act as the shearing overseer depending on the number of shearing stands in operation. This involves account keeping, administration of the shearing team and the maintenance of mechanical shearing equipment.

Wool classers may specialise as wool valuers who assess the value of wool on the behalf of wool buyers, brokers, and domestic and overseas woollen mills.

Wool classers work in shearing sheds and wool handling centres. They mostly work indoors and stand for long periods. Wool classers may need to travel long distances from property to property to work during the shearing season.

Personal requirements:

- Physical fitness.
- Good with hands.
- Normal eyesight (may be corrected).
- Good communication skills.
- Willingness to travel.
- Ability to work in a team.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

The Woolclasser Development Program focuses entirely on the training needs of Woolclassers. You can access specific information via <http://www.thewoolclasser.com> or by calling 1300 133 488. Woolclassers can also complete an AWEX appraisers course, which teaches a classer how to match the AWEX ID codes to the classing system.

Wool presser

Wool Pressers transfer the fleeces into wool presses to form solid bales. They weigh the bales, brand the completed wool bale with the owner's name, a description of the wool and a bale number, and keep records of all bales completed.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Truck driver/Transport operator

Truck drivers use heavy vehicles to transport goods and materials from one area to another.

Truck drivers may perform the following tasks:

- Check brakes, oil, tyres and electrical systems.

- Load goods onto the truck either by hand, or by using a forklift or other lifting equipment.
- Ensure that the load is correctly placed, and secure it by using ropes and chains to avoid damage to the truck or the goods.
- Cover the load with tarpaulin.
- Drive vehicles to their destination and unload.
- Check items against inventory, noting breakage and damage.
- Collect payments and issue receipts.
- Maintain a log book with details of trips, including rest breaks on long trips.

Truck drivers may drive company-owned vehicles or be owner-drivers. Owner-drivers must obtain their own delivery work. Truck drivers carry a wide variety of goods, including flammable substances, raw materials, building materials, manufactured goods, livestock and refrigerated products. They need to be aware of the laws governing the transport of some loads.

Personal requirements:

- Mechanical aptitude.
- Have a safe driving record.
- Be physically fit.
- Meet any age limits that may apply.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detva.gov.au>

ALMITAB offer transport and distributor warehousing competency units up to diploma level.

Wool testing operators

Wool testing operators use either Sirolan –Laserscan, Sirolan – Fleecescan, OFDA 100 or OFDA 2000 wool testing instruments to measure mean fibre diameter, yield, length, strength, vegetable matter content, colour, coefficient of variation of fibre diameter, fibre opacity, fibre curvature and comfort factor.

There is no formal training for wool testers. Most wool testers are self-taught with some initial training provided from the manufacturers of the testing instruments. This training deficiency has been identified and the distributors of the instruments are working towards developing and providing training for wool testers.

Wool valuer

A wool valuer is someone who has the skill to look at a sample of wool on the show floor and make a subjective assessment of the wool characteristics. They then place a commercial value on that wool combining technical and commercial knowledge (knowing what end users want and what they will pay). The difference between the broker's technical staff and a valuer is the valuer has the end use knowledge.

Valuers, value the wool pre-sale and then during the sale may have to make urgent calls to the end-user to increase the price limit to get the particular lot that will meet or make-up the order.

Valuers usually begin their careers by completing the TAFE Certificate 3 and 4 in wool handling and wool classing and then gain experience by working on the show floor with experienced valuers.

Wool broker

Brokers do not usually take ownership of the wool they handle, instead they act on behalf of the grower by organising sampling and testing and offering the wool for sale. There are a number of other functions carried out by the broker including interlotting and bulk classing.

There are relatively few barriers to entry into the industry for wool brokers but there is a growing tendency by brokers to try to differentiate themselves from other brokers by offering a wider range of services.

There is no specific wool broker education provided in Australia. The training required to become a wool broker currently includes a Risk Management Course through the Sydney Futures Exchange, an AWEX accredited appraiser course for brokers to learn how to value wool and the TAFE Certificate 4 wool classing course.

Private treaty merchant

Private treaty merchants (PTMs) specialise in buying wool at the farm gate. They can purchase the wool while it's still on the sheep's back or give a single overall price per kilogram for the entire clip or it is more likely these days that they would buy at a price subject to testing results.

Once they purchase the wool they may resubmit it to auction to make a margin, they may sell it to larger wool merchants or processing mills, or they may sell it to overseas buyers.

To become a Private Treaty Merchant entails a wool classing course and hands on experience.

