

# Practical Application and Reflections on a Phased Management Model for Five-Year Higher Vocational Students

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## Abstract

Five-year higher vocational education holds a significant position within China's vocational education system. Students entering this programme are relatively young, exhibiting distinct developmental phases throughout their growth. Traditional student management approaches often overlook these developmental differences, resulting in insufficiently targeted interventions. Drawing upon practical experience in student management at vocational institutions, this paper analyses behavioral characteristics during the adaptation phase, development phase, and employment preparation phase based on the developmental traits of five-year higher vocational students. It further explores a phased student management model. Practice demonstrates that implementing differentiated management strategies at distinct learning stages effectively fosters the cultivation of study habits, enhances professional identity, and develops vocational competence, thereby improving students' overall quality and employ-ability. The findings offer valuable reference for student management practices in vocational institutions.

## Keywords

Five-year higher vocational education; Student management; Phased management; Vocational education.

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, vocational education reform in China has advanced steadily, with five-year higher vocational education gradually emerging as a vital pathway for cultivating high-caliber technical and skilled personnel. Compared to conventional higher education, five-year higher vocational students exhibit distinct age-related characteristics. Most enroll in vocational institutions immediately after completing junior secondary education, typically around the age of 15, undertaking a five-year course of study. During this period, students not only acquire specialized knowledge but also undergo psychological maturation and transitions in social roles [1].

Existing research indicates that student management practices in vocational institutions not only concern behavioral norms but also directly influence students' learning attitudes, professional awareness, and future career trajectories [2]. However, in practice, some institutions persist with relatively uniform management approaches, lacking systematic consideration of developmental stage differences among students [3]. This situation diminishes the targeted effectiveness of student management to a certain extent.

Consequently, exploring management models tailored to the characteristics of five-year higher vocational students holds significant importance for enhancing the quality of student management.

## 2. Characteristics of the Development of Five-Year Higher Vocational Students

### 2.1. The Learning Adaptation Process is Pronounced

Students entering five-year higher vocational programs require time to adjust to their new academic environment. Compared to secondary school, vocational institutions exhibit significant differences in curriculum design, management approaches, and academic expectations. Some students struggle to adapt to the new learning model in the short term, exhibiting weaker initiative in their studies [4].

Furthermore, variations in foundational academic abilities among students can undermine their confidence in learning. Consequently, strengthening academic guidance and behavioral norms education during the initial enrolment period plays a crucial role in helping students adapt swiftly to the vocational college environment.

### 2.2. Professional Identity Gradually Takes Shape

As students' progress through specialized coursework, they progressively engage in professional skills training, deepening their understanding of their chosen discipline. Research indicates that professional identity significantly influences students' commitment to learning [5]. When students gain a clear perspective on their field's career prospects, their motivation to study typically increases markedly.

Consequently, fostering students' professional identity through disciplinary awareness education, skills competitions, and practical activities constitutes a vital component of student management during their developmental journey.

### 2.3. Career Awareness Gradually Increases

During the latter stages of their studies, students progressively enter the internship and employment preparation phase. At this juncture, they begin to focus more intently on future career development and engage in deeper reflection on employment matters. Concurrently, some students still require further enhancement in professional conduct, communication skills, and teamwork capabilities.

Therefore, strengthening professional conduct education and employment guidance during the pre-graduation period holds significant importance for enhancing students' employability.

## 3. Exploring A Phased Student Management Model

Considering the developmental characteristics of five-year higher vocational students, their five-year academic journey can be divided into three distinct phases, each requiring tailored management strategies.

### 3.1. Adaptation Phase: Focus on Cultivating Behavioral Habits

During the initial period of enrolment, student management efforts should prioritize the development of behavioral norms and study habits. Institutions may utilize orientation programs, themed class meetings, and classroom culture initiatives to familiarize students with the distinctive learning characteristics of vocational colleges.

Concurrently, tutors should assist students in gradually establishing sound study habits through daily supervision. For instance, learning guidance activities can equip students with effective study techniques, while mental health education enhances their capacity to adapt to new environments.

### **3.2. Development Stage: Strengthening Professional Development Guidance**

Upon entering their specialized studies, student management should place greater emphasis on professional development guidance. Institutions may utilize company visits, skills competitions, and specialist lectures to familiarize students with industry trends.

Furthermore, career planning courses constitute a vital component of this stage. Through career planning education, students gain clearer insight into their developmental trajectory, thereby enhancing their motivation to learn.

### **3.3. Employment Phase: Enhancing Professional Competence**

During the pre-graduation phase, the focus of student management gradually shifts towards cultivating professional competence. Institutions may enhance students' job-seeking capabilities through career guidance programmes, mock interviews, and professional etiquette training.

