

Research on the Development Strategy of “Dual-Qualified” Teachers in Vocational Education

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Abstract: The quality of the teaching faculty directly impacts the development of educational institutions and their contribution to socio-economic progress. Adhering to the correct educational direction and fulfilling the fundamental mission of fostering virtue through education require a clear institutional development plan. This involves clarifying key aspects such as the types of talent to recruit and cultivate, how to utilize personnel effectively, and how to implement performance evaluation systems. Guided by the education development strategy, a scientific approach to talent acquisition and cultivation should be adopted, considering factors like job-competency alignment and skill output. Strengthening whole-process management, a tiered and categorized training system—supported by a credit-based evaluation mechanism—should be implemented to ensure sustainable faculty development. By enhancing school-enterprise collaboration and leveraging the bridging role of credit banks, practical training bases and team-building can be advanced through methods such as enterprise problem-based learning, mentor-ship (senior guiding junior), and apprenticeship. This facilitates a cooperative model for cultivating "dual-qualified" teachers across multiple institutions, along with a hierarchical and classified evaluation system, ultimately improving the overall quality of vocational education and building a high-caliber teaching workforce.

1. Introduction

The teaching faculty serves as the fundamental driving force in educational systems. The 'service-for-employment' principle of vocational education dictates dual faculty responsibilities: advancing teaching expertise while ensuring hands-on skill transmission. The caliber of teaching staff directly determines (a) the proficiency gains in students' vocational competencies, and (b) the degree of alignment with human capital requirements across socioeconomic sectors. The development of "dual-qualified" teachers, who possess both theoretical teaching capabilities and technical operational guidance skills, is particularly crucial in the construction of vocational education faculty. To maintain proper educational orientation and fulfill the fundamental mission of fostering virtue through education, institutions must first clarify their developmental positioning, then establish systematic frameworks for: (1) talent recruitment and cultivation criteria, (2) human resource deployment strategies, and (3) performance evaluation mechanisms.

2. Historical Context and Policy Requirements for Developing "Dual-Qualified" Teachers in China's Vocational Education

In Liu Pei's article[1], the historical development of "dual-qualified" teachers is summarized into three stages based on concepts, connotations, and temporal phases: Conceptual Proposal Stage (1990-2004);Connotation Deepening Stage (2005-2018);Systematic Improvement Stage (2018-present).

Since the State Education Commission issued the Notice on Establishing Demonstration Vocational Universities in 1995, China has consistently emphasized that "dual-qualified" teachers must possess not only fundamental teaching competencies but also "certain professional practical skills." Over the past two decades of vocational education development, the State Council and the Ministry of Education have successively introduced more than ten key policies and guidelines, including: Opinions on Issues Related to the Establishment of Higher Vocational Colleges, Ministry of Education Notice on the Comprehensive Evaluation of Talent Cultivation in Higher Vocational Colleges, Ministry of Education Opinions on Improving the Teaching Quality of Higher Vocational Education, National Vocational Education Reform Implementation Plan, Overall Plan for Deepening Educational Evaluation Reform in the New Era, State Council Opinions on Strengthening Teacher Development, Higher Vocational Education Innovation Development Action Plan (2015-2018), Implementation Plan for Deepening the Reform of "Dual-Qualified" Teacher Development in the New Era, Notice on Implementing the Vocational College Teacher Quality Improvement Plan (2021-2025), Opinions on Promoting the High-Quality Development of Modern Vocational Education, Opinions on Deepening the Reform of Modern Vocational Education System Construction. These policies have continuously refined the concept and connotation of "dual-qualified" teachers in response to evolving vocational education and socioeconomic demands. They have also provided specific requirements and guidance on team development, performance evaluation, training and promotion, school-enterprise collaboration, resource development, and international exchange.

Based on the key policy documents mentioned above, the historical development of vocational education in China can be divided into three stages from the perspectives of social participation and governance system as follows.

2.1. Primary Development Stage of Vocational Education (pre-2015)

Since the legal standardization of vocational education scope through legislation in 1996, this stage featured: Based on the key policy documents mentioned above, the historical development of vocational education in China can be divided into three stages from the perspectives of social participation and governance system. The first stage was the primary development phase of vocational education (before 2015), which began with the legal standardization of vocational education scope through legislation in 1996. During this period, there were no clearly defined faculty development objectives for cultivating "high-quality skilled talent," the deep integration of information technology with vocational education had not yet emerged, the concept of coordinated development between secondary vocational education, higher vocational education and specialized colleges had not yet taken shape, and a cohesive development framework connecting different levels of vocational education had not been established.

2.2. The second phase marked the informatization development stage of vocational education (2015-2018)

It characterized by intensive research and application of emerging educational technologies like "Internet Plus" and big data in the education sector. During this period, the application of network and virtual technologies in vocational education became increasingly sophisticated, leading to

profound transformations in talent cultivation approaches and teacher training methodologies. The rapid emergence of various teacher training platforms fundamentally altered the means of faculty team development.

