The Construction and Practice of an Extracurricular System for Primary Education Majors Guided by Teacher Education Accreditation

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Abstract: Against the backdrop of teacher education program accreditation, this program has developed an extracurricular educational system aligned with the "One Practice, Three Acquisitions" graduation requirements to address issues such as loose integration between extracurricular activities and accreditation standards, and fragmented event organization. This framework comprises four modules: "Professional Ethics Immersion", "Teaching Enhancement", "Educational Experience", and "Development Empowerment." Implementation is achieved through branded activities and a dual-teacher collaboration mechanism, supported by an evaluation system combining quantitative points with qualitative portfolios and featuring a dynamic feedback loop. This ensures seamless integration with formal classroom learning. Practice demonstrates that the system effectively enhances teacher trainees' comprehensive literacy and professional competence, providing an actionable pathway for developing extracurricular programs under accreditation-driven frameworks.

Keywords: Teacher education accreditation; Extracurricular system; Outcome-oriented approach; Practical pathway

1. Introduction

To enhance teacher training quality, the Ministry of Education issued the Implementation Measures for the Certification of Teacher Education Programs in General Higher Education Institutions (Interim) (Teacher [2017] No. 13) in 2017, establishing a certification framework grounded in the principles of "student-centredness, outcomes orientation, and continuous improvement" [1]. The Level II certification constitutes a qualifying standard, setting authoritative requirements for primary education program development.

The Level II certification explicitly states that "practicing professional ethics, mastering teaching skills,

learning to nurture students, and developing professional growth" constitute the graduation requirements for primary education students. In 2024, Shanghai Sanda University surveyed administrators from 26 primary schools across Shanghai, Jiangsu, and Jiashan. Findings indicated that "sound professional ethics" (overall score: 4.81/5) and "classroom organization and management skills" (overall score: 9.54/10) were prioritised as the foremost competencies required in new teachers.

Cultivating such critical competencies cannot be achieved through formal classroom instruction alone; they require refinement through authentic scenarios and in-depth practice within extracurricular activities. As an extension and supplement to formal education, extracurricular activities feature student autonomy, broad content coverage, and diverse formats, serving as a vital pathway for enhancing teacher trainees' comprehensive competencies and professional capabilities [2].

Upon the Level II Teacher Education Accreditation framework, Shanghai Sanda University has pioneered a systematically structured and scientifically evaluated extracurricular program for its primary education degree. This system aligns closely with the accreditation's "One Practice, Three Masteries" graduate requirements and integrates employer feedback to provide a practical pathway for cultivating high-calibre primary school teachers.

2. Objectives and principles for constructing the extracurricular system under teacher education accreditation guidance

The development of the Elementary Education program's extracurricular system must systematically address the core requirements of the Elementary Education Professional Certification Standards (Level II), establishing outcomes directly aligned with students' key competencies and capabilities. This focus centres on four key aspects:

First, fostering an unwavering commitment to teaching and professional identity. Through experiential activities, teacher trainees gain a profound appreciation for the sacredness and professionalism of the teaching vocation, cementing the spiritual foundation of "practicing professional ethics" and cultivating a strong desire to teach alongside enduring educational passion.

Second, forging robust teaching practice and innovation capabilities. Addressing the "learning to teach" requirement in the accreditation standards, the extracurricular activities should serve as both an "application arena" for theoretical knowledge and a "training ground" for teaching skills. This ensures students not only master fundamental teaching techniques but also develop comprehensive abilities in instructional design, implementation, and evaluation.

Thirdly, develop comprehensive class management and holistic educational competencies. Cultivate students' abilities to understand pupils, organize activities, and guide growth. This enables graduates not only to excel in classroom teaching but also to master practical problem-solving skills, achieving comprehensive educational outcomes.

Fourthly, guide students in cultivating awareness of lifelong learning and professional growth, nurturing the adaptability and autonomy essential for future educators, thereby establishing a robust base for their subsequent professional advancement.

To achieve the aforementioned four-dimensional objectives, the system's construction adheres to three core principles: Firstly, the output-oriented principle, which takes the attainment of students' key competencies as its

logical starting point, reverse-engineering activity content and assessment methods accordingly; secondly, the systematic integration principle, ensuring that all modules within the extracurricular form an organic sequence, while maintaining close alignment with the first classroom in both content and timing, complementing each other functionally [3]; Thirdly, the student-centred principle, which, while safeguarding core objectives, fully respects students' agency and diversity. This is achieved through diverse choices and flexible mechanisms that stimulate their intrinsic motivation and creative potential.