Concurrently, industry-academia collaboration initiatives provide students with practical opportunities to gain experience within authentic workplace settings. Research indicates that practical experience effectively boosts students' employability competitiveness.

## **4. Phased Management Practice Outlets**

In student management practice, the phased management model has yielded tangible results. Firstly, regarding behavioral standards, students' awareness of discipline has markedly increased, and the classroom learning atmosphere has improved.

Secondly, concerning learning attitudes, students have developed greater interest in their academic disciplines, with markedly heightened enthusiasm for participating in skills competitions and practical activities.

Furthermore, in terms of employment, students' professional competence and employ-ability have seen notable improvement. Through systematic career guidance and practical training, students are better equipped to adapt to corporate environments.

These developments demonstrate that the phased student management model can enhance the targeted nature of student management work to a certain extent.

## **5. Reflections on Further Enhancing Student Management Practices**

During the implementation of the phased student management model, positive changes have emerged in students' behavioral habits, learning attitudes, and professional awareness. Nevertheless, from a long-term developmental perspective, there remains scope for further optimization in student management. Drawing upon practical management experience, continuous improvements to the student management model can be pursued through three key areas: home-school collaboration, counsellor team development, and digital management systems.

Firstly, the home-school collaborative education mechanism should be strengthened. Given that five-year higher vocational students typically enrol at a young age, active parental involvement remains crucial for shaping values, cultivating behavioral habits, and developing learning attitudes. However, in practice, some parents lack sufficient understanding of vocational education and pay inadequate attention to their children's academic progress, resulting in sub-optimal communication. Therefore, institutions should establish more stable and effective communication channels between home and school. For instance, parent-teacher meetings, dedicated communication platforms, and regular liaison mechanisms can enable parents to stay informed about their children's academic and personal progress. Concurrently, institutions may organize thematic lectures or online exchange activities to educate parents on

vocational education trends and student development patterns, thereby fostering greater parental recognition of vocational education's value. Cultivating enduring home-school partnerships will foster a collaborative environment where both institutions and families actively participate in student growth, ultimately enhancing the overall effectiveness of student management.

Secondly, the professional competence of the counsellor workforce should be continuously enhanced. As the primary implementer of student management in vocational institutions, counselors' professional capabilities and expertise directly influence the quality of student administration. With the ongoing advancement of vocational education reforms, the focus of student management has gradually shifted from traditional disciplinary oversight towards comprehensive developmental guidance, placing heightened demands upon counselors. Consequently, institutions should strengthen counsellor development through multiple approaches. On the one hand, specialized training programs, experience-sharing sessions, and case studies can be organized to enhance counselors' capabilities in areas such as psychological support, career guidance, and class management. On the other hand, counselors should be encouraged to engage in educational research and practice summaries, transforming student management experience into theoretical outcomes to drive continuous improvement in student affairs. Furthermore, institutions must refine evaluation and incentive mechanisms for counselors, bolstering their motivation and sense of responsibility to ensure the sustainable development of student management [10].

Moreover, against the backdrop of rapid information technology advancement, leveraging digital tools to enhance student management efficiency holds significant importance. Traditional student management methods, heavily reliant on manual record-keeping and experiential judgement, often suffer from incomplete information or delayed feedback when managing large student populations [11, 12]. Therefore, institutions can utilize digital management platforms to systematically document students' academic progress, behavioral conduct, and practical activities during their enrolment [13]. By collating and analyzing relevant data, institutions can gain a more comprehensive understanding of student development, thereby providing a more scientific basis for management decisions. For instance, establishing student growth portfolios enables continuous tracking of developmental changes across different stages, facilitating the timely identification of potential issues [14]. Concurrently, digital platforms can facilitate information sharing among counselors, subject teachers, and administrative departments, enhancing collaborative efficiency in student management [15].

Overall, as the vocational education landscape evolves, student management practices must continually innovate and refine. Strengthening home-school collaboration, enhancing counselors' professional capabilities, and advancing digital management systems will further improve the scientific rigour and targeted approach of student management [16, 17]. This creates a more conducive environment for the holistic development of five-year higher vocational students.

## 6. Conclusion

Students in five-year higher vocational programs exhibit distinct developmental phases throughout their educational journey. By establishing a phased student management framework and implementing targeted measures at each stage, institutions can effectively foster the cultivation of study habits, enhance professional identity, and advance the development of vocational competencies [18-20].

Moving forward, vocational colleges should continue refining their student management systems in alignment with practical circumstances, thereby providing stronger support for cultivating highly skilled technical professionals.

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