

A Comparative Analysis of the Functions and Operation of University Teacher Development Center at Home and Abroad——Taking Cambridge University and Shanghai Jiao Tong University as Examples

Kun Li*

School of Public Administration, South China University of Technology, Guangzhou, China
397334670@qq.com

Keywords: University Teacher Development Center; Operation Mechanism; Cambridge University; Shanghai Jiao Tong University

Abstract: Built earlier and after many years' development, the Personal and Professional Development Center of Cambridge University has established a systematic mechanism. It offers a good platform for UK teachers' better development. The design of teacher development program is of humanization, pertinence and comprehensiveness, which is attractive to university teachers. In China, as one of the demonstration centers for teachers' development in domestic universities, the Center for Teaching and Learning Development of Shanghai Jiao Tong University has its own features. With a comparative analysis between the Personal and Professional Development Center in Cambridge University and the Center for Teaching and Learning Development of Shanghai Jiao Tong University, the paper tries to summarize the experience about teacher development in Cambridge University for reference.

Introduction

Universities are entrusted with a sacred mission to innovate and transmit knowledge, and for university teachers who are in charge of teaching and resolving puzzles, it is more obvious in this mission. Although China's higher education has made great achievements, it should be recognized that there is still a certain gap between the current construction of university teachers and the expectations of the society. Through the analysis to the organizational structure, operation mechanism and projects of the Personal and Professional Development Center in Cambridge University, the paper hopes to give some enlightenments to the construction and development of China's teacher development center.

Analysis on the Reasons of University Teachers' Development

(1) With the rapid development of information technology and the spread and exchange of diversified knowledge, the single subject knowledge mastered by university teachers cannot meet the needs of current student development and school development strategy.

(2) The popularization of higher education has led to a rapid expansion of the scale of colleges and universities, accompanied by a surge in the number of university teachers, while the society and parents also have more expectations for the quality of university teaching, and this also has put forward urgent requirements for the development of university teachers.

(3) Impact of Marketization of Higher Education. With the market playing the role of resource allocation will directly promote universities to improve their own education quality and further promote the development of university teachers.

(4) Impetus of Internationalization and Globalization of Higher Education. To improve its status, comprehensive strength and competitiveness, it becomes one of the prerequisites for a university to improve the quality of the teaching staff.

Choice of Case Universities

As one of the top institutions of higher education in the world, there is no doubt about Cambridge University's resources and teaching quality of higher education, which is inseparable from its focus on the development of university teachers. After decades of development, the Personal and Professional Development Center of Cambridge University is still a leader in the UK, so it can give reference to China's university teacher development center. As one of the state-level demonstration centers, the Center for Teaching and Learning Development of Shanghai Jiao Tong University has opened up its own characteristics and made remarkable achievements. By the analysis to the development of the Personal and Professional Development Center of Cambridge University and the Center for Teaching and Learning Development of Shanghai Jiao Tong University, this paper aims to absorb the useful experience of Cambridge University and to better promote the construction of university teacher development centers in combination with the national conditions in China.

A Comparison between the Personal and Professional Development Center of Cambridge University and the Center for Teaching and Learning Development of Shanghai Jiao Tong University

Comparison of Development Background and Development Objects. (1) The teacher development of Cambridge University originated from *Robbins Report* in 1963, followed by the *Education Reform Act* in 1988, the establishment of the *Higher Education Fund Committee* (HEFC), the *Dearing Report* in 1997, and the *University Teacher Development Policy* promulgated in 2008, all promoted the university teacher development in the UK at different levels. The teacher development of Cambridge University covers new staff, academic and research staff, academic administrators and support staff.^[3] (2) The teacher development of Shanghai Jiao Tong University began in 2010, and it was put forward in the *Outline of the National Medium-and Long-Term Plan for Educational Development*. In 2012, the *Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Improving the Quality of Higher Education in an All-round Way* clearly proposed to focus on supporting the construction of national demonstration centers for teachers' teaching and learning development. The teacher development group of Shanghai Jiao Tong University includes new teachers, teachers with teaching experience and postgraduate assistants.^[3]