Wool exporter

Wool exporters sell and buy wool, produced in Australia for export to overseas markets.

Exporters may perform the following tasks:

- Supervise and coordinate the marketing activities of overseas distributors/agents and assist in administrative, sales and marketing functions.
- Investigate and assess overseas demand for goods produced in Australia, or local demand for goods produced overseas.
- Research and comply with legal requirements affecting export and import of goods to and from Australia.
- Discuss orders and arrange for the production of goods with suppliers and distributors/agents.
- Arrange the shipment of goods, ensuring that all customs barrier control procedures and other documentation requirements are satisfied.
- Arrange payment, making sure these payments meet financial regulations in Australia and overseas.
- Liaise with freight forwarders and customs brokers, who make freight and space bookings with airline or shipping companies and arrange for the movement of cargo from airports and wharves.

- Monitor the performance of the business and prepare financial statements and report on export-import operations.

Personal requirements:

- Communication and negotiation skills.
- Commercial astuteness.
- Research and administrative skills and mathematical aptitude.
- Ability to speak one or more foreign languages is highly desirable (a considerable amount of overseas travel may be required).

A lot of the firms that operate as exporters also have another subsidiary for private buying. Anyone on the buying side can be an exporter. This includes private treaty merchants.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Wool processor

Early stage processing includes scouring, carbonising and topmaking. ALMITAB offer courses up to diploma level in Early Stage Wool Processing. You are also able to complete a Textile Production Course up to Certificate 4 level, which qualifies you to work in the processing profession from early stage through to garment manufacture. <http://www.almitab.org.au>

Textile mechanic

Textile mechanics set up, adjust and maintain machines used in textile, clothing and footwear industries.

Textile mechanics may perform the following tasks:

- Set up machines, using tools and instruments.
- Start machines for trial runs to make sure they are running properly.
- Diagnose and rectify processing faults on textile equipment.
- Inspect yarns and fabrics produced.
- Repair or replace faulty parts.
- Run a shift.
- Adjust machine settings to meet design specifications.

Textile mechanics usually work shifts.

Textile mechanics specialise in the following areas:

- Knitting mechanics
- Prepare patterning equipment which controls automatic knitting machines to produce a variety of knitted fabric and clothing, including hosiery, jumpers, shirts and underwear.
- Sewing machine mechanics
- Assemble, adjust, lubricate and repair industrial sewing machines.
- Spinning mechanics
- Study specifications to determine settings for machines that are associated with raw fibre through to finished thread such as wool and cotton. They then install and align gears, arrange yarns on the machines and adjust machines to produce different types and thicknesses of yarn.
- Tufting mechanics
- Work on machines that produce tufted carpet.

- Weaving mechanics
- Work on machines that convert yarns into fabrics such as blankets, carpets, towels and clothing material.

Personal requirements:

- Good eyesight (may be corrected).
- Normal colour vision.
- Mechanical aptitude.
- Good with hands.
- Able to work quickly to locate and rectify problems.
- Good communication skills.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detva.gov.au>

Fashion Designer

Fashion designers develop new styles and products for clothing apparel and accessories by creating original designs or by adapting fashions to suit local conditions, trends and buyers.

Fashion designers may perform the following tasks:

- Illustrate concepts by producing storyboard and specification drawings.
- Use computers to manipulate and develop patterns and modify designs.
- Make patterns, or work closely with patternmakers, to draft patterns from sketches or specification drawings.
- Select fabric, colour and trim, and cut out sample garments.
- Fit samples and discuss them with management, sales and manufacturing staff, and contribute to costing estimates.
- Finalise specification sheets with detailed sketches and trim details.
- Approve final samples before they go into production.
- Supervise staff.
- Liaise with production staff during mass production of garments, and participate in quality control.
- Research and develop accessories, fabrics for production of garments.
- Travel overseas to gain information on current fashion trends.
- Control merchandising and retailing of garments.

Fashion designers may work individually or as part of a team.

Personal requirements:

- Creative flair and drawing talent.
- Good communication skills.
- Good colour and design sense.
- Able to work under pressure.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detva.gov.au>

Tailor

Tailors design and make garments such as suits, trousers, overcoats, uniforms and other clothing.

Tailors may perform the following tasks:

- Discuss with customers the type of material to be used and the design of garments.
- Measure customers and record their sizes.
- Make a draft of a master pattern for garments, or alter patterns to fit customers.
- Position and pin patterns onto the fabric and cut the fabric.
- Loosely stitch the garment parts, using a needle and thread or a sewing machine.
- Fit garments on customers, and mark areas requiring alterations.
- Sew the garment parts together, and sew buttons and buttonholes to finish the garments.
- Press the completed garment to mould and shape it.

