



# Department for Business Innovation & Skills

**FURTHER EDUCATION INITIAL  
TEACHER TRAINING**

Mathematics Subject Knowledge  
Enhancement (SKE)  
Programme Guide  
Academic Year 2015/16

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# Part One

## 1. General Introduction

- 1.1 The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) is offering funding for a Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) in mathematics to support the recruitment of post graduate, pre service candidates who are applying to commence Initial Teacher Training (ITT) training in mathematics during 2015/16 Academic Year. The funding is available to all providers of Further Education ITT but the budget is finite and will be allocated on demand until funding is exhausted. Early applications are therefore advisable.
- 1.2 **This particular round of bursary funding is intended to support SKE programmes which provide trainees with the skills, knowledge and ability to teach mathematics to GCSE level and above.**

## 2. What is Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE)?

- 2.1 SKE's are designed for applicants for ITT who show the potential to become outstanding teachers but may not have enough specific subject knowledge to begin the ITT course. The SKE bridges those knowledge gaps forming a sound academic base for the applicant to develop a career in maths teaching.
- 2.2 The decision that an applicant requires to undertake a SKE programme is **always** made by the training provider, usually during the programme recruitment phase. The content of each SKE programme should be agreed between the provider and applicant to reflect the individual needs of the applicant and can range from eight weeks to a maximum of 20 weeks.
- 2.3 Once a training provider and applicant have agreed participation on the maths SKE bursary scheme, the training provider will draw up a conditional ITT offer to the applicant which covers participation in both SKE and ITT training. Once the applicant? has accepted this conditional offer, the training provider will apply for all associated funding covering both areas of all training – see Part 2 of this guide.
- 2.4 In most cases, the SKE training should be completed before the start of the ITT training but there may be circumstances, particularly for part time students, longer SKE courses, or for applicants who apply later in the recruitment year, that this cannot be done. Therefore the option of parallel delivery for SKE is available. An applicant can start their SKE programme and finish it alongside their ITT programme as long as the two are kept separate in their timetable.

### **3. Who would benefit from a maths SKE?**

- 3.1 Initially, the main person to benefit from taking this SKE programme and associated bursary would be the applicant themselves. Not taking up the option could not only determine the applicant's acceptance on the maths ITT course but could also limit their scope of teaching when they qualify.
- 3.2 Secondly, the training provider would benefit from encouraging a potential trainee to take a SKE programme. It will not only give them confidence that the applicant has the necessary knowledge to complete the maths ITT, but it would also show their commitment to complete the training and go on to make teaching a profession.
- 3.3 Finally, you cannot forget the ultimate benefit future learners and trainees will gain from having skilled and professional teachers or lecturers delivering their maths courses and training.

### **4. How do I know if someone needs maths SKE?**

- 4.1 The need for SKE training should always be identified by the training provider during the recruitment and selection process for the ITT course. If they see an applicant who shows the potential to become an outstanding teacher but they feel not have enough specific subject knowledge to begin the maths ITT course, they should suggest that person consider undertaking a SKE programme to gain the additional depth of subject knowledge. This could include:
  - A person that has studied maths to a highly advanced level, but over time have lost some of the 'basics' needed to teach at GCSE level.
  - A person who has studied a degree which is related to maths, rather than an exact match, and who needs support to ensure they can cover the full range of maths subject knowledge that is required.
  - A person who has changed career and may have a related degree with a lot of knowledge and application of maths, who needs to cover the basics.

*Annex A gives more in depth examples of potential applicants for a SKE bursary.*

- 4.2 If the offer of SKE training is not taken up by the applicant, it is the solely the decision of the training provider whether a place on the ITT programme is offered or not.

## 5. How will maths SKE be delivered?

- 5.1 SKE training can vary in terms of duration, from a short eight week ‘refresher’ or ‘booster’ programme right through to a more substantial programme of up to 20 weeks.
- 5.2 SKE programmes can be delivered by a wide range of suppliers and you can consider different options depending on individual needs. Suppliers may include:
- *A college or university subject department*
  - *another ITT provider*
  - *a third party supplier*
  - *delivering the SKE in-house*
- 5.3 SKE is flexible enough to be delivered in a variety of ways including:
- *full-time classroom-based study*
  - *part-time classroom and evening/weekend study*
  - *part-time distance learning*
  - *any combination of the above*

5.4 It will be the responsibility of the training provider and applicant to agree the preferred training option and this will be detailed in the providers training offer to the applicant.