A Comparison of Operation Mechanism. This part is based on the overall operating mechanism and institutional functions of the school. Refer with Fig. 1, the duty of the Academic Committee is to make recommendations to the School Board on the development of teaching staff through the School Affairs Committee. Personal and Professional Development Center: carry out staff development activities; publish development-related information; provide consulting services; implement the teacher development policy; offer evaluation and improvement to development activities; provide specialized programs for new teachers. Colleges, departments and institutes have established a teacher development coordinator to understand the development needs of the teaching staff. The university teachers can learn about their development needs through skill evaluation, peer evaluation, student feedback and deliberation by higher authorities. Secondly, they should choose suitable development projects and accept evaluation on their own initiative. Finally, they should make good use of the help and development opportunities provided by all relevant departments to promote personal and professional development. Other institutions in the university should cooperate with the Personal and Professional Development Center to provide a comprehensive service for the development of the faculty in the school and ensure the smooth development of the university teachers.

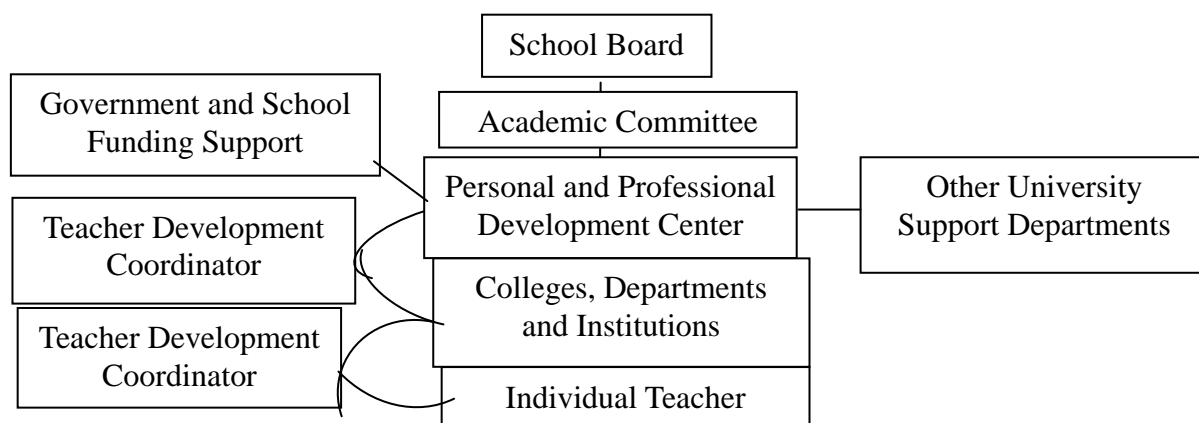


Figure 1. The Operation Mechanism of Personal and Professional Development Center of Cambridge University^[4]

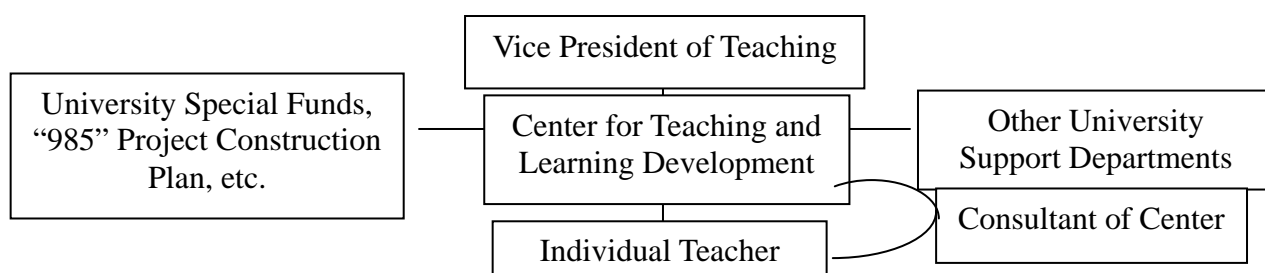


Figure 2. The Operation Mechanism of Center for Teaching and Learning Development of Shanghai Jiao Tong University

