

# Research on the Construction of the Practice Teaching Mode of MTA in China: A Case Study of Chifeng University

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## Abstract

According to the general requirements of the Guiding Training Plan for Postgraduates of Master of Tourism Management issued by the China Tourism Management Postgraduate Education Steering Committee, practice is an important part of MTA training. The construction of a student-centered practical teaching mode that fully arouses the enthusiasm of students and the effective promotion of diverse practical teaching activities is the concrete embodiment of MTA's strengthening the practice link. It is also an effective means to achieve the MTA training goal of "high-level, application-oriented professionals with a sense of social responsibility, entrepreneurial and innovative ability, tourism professionalism, international vision and strategic thinking ability, and competent for the actual work of modern tourism and related industries", which is of typical significance for improving the quality of MTA training.

## Keywords

MTA, Practice Construction, Teaching Management

## 1. Introduction

China's Master of Tourism Administration (MTA) is a kind of professional degree education approved by the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council in 2010. It aims to cultivate "high-level, application-oriented professionals with a sense of social responsibility, entrepreneurial and innovative ability, tourism professional quality, international vision and strategic thinking ability, and competent for practical work in modern tourism and related industries" (China Tourism Management Postgraduate Education Steering Committee,

2011), the unified enrollment of graduate students nationwide began in 2011. At present, the number of MTA degree authorization points has grown from 67 in 2011 to 133 in 2020 (The Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council of China, 2021) (Table 1).

Professional degree education attaches great importance to practical teaching. High-quality practical teaching should be carried out in specific courses and special practical teaching courses. Building a good practical teaching model will help professional degree education to successfully carry out practical teaching and case teaching (The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security of China, 2013; Yang, 2014). Full and high-quality practical teaching oriented to the industry is an important guarantee for the quality of MTA education. The practical teaching of MTA attaches great importance to the “local atmosphere”. The construction of a practical teaching mode can play a good role in the combination of “production, learning, research and application” of professional masters. At the same time, good practical teaching can also make a good contribution to the development of local industries.

## 2. The Importance of Practical Teaching for Master of Tourism Management (MTA)

In the Guiding Training Plan for Postgraduates of Master of Tourism Management (2011) formulated by the China Tourism Management Education Steering Committee (MTA) (hereinafter referred to as the “MTA Education Steering Committee”), we paid special attention to the construction of practical teaching mode. In the training objectives, it is emphasized to “cultivate high-level, application-oriented professionals with a sense of social responsibility, entrepreneurial and innovative ability, tourism professional quality, international vision and strategic thinking ability, and competent for the practical work of modern tourism and related industries”. In terms of training methods, it emphasizes on strengthening the practice link and requires “inviting teachers with rich teaching experience and management practice experience to teach graduate students”,

**Table 1.** Number of masters in tourism management (MTA) in China.

No.	Region	Before 2020	2020	Total
1	Northeast China	10	0	10
2	North China	16	5	21
3	East China	13	6	19
4	Central China	28	6	34
5	South China	12	1	13
6	Southwest China	13	9	22
7	Northwest China	10	4	14
	Total	102	31	133

“integrating theory with practice, paying attention to practical application, and paying attention to training the thinking ability and the ability to analyze and solve problems of graduate students. Teaching is carried out in combination with cases in the actual development of China’s tourism industry, and classroom discussion is fully used to guide graduate students to think creatively”. How to combine the relevant requirements of the state and the MTA Education Instruction Committee to build a professional practice, which is an important link in the MTA training process, is of typical significance to practice the MTA training objectives, innovate the talent training model, and improve the quality of talent training (Sun et al., 2014).

### **3. The Construction Direction of Practical Teaching for Master of Tourism Management (MTA)**

The Opinions of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security of China on Deeply Promoting the Reform of the Training Mode of Professional Degree Postgraduates clearly put forward that the training mode of professional degree research should be “guided by professional needs, focused on the cultivation of practical ability, and taken the combination of industry and education as the way”. Therefore, how can MTA establish a suitable practical teaching mode to ensure adequate and high-quality MTA professional practice and promote the improvement of students’ quality? The current MTA practical teaching should point to the following two aspects.

#### **3.1. How to Highlight the Adaptation to Professional Ability in Training Program Design**

Starting from professional degrees, especially MTA’s “what kind of people need to be trained”, and starting from the industry (enterprise)’s demand for professional ability and quality of professional degree graduates, a comprehensive analysis of professional practice is the best way and powerful means to cultivate the knowledge, ability and quality of professional degree graduates, highlighting the need to focus on building a good practice platform for professional degree graduates in formulating corresponding talent training objectives, providing reliable, effective Comprehensive practice opportunities, guidance and training to help professional degree graduate students fully improve their practical ability in limited time.

#### **3.2. How to Solve the Common Problems Faced by Practical Teaching**

In combination with the universities that have carried out MTA in various regions, the problems that have been generally faced in the MTA practice teaching link are:

- Different goals of schools and enterprises lead to low enthusiasm of enterprises (industries) to participate in practice.

- The two tutors in the double tutor system are not balanced, which restricts the effectiveness and quality of practice guidance.
- The practice content is not rich enough and the effect required by the training program is not consistent.