## 6. SKE and mathematics ITT parallel delivery

- 6.1 It might be the case that an SKE programme cannot be completed **before** an ITT course is due to start, particularly for longer SKE training, or for applicants who apply later in the recruitment year, or time is restricted because the student is part time. Therefore the option of parallel delivery for SKE is available. An applicant can start their SKE programme and finish it alongside their ITT programme as long as the two are kept separate in their timetable.
- 6.2 When SKE and ITT training are being delivered in parallel, the general principle is that the training provider will still be able to claim SKE study fee but trainees will not be able to claim the SKE bursary payment, as this will be supported by their student loan funding for their ITT training. However in the case of part time trainees, they will be considered eligible for the bursary as long as the SKE is delivered on their non ITT course days.
- 6.3 Ofsted has amended its ITE inspection handbook to take account of the fact that an applicant might not have completed SKE before starting ITT. However, it is still the case that all training, including any SKE, must be completed to the requisite standard.

## 7. How is mathematics SKE funded?

- 7.1 Providers of maths SKE training will be able to claim a programme study fee to cover the costs of providing the SKE training and bursary payment subject to trainees meeting the Student Loan Company (SLC) conditions.
- 7.2 Funding for this maths SKE programme comes from the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) and is managed by National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) which is part of the Department for Education (DfE).
- 7.3 All training providers registered with the SFA who are delivering post graduate, pre service maths training taken to least GCSE level will be able to request funding for SKE, as will all ITT providers who are in receipt of HEFCE funding. Details of the SKE application process is set out in the second part of this guide.
- 7.4 Funding will operate on demand and can only be requested when a conditional offer of an ITT place has been made to an applicant.
- 7.5 Providers of SKE training will be able to apply for **SKE Programme Funding** for the academic year 2015/16. The maximum amount that BIS will fund is based on the amount of full time study that the SKE programme equates to - 25 hours is approximately equivalent to one week's full-time study. The maximum rates available by duration are set out in the table below:

**Mathematics SKE Programme funding rates 2015/16 for the Provider**

<b>Weeks of full time (or equivalent) study)</b>	<b>Maximum Programme Rate</b>
Up to 8 weeks	£1,910
9 to 12 weeks	£2,810
13 to 16 weeks	£3,705
17 to 20 weeks	£4,605

- 7.6 Candidates taking SKE training are not eligible for SLC maintenance support for this programme. In order that they are supported, we will provide a **bursary** to those who meet the SLC conditions. Examples of the amount of bursary funding that applicants for SKE may receive are set out in the table below:

<b>Programme length in Weeks</b>	<b>Bursary Rate (£200 a week)</b>
Up to 8 weeks	£1,600
9 to 12 weeks	£2,400
13 to 16 weeks	£3,200
17 to 20 weeks	£4,000

# Part Two - Applying for SKE Programme Funding

## 1. General

- 1.1 This part provides guidance to providers and applicants on the procedures involved in securing funding for a SKE training programme.
- 1.2 The National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) – who are part of the Department for Education (DfE) manages and administers all SKE funding on behalf of the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS). All payment queries should be directed to their Funding Team at [FA.TEAM@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FA.TEAM@education.gsi.gov.uk) Any queries regarding eligibility or the purpose of SKE scheme should be directed to BIS via the email address: [FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk)
- 1.3 It is the ITT provider who requests SKE funding for both the study programme and trainee bursary from the NCTL using the SKE request form : <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-knowledge-enhancement-ske-course-form> . ITT providers may only request SKE funding to support ITT places to study maths for the Academic Year (AY) 2015/16.

## 2. SKE Programmes

- 2.1 SKE programmes must:

- start and end before the applicant completes their ITT programme;
- be delivered before or alongside the ITT programme;
- deliver what is required such that the ITT provider can satisfy themselves that the applicant meets the subject knowledge requirements by the time the ITT programme is complete; and
- be designed so that by the end of an ITT programme, trainees are able to demonstrate excellent subject and curriculum knowledge in the context of further education.