Refer with Fig. 2, the vice president of teaching is responsible for the work of the Center for Teaching and Learning Development to ensure the center's work being done smoothly. As for the Center for Teaching and Learning Development, it should train teachers. Then it is responsible for teaching research and evaluation, and carries out systematic research and quality diagnosis for teachers and students. Lastly, it is necessary to build a communication platform and provide personalized help for teachers to improve their teaching ability. Other departments in the university need to fully assist the Center for Teaching and Learning Development to ensure that the work goes smoothly. University teachers should actively participate in the development projects of the center and enjoy the training process. By contrast, we can see that in Cambridge University, the academic committee has discussed the policies and procedures for the university teacher development and submitted the most appropriate plan to the school board, which can reduce the work of the Personal and Professional Development Center and ensure the value of policies and procedures. However, the disadvantage is that the work efficiency of the center will be reduced.

While in Shanghai Jiao Tong University, the Center for Teaching and Learning Development is directly supervised by the vice president of teaching, and the work uploaded and issued is relatively timely. However, its administrative position is the key job of the vice-president of teaching, and this will lead to the vice-president of teaching failing to carry out the work of the center from the perspective of teaching in some aspects. The Personal and Professional Development Center of Cambridge University and supporting institutions outside the university jointly carry out staff development projects, which can make up for the development content neglected by staff in the university and is conducive to promoting the all-round development of staff. However, as for Shanghai Jiao Tong University, there is no such cooperation.

This part is based on the internal operating mechanism and institutional functions of the teacher development center.

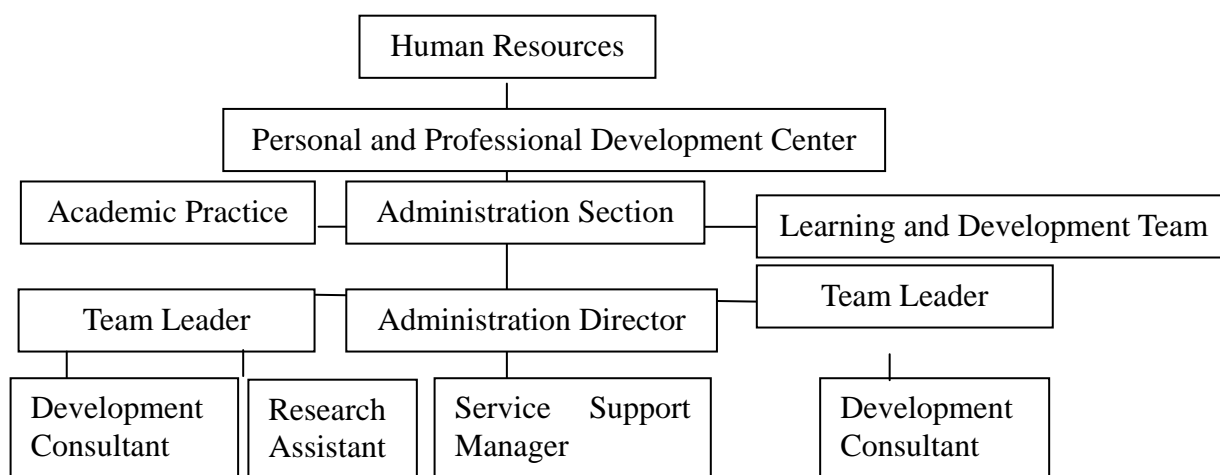


Figure 3. Internal Operation Mechanism of the Personal and Professional Development Center^[4]

Refer with Fig. 3, the academic practice team is responsible for the development and coordination of the teacher development projects; the development consultant will develop the relevant projects according to the faculty's characteristics; the research assistant is in charge of the implementation effect and influencing factors of the research project. The learning and development team is committed to stimulating the teaching staff's potential. The development consultant is responsible for the promotion of managers' abilities, the induction training of new teachers and the staff career development projects, and keeps abreast of the operation of the development projects. The administrative section provides administrative support, and the executives are in charge of the deployment of development projects and ensuring the project going well; the service support manager is responsible for the budget, the use of funds and the normal operation of the equipment.