2.3. The third phase represents the modern governance system stage of vocational education (post-2018)

With evolving socioeconomic developments, multiple departments including the State Council and Ministry of Education frequently introduced policy measures centered on key concepts such as "dual-qualified teachers", "three-education reform", "high-quality vocational education development", "vocational education system construction", and "dual-qualification certification standards" since 2019. A significant milestone was reached in April 2022 when the 34th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 13th National People's Congress revised the 1996 Vocational Education Law, providing clear guidance on vocational education's positioning and direction. This phase has seen escalating requirements for teachers' dual competencies in both quality and skills, emphasizing multi-party collaboration and coordinated development, while establishing a comprehensive modern governance framework with vertical and horizontal integration across all education levels. Although the system demonstrates improved regional coordination and legal standardization, each vocational education institution exhibits distinct characteristics and limitations shaped by regional and temporal socioeconomic contexts, with the "dual-qualified" teacher development initiative concurrently facing various challenges across different dimensions.

3. The construction of teaching faculty in vocational education currently faces several prominent issues

3.1. Unclear self-positioning in professional development and a recruitment bias that overemphasizes academic credentials while undervaluing technical skills and pedagogical competencies

With the evolution of socioeconomic and educational development, society has placed increasingly higher demands on the cultivation and status of "talents." In various institutional accreditation processes, the proportion of "dual-qualified" teachers has become a crucial evaluation metric. Against this backdrop, some vocational schools and even higher education institutions have engaged in indiscriminate talent recruitment without conducting systematic planning or demonstrating alignment with their disciplinary development patterns and institutional strengths. These institutions blindly pursue aggregate quantitative targets, focusing solely on candidates' academic credentials and research outputs while neglecting careful consideration of: (1) the recruits' professional development platforms and career growth potential; and (2) the actual strategic needs of institutional development planning.

This recruitment approach exhibits a pronounced bias toward academic qualifications over technical skills and pedagogical competencies, coupled with a lack of effective mechanisms for attracting seasoned craftsmen and technical experts with extensive enterprise experience. Consequently, the recruitment of industry professionals remains challenging and limited, with insufficient emphasis on the requirement for at least three years of frontline enterprise practice[2]. While institutions successfully recruit numerous highly educated graduates, the prevalent phenomenon of "person-position mismatch" frequently leads to constrained professional development opportunities, underutilization of talents, wasted faculty management resources, and diminished team efficiency—all of which undermine faculty stability and hinder the cultivation of higher-level teaching expertise.

Particularly among newly recruited highly-educated faculty members, when their specialties diverge from position requirements, a problematic tendency emerges: prioritizing fundamental and applied scientific research while marginalizing pedagogical responsibilities and practical skill development. This mismatch not only restricts individual career advancement but also creates a vicious cycle that adversely affects the overall development of the institutional faculty.

3.2. The professional training and development of teaching staff lack systematic planning, practical skill application, and progressive development tiers

The current short-term training programs organized at various levels exhibit several systemic limitations in developing vocational education faculty. Firstly, there exists a prevalent generalization of ideological and political education content across disciplines, with inadequate integration of discipline-specific, industry-relevant, and position-appropriate training components. The training ecosystem suffers from fragmentation in both temporal delivery and substantive content, lacking continuity and failing to address the specialized pedagogical competencies required for "dual-qualified" teacher development. This disconnect impedes the accumulation and transfer of practical vocational skills, resulting in misalignment with emerging industrial demands, particularly in new engineering fields and advanced technological sectors.

Furthermore, the training curriculum demonstrates significant content redundancy in ideological-political education while exhibiting critical deficiencies in discipline-specific knowledge updating and its integration with emerging technical skills. Compounding these issues is the absence of differentiated training frameworks that account for: (1) the heterogeneous characteristics across different vocational disciplines and industry sectors, and (2) the hierarchical composition within specific professional domains. The current model employs undifferentiated training content and methodologies for faculty at varying career stages (from novice to advanced practitioners), lacking targeted approaches that recognize distinct developmental needs across the professional competency spectrum. This one-size-fits-all paradigm fails to establish sustainable, tiered professional development pathways essential for comprehensive faculty growth.

3.3. The "Dual-Qualified" Teacher Certification System and Professional Title Evaluation Mechanism Operate as Parallel Systems Without Effective Integration

The "Dual-Qualified" Teacher Certification Standards issued in 2022 established tiered requirements for different levels of vocational institutions, serving as a guiding framework document. However, the implementation of operational rules tailored to various vocational colleges requires further research and refinement. In practice, many institutions fail to fully grasp the substantive standards of "dual-qualified" certification. Prior to the release of these standards, the long-standing influence of traditional university promotion criteria has created persistent challenges in breaking away from conventional evaluation metrics for faculty advancement.