### **3. Eligibility for Funding**

#### **3.1 Training Providers**

- SKE funding is only available to providers who have met financial assurances and requirements to be included on the SFA Register of Training Organisations or are receiving HEFCE funding. Providers who do not meet these minimum requirements will not be eligible for SKE funding.
- The ITT provider can deliver the programme or commission it from any other supplier.
- In order for SKE funding to be released ITT providers must have signed the declaration set out in the SKE funding request that if successful it will only be used to support the named individuals.
- If the amount of subject knowledge required means that the SKE programme cannot be completed before, or delivered alongside, the ITT programme in 2015/16, the ITT provider cannot make an offer of a place on an ITT programme

#### **3.2 Applicants/Trainees**

- The applicant must have applied for and discussed the offer of a place on a maths ITT programme prior to the commission of any SKE programmes. If the applicant successfully completes the SKE programme then the conditional ITT place must be made available.
- The applicant must be undertaking a post graduate pre service programme that will enable them to teach maths at GCSE level or higher.
- If a trainee is undertaking a SKE programme in parallel with their ITT programme and fails to complete the SKE then the training bursary stops.
- It is a BIS requirement that the degree classification and all other bursary requirements have to be met prior to a SKE programme commencing. Any entry requirements for a SKE programme specified by the ITT provider must be discussed and agreed with the applicant
- In order to receive the SKE bursary for maths, the trainee must meet all required Student Loan Company (SLC) funding conditions. In circumstances when the SKE training runs parallel with the ITT training the trainee will not be able to claim the SKE bursary payment, as this will be supported by their student loan funding for their ITT training. But see part 1, 6.2 for PT students.

## **4. Payment of SKE Programme Study Funding**

- 4.1 ITT providers will receive SKE study funds directly from the NCTL for each trainee on the programme. It is a condition of SKE programme funding that the ITT providers cannot charge applicants fees for undertaking a SKE programme.
- 4.2 ITT providers should commission SKE programmes that will best meet the needs of applicants. These can range from eight weeks to a maximum of 20 weeks. This may include part-time, distance learning and full-time programmes.
- 4.3 The funding that can be requested must relate to the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) duration of the programme where eight weeks equates to 200 hours of study, regardless of the start and finish dates of the programme. A full time programme would equate to 25 hours of engagement per week.
- 4.4 The NCTL will review all SKE study funding requests to ensure it reflects the actual cost of the SKE programme in-line with the maximum levels indicated in the table below:

<b>Programme length in Weeks</b>	<b>Maximum Programme Funding</b>
Up to 8 weeks	£1,910
9 to 12 weeks	£2,810
13 to 16 weeks	£3,705
17 to 20 weeks	£4,605

- 4.5 ITT providers should submit their requests for funding electronically on the SKE request form. Where the SKE programme is procured and delivered by a third party, the invoice must be retained by the ITT provider for audit and assurance purpose.
- 4.6 Applicants must only be registered on one SKE programme. We reserve the right to monitor SKE programme take up and spend. Any SKE programme funds deemed to have been used inappropriately will be recovered in full.
- 4.7 Payments will be made electronically by BACS at the start of each calendar month. The NCTL aims to pay SKE programme funding in full in the next NCTL monthly payment run following receipt and acceptance of the SKE request form.
- 4.8 ITT providers must inform the DfE ITT Funding Team at [FA.team@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FA.team@education.gsi.gov.uk) as quickly as is reasonably possible if an applicant fails to engage in or withdraws from their SKE programme. We reserve the right to investigate withdrawals from SKE programmes and recover any unused funding.

## **5. Payment of SKE Bursary Funding**

- 5.1 ITT providers will receive the SKE training bursary on behalf of the trainee and in turn must pass this on, in full, to the applicant. SKE training bursary funding will cover the last full month of participation on the SKE programme. Any unused SKE training bursary funding issued beyond this date will be recovered in full through the Annual Grant Report which ITT providers will need to return.
- 5.2 The SKE training bursary will reflect the FTE duration of the SKE programme, not the overall actual duration of the SKE programme. For example, if an applicant is required to undertake an eight week SKE programme but it is delivered through distance learning over a longer period, the SKE training bursary will be paid for the eight weeks.
- 5.3 Each request for SKE funding will need to set out the duration of the SKE programme and cost. BIS will fund the actual cost of the SKE programme unless it exceeds the rate maximum for the duration, in which case the maximum funding rate for the duration will be paid. Examples of bursary payments are set out below:

<b>Programme length in Weeks</b>	<b>Maximum bursary (£200 a week)</b>
Up to 8 weeks	£1,600
9 to 12 weeks	£2,400
13 to 16 weeks	£3,200
17 to 20 weeks	£4,000

- 5.4 If the SKE programme runs in parallel with the full time ITT programme the higher of the two training bursaries will be paid, not both.
- 5.5 Payments will be made electronically by BACS at the start of each calendar month. The NCTL aims to pay SKE training bursary funding from the next NCTL monthly payment run following the start date of the SKE programme, which must be recorded on the SKE request form. Failure to record the start date of the course in the request form will result in the form being rejected. The SKE training bursary will be paid over the duration of the SKE programme.

**A schedule of the processes involved in applying for SKE funding can be found at Annex B.**

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## **6. Monitoring and Analysis of SKE Scheme**

- 6.1 The data submitted in the SKE request form will form part of a regular analysis and review by BIS to monitor and evaluate take up of the SKE scheme.

## **7. Financial audit of the SKE Scheme**

- 7.1 In order for SKE funding to be released, the ITT recipients of SKE funding must have agreed to the terms and conditions set out in SKE ITT Funding Offer Letter (FOL).

# Annex A

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is SKE?

Subject knowledge enhancement is intended help providers recruit the best people on to ITT programmes. If you see someone at interview that has the right skills and aptitude to be a good teacher, but has not had the opportunity to develop their subject knowledge then you can discuss with them the possibility of completing a SKE.

You should agree with them the content and duration of the SKE, dependent upon how much they need to learn in order to meet the requirements for their ITT.

BIS are offering SKE to support mathematics recruitment for candidates who will commence their ITT training in 2014/15. We are only funding SKE up to a maximum of 20 weeks.

SKE has been used in schools ITT for a number of years; you may want to look at the NCTL website for further information.

### Who would benefit from taking a SKE

Below are some examples of how SKE could support recruitment to ITT.

Please note – there is complete flexibility with SKE. These examples are illustrative not exhaustive making and any number of combinations of course content and duration are possible to best meet the trainees needs.

**Applicant A** recently graduated with a 2:1 in pure maths and applied for a maths ITT course with an HEI provider. They completed an eight week SKE programme to refresh the 'basics' that would be required to teach maths at GCSE level, as this had not been covered since he was at school. The SKE was commissioned an online package from a third party provider.

**Applicant B** held a science degree and applied for a maths ITT course with a FE College. They completed a 12 week maths SKE programme that was delivered in-house by the HEI.

**Applicant C** held a degree in engineering. The degree included modules that covered mathematics and physics. The maths module did not provide sufficient coverage of the key core areas. They began an 18 week maths SKE course which was commissioned from another HEI. The programme was completed prior to there starting the maths ITT course in October.

## **Which subjects can I use it for?**

We are currently only funding SKE for mathematics in FE ITT.

## **How is it funded?**

SKE is directly funded by BIS. Payments are made by NCTL on our behalf.

The funding levels depend upon the length of the programme, they are set out in terms of weeks. The funding levels are:

<b>Programme length in Weeks</b>	<b>Programme Funding</b>	<b>Bursary (£200 a week)</b>
Up to 8 weeks	£1,910	£1,600
9 to 12 weeks	£2,810	£2,400
13 to 16 weeks	£3,705	£3,200
17 to 20 weeks	£4,605	£4,000

## **Can the SKE programme be less than 8 weeks duration?**

Yes but if it substantially less than a provider can expect to be challenged as to the need for the programme.

## **How do I get the funding?**

The funding is only available to ITT providers who are either currently in receipt of HEFCE funding or are registered with the SFA on the Register of Training Organisations. It is paid directly to the ITT provider once the need for SKE is identified, and assurances about expenditure will be sought. They use it to pay programme costs themselves and pass the bursary element to you.