3. Constructing an extracurricular educational content system guided by teacher education accreditation

Guided by the outcomes-based approach of teacher education accreditation, the School of Education at Shanghai Sanda University has systematically integrated and enhanced its extracurricular activities. This has resulted in the establishment of four distinct content systems. The correspondence between the system structure and accreditation standards is outlined in **Table 1**.

Table 1. The extracurricular educational content system

System Module	Core Objective	Principal Branded Activities and Practical Vehicles	Graduation Requirement Dimensions Supported
Immersion in Professional Ethics	Fortifying the conviction to teach, cultivating educational passion	Educational Spirit Roots-seeking (Study Tours), Themed Class Meetings/Youth League Activities, Freshman Professional Orientation, Interviews with Outstanding Educators, Lectures by Key Teachers/Distinguished Principals, Alumni Lectures, "Scholarly College" Reading Campaign, Evening Study "Teacher Ethics" Module	**Cultivating Professional Ethics** (Ethical Standards, Educational Passion)
Teaching Enhancement	Honing fundamental teaching skills, stimulating innovative thinking	"Teacher Trainee Writing Skills" Training, Evening Study "Teaching Competence" and "Educational Discourse" Modules, Teaching Fundamentals Competition, Poetry Interpretation Contest, Teaching Qualification Mock Lessons, "The Reader" Activity, "University Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship" Project Curriculum Development, After-School Service Practice	**Mastering Pedagogy** (Subject Proficiency, Teaching Competence)
Educational Experience	Enhancing Class Management and Educational Capabilities	Themed Class Meeting Planning Competition, Specialised Lectures on Class and Team Management, After-School Service/Summer Care Program Class Management Practice, Case Studies in the Universal Mentor System, Community Culture Development	**Mastering Student Development** (Class Guidance, Holistic Education)
Developmental Empowerment	Cultivating Lifelong Learning and Self-Directed Development	Principal/Master Teacher Leadership Lectures, Career Planning Competitions/CV Writing Workshops, Whole-School Mentoring System, Professional Clubs/Project Teams, "Challenge Cup" University Innovation Competition, Community Culture Building, Campus Culture Development, and other practical activities	**Learning Development** (Reflective Practice, Communication & Collaboration)

The table above presents the four functional modules precisely aligned with graduation requirements within this system. Below is a detailed elaboration of each module's core elements:

3.1. Immersion in professional ethics and cultivation of educational spirit

This template employs a tripartite teacher ethics cultivation system: "Roots, Exploration, Immersion, Dialogue", to translate abstract ethical norms into actionable pathways, embedding teacher ethics education throughout teacher training.

Roots of Educational Spirit: Commencing with the inheritance of pioneering educators' ethos, trainees visit Nanjing Xiaozhuang Normal University and Hunan First Normal University, connecting the practices of Tao Xingzhi and Mao Zedong to comprehend education's connection with the mission of the times, thereby internalizing the spirit of predecessors as professional conviction.

Value-Based Immersion: Employing the approach of "explicit curriculum + implicit culture" to embed teacher ethics education into daily practice. Explicit dimension: First-year class meetings focus on "teaching profession awareness", building ethical understanding through case studies; the "Twenty Minutes of Evening Study" initiative reinforces professional conduct standards. Implicit dimension: Utilising the "Book-Loving College" initiative, deepen student-teacher professional identity through reading groups and salons.

Establishing a tiered professional ethics dialogue system: First-year students receive guidance on career direction through "Principal's First Lecture" and "Outstanding Alumni Sharing Sessions." Second- and third-year students engage in discussions with leading teachers and distinguished principals on practical topics such as classroom management and teacher-student communication. Fourth-year students participate in experience-sharing sessions with graduating seniors, addressing job-seeking and workplace adaptation challenges. Concurrently, "Outstanding Teacher Interviews" are mandated as compulsory practical training, requiring students to conduct classroom interviews in primary/secondary schools and submit reports.

3.2. Teaching training and professional competence enhancement

This module systematically builds a teaching competency development chain centered on three pillars: training, competitions, and research.