The current evaluation system tends to overemphasize quantifiable indicators such as academic publications, research funding, and professional certifications, while neglecting the essential vocational education focus on skill application and pedagogical transformation capabilities. This reflects a lack of integrated qualitative-quantitative assessment frameworks that align with the fundamental objectives of vocational education.

A notable institutional paradox has emerged where faculty members simultaneously pursue both conventional title evaluation and "dual-qualified" certification pathways within the same vocational college. While both systems fundamentally assess professional competence and teaching capability, they operate as disconnected parallel processes. This structural dichotomy persists despite their shared evaluation objectives, revealing unresolved tensions in the implementation of vocational education

reform and the transition from traditional academic evaluation paradigms. The situation underscores the need for greater harmonization between the dual-qualified certification system and faculty development mechanisms to fully realize the intended transformation of vocational education.

4. Building strategies for "dual-profession" faculty teams in vocational education

4.1. The selection of teaching personnel must adhere to the guidance of educational development plans to ensure proper screening at the entry point of faculty recruitment

The introduction of special talents and faculty members should be based on the university's disciplinary features and professional development goals. Institutions must accurately position their educational development objectives, coordinate long-term faculty planning with short-term goals, and strictly control the quality of faculty recruitment and cultivation from the source[3].

For special faculty categories (high-degree holders, returnees from abroad, new graduates), targeted ideological and political education as well as core values training should be conducted to ensure ideological alignment with job requirements. This helps avoid job-position mismatches, discrepancies between professional backgrounds and institutional platforms, and subsequent job burnout or value dislocation. The process requires clear definitions of the types of talents needed, how to utilize them effectively, and how to retain them, implementing scientific recruitment through multiple dimensions including job-skill matching and competency levels.

Simultaneously, institutions should balance performance resource allocation between newly recruited and existing faculty, avoiding excessive preferential treatment towards new hires while not neglecting the contributions and accumulated experience of longstanding faculty members.

4.2. Fully leverage the bridging role of informatization and credit banks to implement systematic, stratified, and categorized training through a credit-based system

Strengthen the categorized and tiered management of teaching faculty. For general training content such as ideological and political education, as well as teacher ethics and professionalism, it is essential to fully leverage the bridging role of information technology and credit banks, enhance whole-process training management, and utilize credit-based online learning shared resources to avoid redundant training. For teachers of different disciplines, job levels and specialties, a phased and categorized refined training system is implemented [4]. Universities and enterprises cooperate to formulate targeted long-term training plans, establish a stable hierarchical teaching staff structure and a coordinated enterprise training team. Enhance the accuracy of skills training through customized cultivation and feedback. For universal and programmatic educational training, systematic and professional development of shared information platform resources can be achieved via resource construction.

4.3. Establish an industry and market demand-oriented collaborative mechanism for faculty development involving government, educational institutions, enterprises, and local communities

The frontline production of enterprises serves as the yardstick for measuring teaching effectiveness and skill development outcomes. Guided by market demand and aimed at serving regional economic development and industry needs, we should establish a collaborative mechanism featuring: government coordination in institutional safeguards, enterprise participation in technical aspects, school provision of faculty and trainee platforms, and local guidance reflecting regional socioeconomic characteristics.

Enterprises should provide customized professional guidance on new technologies and skills tailored to different school specialties and levels. Schools should implement mentorship programs ("master-apprentice" and "senior-junior" models) to coordinate practical training and teaching plans for faculty and trainees at various levels. Through enterprise secondments and job rotations, we can achieve two-way exchange between skilled enterprise craftsmen and school faculty.

The mechanism should focus on creating practice bases, teaching teams, and training teams that integrate regional and school-specific characteristics. By appointing enterprise mentors and sending teachers to gain frontline experience, we can identify production challenges and address them through "problem-claiming" and "mentor-teacher skill pairing" approaches. This drives teaching practice, project development, and student cultivation, achieving coordinated development in teaching, research, and skills transformation.

Breaking institutional barriers across sectors and bridging the gap between achievements and applications requires cross-sector collaboration. We should explore provincial, municipal, and industry-specific cooperative mechanisms to promote targeted development of "dual-qualified" faculty teams that meet industry demands and local economic development needs.

4.4. Explore a Graded Classification Evaluation Mechanism for Teaching Staff that Integrates "Professional Titles" with "Dual-Qualification" Standards

The evaluation of faculty competence should be based on tangible contributions such as practical teaching effectiveness and skills transformation outcomes. An integrated evaluation mechanism for faculty classification should be explored to reconcile professional titles with dual-qualification certification, clarifying their inherent nature and interrelationship.

For faculty teams demonstrating strong innovation capabilities and significant research output, the professional title evaluation and promotion pathway should be encouraged. For skill-oriented faculty, third-party assessments from enterprises and other institutions should be introduced, with a focus on evaluating their competencies in production practices and skills cultivation, thereby promoting their advancement through the dual-qualification evaluation pathway. A parallel dual-track system should be explored, unified under a consistent performance and remuneration framework.

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