

# Research on Reform of Clothing Design and Craft Teaching Based on Modern Apprenticeship System

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**Abstract:** Clothing design and craft is a professional and practical course. Teaching reform based on the modern apprenticeship system aligns with contemporary demands and effectively enhances students' professional skills and overall competencies, thereby increasing their competitiveness in the job market. This paper explores discussions on the modern apprenticeship system and the current teaching status of clothing design and craft, followed by an analysis of strategies for teaching reform in this field under the modern apprenticeship system.

**Keywords:** Modern apprenticeship; Clothing design and craft; Teaching reform

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## 1. Introduction

With the rapid development of the social economy, the teaching of fashion design faces numerous opportunities and challenges. Traditional teaching models no longer meet the learning needs of contemporary students. In this context, the modern apprenticeship system emerges as a talent cultivation model that integrates academic instruction with enterprise-based practice. Its application in the teaching of fashion design and craft enables students to adapt more effectively to the fashion industry's environment, comprehend actual design and production processes, improve their overall competencies, and establish a solid foundation for their future careers.

## 2. Overview of the reform of modern apprenticeship and clothing design and craft teaching

### 2.1. The basic concept and characteristics of modern apprenticeship

Modern apprenticeship is a contemporary talent training model that combines modern vocational education with the traditional mentoring system. By strengthening school-enterprise cooperation and integrating

industry with education, this model enhances the relevance and quality of vocational talent training, ensuring a seamless connection between professional education and industrial demand, as well as a close alignment between teaching content and job requirements <sup>[1]</sup>. In practical application, vocational colleges collaborate extensively with enterprises to allow students, as “apprentices,” to apply their professional knowledge and skills during internship stages. This process helps students clarify their career and employment goals, achieving the development objective of combining work and study. Additionally, the modern apprenticeship system breaks away from the traditional separation of vocational education and work practice, embodying the employment-oriented trend of vocational education reform. By learning professional skills under the guidance of a “master” during practice, students accumulate work experience, fostering the integration of school and enterprise education.

## **2.2. The necessity of reform in clothing design and craft teaching**

With the rapid development of society and the economy, traditional concepts in fashion design have become insufficient to meet the diverse and personalized needs of consumers. The demand for high-quality professionals in the fashion design and craft industry has also increased significantly. Against this backdrop, higher vocational colleges must actively explore reforms in clothing design and craft teaching to adapt to evolving market demands and cultivate more outstanding talent aligned with industry developments <sup>[2]</sup>. Furthermore, certain higher vocational institutions overly emphasize theory while neglecting practical application in the teaching of fashion design and craft. This imbalance weakens students’ practical abilities and innovation awareness. Teachers must address this issue by reforming traditional teaching approaches and innovating teaching content, methods, and evaluation systems. By adopting modern apprenticeship models and other production-education integration methods, students can gain broader professional insights, enhance their competitiveness in the job market, and establish a solid foundation for their career paths.

## **2.3. The application advantages of modern apprenticeship in clothing design and craft teaching**

Clothing design and craft teaching focuses on cultivating students’ professional practical abilities, while modern apprenticeship emphasizes enhancing practical skills alongside professional competencies and qualities. This model allows students to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical operations in real-world contexts, enabling them to address practical problems effectively <sup>[3]</sup>. Moreover, “learning by application” is a core concept of modern apprenticeship. Under the guidance of a “master,” students participate in real projects, completing authentic clothing design and production tasks. This exposure to cutting-edge technologies and fashion industry trends provides valuable insights into their future studies and careers. Additionally, during the clothing design and production process, with guidance from both school and enterprise mentors, students actively consider factors such as production costs, user experience, and market demand. This comprehensive approach contributes positively to the overall enhancement of students’ competencies.

# **3. The current situation of fashion design and craft teaching based on the modern apprenticeship system**

## **3.1. The mechanism of cooperation between schools and enterprises needs improvement**

Currently, the collaboration and interaction between some higher vocational colleges and garment enterprises

remain relatively superficial, lacking depth in areas such as curriculum design, talent training objectives, and the sharing of educational resources. This limitation prevents both parties from fully leveraging their strengths to cultivate high-quality vocational talents in garment design and craft skills<sup>[4]</sup>. In practice, school-enterprise cooperation often involves enterprises providing internship positions while schools organize senior students to participate in these internships. While this approach increases students' exposure to professional practice, it fails to adequately address their long-term career development and does not fully stimulate their initiative or creativity. Furthermore, due to the absence of effective supervision and evaluation mechanisms, students gain only limited knowledge and skill growth during their internships.