Tailors may work in made-to-measure or ready-made tailoring. In ready-made tailoring, the garments are sewn by machinists. Tailors in mass-production factories usually perform one of the listed tasks, while tailors in small firms may be involved in all tasks.

Personal requirements:

- An interest in clothing design.
- Good eyesight.
- Normal colour vision.
- Good with hands.
- Ability to work under pressure.
- Good public contact skills.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Fashion coordinator

Fashion coordinators arrange and supervise the marketing of fashion clothing for manufacturing houses, textile firms and retail stores.

Fashion coordinators may perform the following tasks:

- Plan and advise on fashion lines and assess garments' potential for publicity purposes.
- Promote garments to the press and public.
- Organise and compere fashion parades.
- Supervise the photography of items and clothing selected for promotion.
- Liaise with fabric mills, wholesalers and suppliers to ensure that correct colourings and textures are produced.
- Keep up to date with general fabric developments.
- Provide fashion direction to buyers.

Fashion coordinators may be required to travel interstate or overseas to become aware of advanced fashion trends.

Fashion coordinators working in large retail stores may coordinate the work of several fashion departments to promote a wider range of products.

Personal requirements:

- A natural flair for fashion.

- Good organisational skills.
- Sound judgement.
- Good communication and negotiation skills.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Textile designer

Textile designers produce patterns for printed, woven or knitted textiles, and many patterned surfaces.

Textile designers may perform the following tasks:

- Design and produce original woven, knitted or printed fabrics.
- Design fashion fabrics for clothing, including jackets, shoes, socks, jeans, hats, bags and lingerie.
- Design fabrics for homeware items, including chairs, carpets, bed linen and tableware.
- Design surface patterns for laminates, wallpaper, plastics, tiles, toys and packaging.
- Make drawings of initial concepts and work with various yarns and fabrics.
- Make decisions about colour, structure, surface pattern, weight and yarn composition, taking into account the final use of the fabric, and translating the designs into marketable fabrics.
- Use computer-aided design (CAD) systems.
- Inspect pre-production for colour and quality, and approve these or instruct changes to be made.
- Produce finished artwork, storyboards and colourways.
- Prepare the despatch of design specifications for production/end use.
- Liaise with clients, sales staff, buyers and production team, working to deadlines
- Research and gather information about the target market.

Textile designers work within and alongside industries such as fashion, automotive and interior design. They may also work within a studio environment alongside other designers, or as freelance designers working with a client base.

Personal requirements:

- Good drawing skills.
- Ability to use colour and translate ideas.
- Interest in pattern and surface decoration.
- Creativity.
- Problem-solving and communication skills.

For specific information refer to <http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>

Wool product manufacturer

To learn how to produce wool products such as doonas, ugg boots etc ALMITAB offers a range of units depending on the particular product you are interesting in learning to make. Visit <http://http://www.almitab.org.au> or call (03) 9358 1311.

Retail buyers

Retail buyers purchase goods to be sold in retail stores. They may purchase goods locally, interstate or overseas.

Retail buyers may perform the following tasks:

- Obtain information from store executives and salespeople about stock levels and fast- and slow-moving goods.
- Consider which goods will sell well in particular locations, and the prices customers are prepared to pay.
- Research customer demands, and trends by processing store sales and inventory reports.
- Manage and analyse stock levels and order points using computers and statistics.
- Try to anticipate changes in customer demand for particular goods as goods must be purchased well before their sale to customers.
- Inspect, compare and select goods at either manufacturers' or agents' premises.
- Contact suppliers to replenish stocks.
- Be aware of relevant legal information, e.g. consumer rights and store licensing.
- Communicate frequently with store management to discuss planning, budgeting, sales promotions and advertising campaigns.
- Attend trade fairs and other displays interstate and overseas to obtain information about the range of products available.

In large department stores, buyers may specialise in certain types of merchandise (e.g. textiles, fashion, hardware, toys).

In a national chain of stores, such specialist buyers may purchase their merchandise for all stores, or nominate brands to be stocked.

In small businesses, owners normally perform their own retail buying after consultation with their staff.

Personal requirements:

- Knowledge of, or an interest in, the retail market.
- Good communication and negotiating skills.
- Good organisational skills.
- Good with figures and numbers.
- Willingness to travel.

For specific information refer to <http://http://www.jobguide.detya.gov.au>