Tiered Teaching Training: At the foundational skill level, the "Teacher Trainee Handwriting Skills Training" program commences from Year 1. Outstanding students are selected as "Junior Tutors", integrating handwriting practice into the compulsory extracurricular curriculum. For specialized skills, modules such as the "Twenty-Minute Evening Study Activity", "Teacher's Words", and "Teacher's Discourse" enhance oral expression through sharing hometown cultures and educators' quotations. Activities like singing children's songs and sharing mental health knowledge improve students' professional skills and educational literacy.

A competition system involving all participants: A teaching fundamentals competition mechanism has been established, fostering a positive atmosphere where "competition drives practice and competition drives excellence." The competition adopts a progressive model of "voluntary participation + universal coverage": second-year students may enter voluntarily, while third-year students participate comprehensively. The event comprises preliminary and semi-final rounds to ensure comprehensive skill assessment. Currently, the program has established a three-tier competition system spanning university, municipal, and national levels.

Industry-Academia-Research Integration: Utilizing the "University Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship" program as a vehicle, educators establish an innovation cultivation mechanism encompassing "curriculum development — achievement transformation — practical validation", thereby achieving the synergistic development of teaching capabilities and research literacy. The "University Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship" program is aligned with curriculum development. All developed courses undergo an "on-campus trial teaching — refinement — university-community application" pathway, directly integrating into

partner primary schools' "after-school service" to achieve a closed-loop process from curriculum creation to classroom implementation.

3.3. Educational experience and class leadership development

This module progressively cultivates students' educational capabilities through "simulation, practical application, and discussion." It transforms teacher education students from "learners" of class management into "collaborators" and "leaders."

Founded on "Specialized Lectures" and Driven by "Planning Competitions": "Class and Team Management Specialized Lectures" are offered, inviting frontline form tutors and moral education specialists to deliver insights on class culture building, student psychological counselling, and the art of home-school communication, providing students with cutting-edge expertise. A "Themed Class Meeting Planning Competition" is organized, requiring students to complete a "Themed Class Meeting Planning Proposal" around a specific theme. Outstanding proposals are incorporated into the college's teaching resource repository, solidifying and sharing learning outcomes.

Fulfilling holistic educational responsibilities in real-world settings, such as after-school programs and summer care classes: Leveraging stable practice bases, students are organized to deliver lessons in primary schools or community classrooms. Under dual-mentor guidance, they independently or collaboratively undertake classroom instruction, daily management, discipline maintenance, activity organization, and individual student tutoring.

Deepening reflection through case studies [4]: Utilizing the faculty's comprehensive mentoring system, students engage in group case studies focusing on real-world challenges encountered during practice (e.g., guiding students with special needs, handling classroom emergencies). Under mentor supervision, these cases undergo structured analysis.

3.4. Developmental empowerment and career navigation

This module establishes a comprehensive, personalized development support network. It cultivates key competencies including career planning, independent inquiry, teamwork, and reflective practice.

External Guidance and Career Launch: Regularly host "Principal/Master Teacher Leadership Lectures", inviting seasoned practitioners and administrators in education to share industry insights, growth experiences, and career wisdom, using role models to drive professional identity. Concurrently organize practical activities such as "Career Planning Competitions" and "CV Workshops" to guide students in systematically assessing themselves and exploring career pathways.

Multi-stakeholder Collaborative Development: Establish "Professional Societies" and "Project Teams"—such as the Educator Spirit Oratory Society, Chinese Talent Society, A Cappella Society, "Hand-in-Hand" After-School Service Society, and Science Innovation Society—encouraging students to form learning communities based on shared interests or research topics.

Forging Comprehensive Competencies Through Competitions and Real-World Projects: Actively organizing and guiding student participation in competitions such as the Challenge Cup Innovation Contest, enabling students to enhance their overall capabilities through competition preparation. Concurrently, practical activities like "Community Cultural Development" and "Campus Cultural Development" serve as comprehensive testing grounds. Post-activity exchanges and reflections further enhance students' lifelong

learning capabilities.