### **3.2. The goal of talent training needs optimization**

In the teaching of fashion design and craft, traditional training objectives often prioritize the transmission of theoretical knowledge while neglecting the cultivation of students' innovative thinking and practical abilities. However, the garment industry is highly competitive, and creative practical exploration serves as the core driver for its sustainable development. Therefore, talent training goals should place greater emphasis on fostering students' innovative thinking and practical problem-solving abilities<sup>[5]</sup>. Additionally, with the digital transformation and upgrading of the garment industry in the Internet era, vocational colleges should adapt their training objectives to include the development of students' digital design thinking and 3D printing application skills. Such adjustments will provide students with the necessary guidance and support for their long-term career development.

### **3.3. The strength of “double-qualified” teachers is relatively weak**

The rapid development of the garment industry, marked by the emergence of new technologies, materials, and techniques, demands that teachers not only possess a strong professional foundation and teaching ability but also have practical work experience. However, the number of teachers who can meet both of these requirements is limited, leaving significant room for improvement in the development of “double-qualified” teachers<sup>[6]</sup>. Currently, the teaching staff for garment design and craft in higher vocational colleges often exhibit a single-dimensional structure, lacking sufficient industry experience. Although these teachers typically have excellent professional backgrounds and academic qualifications, they frequently lack hands-on experience in real garment design and production projects. Conversely, enterprise mentors involved in the modern apprenticeship system possess extensive practical experience but often lack teaching skills and knowledge of educational theory.

## **4. The reform strategy of clothing design and craft teaching based on the modern apprenticeship system**

### **4.1. Optimizing the school-enterprise cooperation mechanism and strengthening top-level design**

The increasing demand for high-quality professionals in the garment industry necessitates innovation and reform in the teaching of garment design and craft in higher vocational colleges. School-enterprise cooperation serves as a crucial prerequisite and guarantee for implementing the modern apprenticeship system. From the perspective of modern apprenticeship, such cooperation in fashion design and craft teaching should not remain limited to theoretical instruction and practical operations but should also delve into dimensions such as curriculum design, teaching content, teaching methods, and evaluation systems<sup>[7]</sup>.

In addition to signing long-term cooperation agreements, both parties should establish joint working groups and hold regular communication meetings to ensure effective dialogue and timely resolution of issues during the cooperation process. This approach can fully harness the educational potential of modern apprenticeship in clothing design and craft teaching. Furthermore, traditional clothing design and craft curricula often prioritize theoretical knowledge and skill demonstrations, limiting students' hands-on opportunities. To address this, teachers should optimize the curriculum system by enhancing school-enterprise collaboration, incorporating more practical training sessions both within and outside the school, and enabling students to apply their professional knowledge and skills under the guidance of "masters" through on-campus project training and off-campus enterprise internships.

In practice, teachers can outline a career development path for students, progressing from "students" to "prospective apprentices," then "apprentices," and ultimately "professional talents." Implementing a flexible learning management and credit system can further guide curriculum optimization [8]. Additionally, a feedback mechanism should be established to gather evaluations and suggestions from enterprise mentors regarding students' practical performance, as well as students' reflections on their training experiences. Based on this feedback, adjustments to teaching content and methods can be made to better align with industry needs while enhancing students' vocational skills.

#### **4.2. Clarifying talent training goals and innovating practical teaching**

Clarifying talent training objectives is essential for improving teaching quality and enhancing students' learning outcomes in the reform of fashion design and craft teaching under the modern apprenticeship system. To ensure the relevance and practicality [9] of these objectives, teachers should align them with industry trends and market demands. By analyzing the future development trajectory of the fashion design and craft field, teachers can adjust the curriculum to better meet the industry's actual work requirements, thereby providing students with more targeted vocational skills education.

Talent training goals under the modern apprenticeship system should ensure that students acquire foundational knowledge of fashion design, garment structure, and garment craft, as well as develop professional competencies in garment design, pattern making, and sample garment production. In terms of practical teaching, industry experts or experienced enterprise staff can be introduced as guest lecturers or enterprise mentors [10]. Their involvement can provide students with insights into the latest industry knowledge and technologies, as well as opportunities to engage with real-world enterprise practices during their studies.