#### **4. Key Points for the Construction of Practical Teaching for the Master of Tourism Management (MTA)**

In combination with the requirements of the Opinions of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security on Deeply Promoting the Reform of the Professional Postgraduate Training Mode (Jiao Yan [2013] No. 3), the Guiding Training Plan for Postgraduates of the Master's Degree in Tourism Management (2011) issued by the MTA Education Instruction Committee, we will promote the close integration of practice with curriculum teaching and dissertation work, and focus on cultivating the awareness and ability of graduate students to solve practical problems in practice.

##### **4.1. Refined Implementation of the Training Program**

With the goal of how to set the problem-oriented practical teaching goal, in the specific courses (9 professional compulsory courses + 5 professional elective courses specified by the MTA Teaching Instruction Committee) and practical teaching links (2 credits for social practice, 1 credit for scientific research activities, 1 credit for academic activities, a total of 4 credits), we carefully build a comprehensive teaching environment conducive to students' learning, research and practical ability, so as to stimulate students' learning potential and interest (Li et al., 2020).

##### **4.2. The Whole Process Is Integrated into the Teaching Content of Each Link**

Focusing on how to design the integration of theory and practice, highlighting the practical characteristics and industry needs, we should comprehensively consider the teaching composition of theoretical teaching and practical teaching according to the characteristics of each course, and promote the integration of theoretical teaching and practical teaching content.

##### **4.3. Constantly Strengthen the Construction of Practice Base**

Appropriate analysis should be made on the construction of joint training practice base, and effective analysis should be made on how to realize the common interests of universities and enterprises.

- In the aspect of degree thesis writing, the analysis should be made on the origin of MTA's degree thesis from practice and the summary of practice to explore the diversification of the degree thesis (for example, the form of the thesis can be a monograph, or an investigation report or case analysis report).

- Implement the evaluation of practical teaching effects.

## **5. A Case Study on the Practice Teaching of the Master of Tourism Management (MTA) of Chifeng University**

### **5.1. Master of Tourism Management (MTA) of Chifeng University Has a Foundation in Practical Teaching**

First, the MTA practical teaching at Chifeng University is being actively promoted. With the support of the school, the MTA training program has basically taken shape. The training program attaches great importance to practical teaching, and has made a directional plan for practical teaching. During the development of the training program, we had in-depth exchanges with more than 20 persons in charge of the MTA authorized points and professional teachers of universities inside and outside the area. We have a preliminary understanding of the practical teaching model, and we also have a good understanding of the training programs, and teachers' Practice teaching has carried out in-depth research, which is conducive to the development of practice teaching.

Second, the construction of a practice teaching base has been explored. On the basis of actively learning from the MTA practical teaching mode of similar schools, based on the actual situation of Chifeng University and the regional culture and tourism industry, preliminary research has been carried out, and a number of practice bases have been established, such as Keqi Cultural Tourism Group and Yulong Shahu International Ecotourism Zone. Some teachers have participated in the practical teaching guidance of the MTA of relevant units and accumulated preliminary experience in the establishment of practical teaching bases.

Third, a relatively reliable team of practical tutors has been initially established. Seven practical instructors were initially recruited, including two from professional research institutions (one from China Tourism Research Institute, one from Tianjin University of Finance and Economics), two from professional cultural tourism planning and operation units (one from Beijing Davos Summit Tourism Planning and Design Company, one from Beijing Zhongke Ruitu Tourism Planning and Design Institute), and three from tourism enterprises (two from Cultural Tourism Group, one from Hotel Group), which basically covered all aspects of the industry, education, research and use, They are all instructors of MTA practice in many colleges and universities, and have rich experience in practical teaching guidance, which has a good help to promote the implementation of practical teaching guidance in the MTA of Chifeng University.

### **5.2. Taking the Training Program as the Core to Promote the Development of Practical Teaching Characteristics**

According to the relevant requirements of the MTA Education Steering Committee and the University Research Institute on the development of the training program, the training program for full-time postgraduates with master's degree

in Tourism Management of Chifeng University attaches great importance to practical teaching. It mainly includes:

First, in terms of training mode, it emphasizes the double tutor system (on-campus and off-campus practice tutors), implements the double tutor system on campus and off campus, and the on-campus and off-campus tutors jointly guide students' learning, research and professional practice; the school tutor is the first person responsible for the cultivation of graduate students, who are responsible for guiding the graduate students in the whole process of course learning, project research, practical teaching and thesis writing; the main responsibilities of out of school practice tutors are to expand students' horizons, guide students to participate in and effectively complete the social practice activities of their majors, and provide corresponding guidance on topics selection, topic opening, writing and other aspects of the dissertation.

The second is to plan 4 credits for practical teaching (2 credits for social practice, 1 credit for scientific research activities, 1 credit for academic activities, a total of 4 credits), and plan to carry out social practice around professional research or work practice in the form of teaching practice, social investigation, thematic research, professional practice, etc. It is proposed to adopt time-sharing and segmentation, or centralized practice, or a combination of decentralized and centralized practice; In terms of practical evaluation, it is proposed to submit teaching design and experience, social survey or case analysis results after practical activities, guide teachers to give a relevant evaluation and obtain corresponding credits after passing the evaluation.

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## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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