4. Development of operational management mechanisms

To ensure the standardized, efficient, and sustainable operation of second-curriculum activities, this program has established a four-pronged operational management mechanism guided by the "continuous improvement" principle of teacher education accreditation as follows:

Firstly, a program-wide planning and execution mechanism has been established. At the program level, a "extracurricular Working Group" has been established: the Head of Department serves as Group Leader, steering direction and approving plans; the Deputy Head of Department acts as Executive Deputy Group Leader, overseeing daily operations and cross-campus coordination; four module leads (Professional Ethics, Teaching, Student Development, and Development) are appointed to coordinate the professional design and implementation of corresponding activities across both campuses. Concurrently, a "Regular Meeting System" (planning meetings, progress meetings, summary meetings) was instituted, alongside standardized procedures for activity reporting, briefing documentation, and archiving. These organizational and procedural safeguards ensure the systematic and standardized operation of the extracurricular program.

Secondly, a dual-instructor collaborative mechanism for guidance, training, and evaluation has been established. To address the shortfall in practical guidance from university faculty, educators established a "dual-instructor" guidance team comprising university subject specialists and primary school frontline teachers, supported by a series of collaborative mechanisms. Responsibilities were clearly defined: university faculty focus on theoretical frameworks and activity design, while frontline teachers concentrate on embedding practical scenarios and refining skills. Deep collaboration is achieved through joint participation in collective lesson planning and activity proposal reviews.

Thirdly, educators have strengthened the management and iterative promotion mechanisms for flagship programs. To enhance educational effectiveness, projects such as the "Teacher Training Students' Teaching Skills Competition" and "After-School Services" have been subjected to full-process closed-loop management, encompassing selection, mentor follow-up, archiving, and multi-dimensional evaluation mechanisms. These projects have been established as core practical components for senior-year students. Through a "mentoring and guidance" mechanism facilitating experience sharing and intergenerational transmission, project management has evolved from isolated activities into replicable models.

5. Establishing an extracurricular evaluation system

5.1. Structured points platform and personal growth portfolio

The system comprises a "Structured Points Platform" and a "Personal Growth Portfolio", both underpinned by the points framework and activity modules stipulated in the syllabus [5].

Structured Points Platform: Points allocation adheres to the detailed provisions under Section V "Course Assessment" of the co-curricular syllabus. For example:

Participation Points: Attending a masterclass lecture and submitting a learning report earn the 2 points stipulated in the syllabus.

Achievement-Based Points: Awards from teaching fundamentals competitions directly translate to 5–20 points based on national, municipal, or university level, precisely reflecting competency.

Process-based points: The "Teacher Trainee Handwriting Skills" training accumulates points through routine weekly check-ins (minimum 4 times per week, 0.1 points per check-in). "After-school services" are credited based on actual teaching hours undertaken (1 point per hour).

Deep Engagement Bonus Mechanism: To incentivize profound participation and high-caliber outputs, the system implements a "base points + deep engagement bonus" framework for selected projects. For instance, participation in the "Curriculum Development" project yields 2 base points within the "Teaching Enhancement" module. Subsequently, based on the innovation, completeness, and review outcomes of the course proposal, an additional 1–3 points may be awarded as a deep engagement bonus. This mechanism effectively guides students from merely "completing activities" towards "producing high-quality outputs."

Students must ultimately accumulate 160 points to meet graduation requirements.

5.2. Personal growth portfolio: Qualitative evidence and developmental trajectory

The portfolio system collects in-depth, process-oriented materials generated across modules, such as study tour reports tracing educational philosophies, complete course development proposals and teaching materials, post-lesson service educational narrative reflections, and career planning documents. These materials correspond directly to credit items, collectively forming an evidence chain supporting specific graduation requirement indicators.

The points platform provides real-time visualization, enabling students and mentors to monitor progress across modules at any time. For students showing prolonged inactivity or significant weaknesses in specific modules, mentors will intervene promptly. For instance, if low credit accumulation in advanced achievements within the "Teaching Enhancement" module is identified, competition coaching and project incubation are intensified; if reflective materials in the "Educational Experience" module remain superficial, guidance on educational narrative writing is strengthened. This ensures alignment between educational effectiveness and accreditation requirements.

In summary, teacher education programs should be guided by accreditation standards to construct and refine their extracurricular educational systems, thereby enhancing the quality of teacher training. The framework and practices presented in this research aim to provide actionable references for ongoing teacher education program development – references grounded in practice, and open to critique.

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Author contributions

Li Liu conceived the idea of the study and wrote the first to third parts of this thesis; Jia Bi wrote the fourth part; and Linyuan Su wrote the fifth part.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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