Additionally, teachers can collaborate with apparel enterprises to develop internship and training programs, granting students access to cutting-edge technologies and management practices in the industry. For instance, enterprise designers can conduct practical demonstrations of clothing design and production, with teachers assisting in the recording and explanation of these sessions for online video classes. Through online teaching platforms, students can repeatedly access high-quality instructional videos to reinforce their practical skills.

During enterprise internships, students can observe enterprise mentors in action and seek their guidance while undertaking tasks independently. This approach not only enhances students' practical abilities but also fosters their innovation skills, preparing them for future challenges in the fashion industry [11].

#### **4.3. Building a "double-qualified" teacher team to improve teaching quality**

In the teaching of fashion design and craft, establishing a team of "double-qualified" teachers is an effective



strategy for enhancing teaching quality. “Double-qualified” teachers can seamlessly integrate theoretical knowledge with practical skills, offering students a more comprehensive, in-depth, and high-quality learning experience.

First, the teacher training system should be continuously improved. Vocational colleges should regularly organize training activities focused on teaching methods, subject-specific knowledge, and industry developments to enhance teachers’ professional expertise <sup>[12]</sup>. Second, cooperation between schools and enterprises should be strengthened. Greater efforts should be made to recruit skilled professionals from the garment industry to facilitate the two-way exchange of talent between enterprises and vocational colleges. For instance, experienced garment design professionals from enterprises can be hired as part-time corporate tutors to guide students in on-campus practical training and provide instruction closely aligned with real-world work scenarios.

Additionally, the composition of the teaching team is crucial. Schools should ensure a balanced ratio of full-time to part-time teachers, forming a complementary teaching team structure. Young teachers should also be nurtured through mentoring programs and other developmental initiatives. Attention should be given to the cultivation of teachers’ professional ethics and values. In teacher recruitment, ethics should be prioritized as the primary criterion for evaluating qualifications, and emphasis should be placed on teachers’ abilities in ideological and political education as well as their adherence to professional ethics. Regular assessments of teachers’ ethical conduct should be conducted, with commendations and rewards for exemplary performance <sup>[13]</sup>.

Finally, schools should establish scientific teaching standards and evaluation systems tailored to the application of the modern apprenticeship model in fashion design and craft teaching. This approach will promote the growth of “double-qualified” teachers and enhance the effectiveness of education in this field.

#### **4.4. Improving teaching evaluation and enhancing students’ professional quality**

Although the modern apprenticeship system has been widely applied in fashion design and craft teaching, various challenges remain in its practical implementation. To address these, teachers should focus on continuously refining the teaching evaluation system to enhance students’ professional quality <sup>[14]</sup>.

First, multi-dimensional evaluation standards should be established. Students’ performance should be assessed comprehensively across dimensions such as knowledge acquisition, skill application, innovation capacity, and teamwork. By evaluating students’ performance in practical fashion design and craft activities, their overall quality and career potential can be more accurately assessed.

Second, the evaluation process should integrate both formative and summative assessments. In addition to assessing students’ final clothing designs or production outcomes, emphasis should be placed on evaluating their performance throughout the design and production process. This includes their innovation, problem-solving abilities, and technical skills. Formative evaluations can motivate students to engage more actively in practical activities, while also identifying and addressing their weaknesses in a timely manner <sup>[15]</sup>.

Lastly, multiple evaluation stakeholders should be involved. Teacher evaluations should assess students’ theoretical understanding and technical proficiency to gauge their academic progress. Enterprise mentors can evaluate the professionalism, quality, and adherence to industry standards demonstrated by students during design and production processes. Peer evaluations can foster collaborative learning and mutual accountability among students. Furthermore, students’ fashion creations can be shared on social media or sold in markets, allowing real consumers to evaluate their work. Such external feedback provides students with valuable insights

into their professional abilities from a societal perspective, helping them identify and refine their career paths.

## 5. Conclusion

In summary, the integration of modern apprenticeship into the teaching of fashion design and craft provides a framework for enhancing students' practical abilities, professional competencies, and innovative capacities. By implementing strategies such as optimizing the school-enterprise cooperation mechanism, clarifying talent training objectives, establishing a "double-qualified" teaching team, and refining teaching evaluation systems, vocational colleges can effectively address industry needs. These efforts contribute to the cultivation of high-quality professionals aligned with the evolving demands of the garment industry, ultimately benefiting both students and society as a whole.

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## Disclosure statement

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