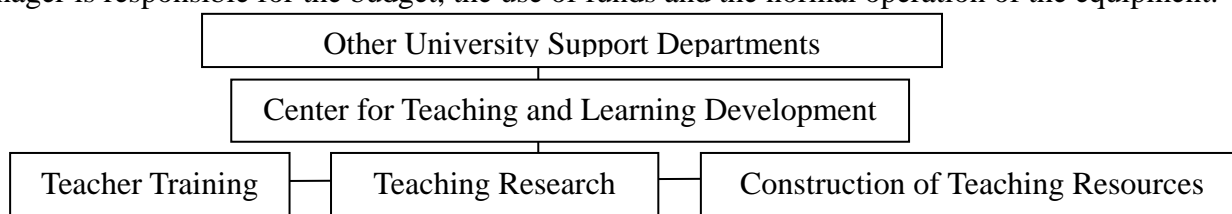


Figure 4. Internal Operation Mechanism of the Center for Teaching and Learning Development

Refer with Fig. 4, the teacher training (group) conducts teaching method and practice training for new teachers to improve the quality of teaching assistants. The teaching research (group) provides personalized consulting services for teachers to help them carry out teaching rectification in view of the problems encountered by teachers in their teaching process. The construction of teaching resources (group) aims to build an information network in education and teaching.

Project Design and Training Courses. (1) The project design of the Personal and Professional Development Center of Cambridge University includes the following parts:

For new faculty members, there are induction training, welcome party and other projects; academic and research-oriented faculty members have academic practice-themed projects, such as career development and teaching method guidance courses; academic assistants have vocational qualification training programs; leaders and managers have leadership courses and management courses; and for the personal development of the faculty, has specialized career planning courses, stress-relief project and other projects.

(2) The training courses of the Center for Teaching and Learning Development of Shanghai Jiao Tong University include:

Teaching workshops can arouse teachers' attention and interest in teaching through interaction and discussion; the training to new teachers can improve their teaching ability and teaching quality; luncheon provides a platform for teachers of Jiao Tong University to communicate freely; assistant training; mid-term student feedback; much attention to the process evaluation of teaching to help teachers find problems and seek solutions, and thus to improve the teachers' teaching level.

Enlightenments of the Personal and Professional Development Center of Cambridge University on the University Teacher Development in China

(1) Pay attention to policy guidance at different levels and gradually push forward in a timely manner. Policy promotion should be carried out at the government level and at the school level, and new policies should be continuously promulgated as the situation changes.

(2) Enrich the contents and groups of teacher development and focus on establishing a comprehensive development project system.

(3) Promote the diversification of funding sources for teacher development centers, advocate the establishment of special guarantee funds, and encourage alumni and external organizations to provide financial support.

(4) Enhance the feasibility of development projects and make them come into play fully. Attach importance to the teachers' subject will, care for teachers' self-demands, and design more feasible development projects.

Conclusions

The paper has discussed the university teacher development and aims to promote teachers' development and improve the quality of university teaching, and further to enhance the quality of the talent cultivation in China. Therefore, while learning from the successful experience of foreign countries, it is essential to keep a clear mind and establish a teacher development center that is in line with China's national conditions and has the university's own characteristics and positioning.

References

- [1] Information on <https://www.cam.ac.uk/>
- [2] T. Zhai: *The Practice Exploring of Teachers' Teaching Development Center of "985" Universities* (MS., Lanzhou University, China 2015), p.15. (In Chinese)
- [3] W.J. Tu: *Journal of Jimei University (Education Science Edition)*, Vol. 13 (2012) No.1, p.1. (In Chinese)
- [4] C.C. Cui: *International and Comparative Education*, Vol. 38 (2016) No.2, p.47. (In Chinese)