## **Who sets the content?**

The content of an SKE is set by the training provider in conjunction with the applicant. Through the selection and interview process you may come to the view that an applicant for ITT would make a great teacher but does not have enough subject knowledge to be able to complete their ITT. For example they may have a good A-level in maths, but their degree has been focused on a related subject, with only some maths required. In these circumstances you may decide that they need to refresh their maths knowledge and an SKE could achieve this.

We expect providers to understand the knowledge required in order to teach mathematics to GCSE and level 3, and to be able to assess how much knowledge an applicant has through their selection processes.

You can then set out the specifics that they need to cover and agree with them how they will achieve this, including the amount of time they will need to spend achieving this knowledge.

## **Is this a course or a qualification?**

Neither, SKE is a funding programme to support the development of candidates to ITT, particularly in subjects where there is a shortage of teachers. The provider who requests the funding can spend it as they see fit in order to meet the needs of the applicant.

This may mean requiring them to complete a course of study, either run by their ITT provider or run by another institution. Alternatively it could mean using your existing staffing to provide the learning for example through a guided tutorial arrangement, or it could be achieved through a distance learning package.

Providers and applicants can decide how this is best achieved.

## **How do you measure if it's been successful?**

There is no requirement for the SKE to be formally assessed or certificated; although you will want to be assured that the trainee has achieved all that they need to at the end of the programme. It is for providers to decide how this is best achieved

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## **How is the student supported if they need an SKE can they get a student loan?**

No, SKE programmes are not eligible for student loan company support. However, if the trainee meets the requirements of the SLC they are eligible for a bursary from BIS, payable by NCTL on our behalf. The rates for the bursary are set out in the table above.

### **Is SKE separate from ITT?**

Yes, it is funded separately. However we assume that if you support an applicant to undertake a SKE then you have offered them a place on your ITT programme subject to their completion of the SKE. Providers who use UCAS Teacher Training will usually make a conditional offer based on completion of the SKE.

There may also be some occasions when you think that the trainee may be able to complete some or all of the SKE whilst in their ITT programme. If this is the case we will fund the SKE study whilst they are on ITT, but the candidate will not be able to receive a bursary for any SKE undertaken whilst on ITT, as this will be supported by their student loan funding.

### **What happens if I don't complete the SKE?**

You might get on to your ITT programme. If you're doing the SKE in parallel to ITT, your place on the course will be in jeopardy and the bursary payments will cease.

# Annex B

## The Processes involved when Applying for SKE Programme Funding

The following is an general overview of the processes involved in the setting up and receiving of mathematics SKE funding :

1. Applicant applies and is interviewed for a place on an mathematics ITT programme course
2. The provider and applicant agree the need for participation on a maths SKE course, they establish the content and length of the SKE course.
3. The provider completes the SKE funding request form and sends it to the NCTL. It can be downloaded via the following link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-knowledge-enhancement-ske-course-form>. Requests for multiple trainees can be included on one request form. Additional copies of the request form can be obtained directly from the BIS at email address: [FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk)
4. SKE training bursary and SKE study programme funding requests relating to the same applicant must be made on the same request form;
5. Once completed, the SKE request form should be sent to the NCTL at [FA.TEAM@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FA.TEAM@education.gsi.gov.uk) and copied to the BIS email address [FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk)
6. On receipt of the SKE request form, the NCTL ITT Funding Team will check it and discuss any queries with the provider. On approval, a Funding Offer Letter (FOL) covering both SKE and ITT programmes will be issued by BIS/NCTL. This will set out the funding approved and the terms and conditions of its use.
7. All recipients of SKE funding must complete all highlighted sections in the FOL, which will be sent after approval of the completed SKE request form. Annex A of the FOL must be signed by the appropriate responsible person and returned to BIS at [FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk)
8. The maths SKE training starts.

9. The NCTL will aim to pay the ITT provider the programme costs in full the month following the course start. Bursary payments will commence at this point and will be distributed across the academic year.
10. SKE programme funding is paid by the NCTL to the ITT provider to cover the cost of running SKE programmes ie programme cost and any bursary. There is no additional funding to cover administration relating to SKE programmes or bursaries.
11. ITT providers must retain all financial documentation obtained in running the SKE programmes in case they are requested by the NCTL.
12. ITT providers using a third party to deliver a SKE programme should retain all invoices corresponding to the SKE request form as you could be subject to an audit during the year. You may also be asked to submit these invoices to the NCTL at the end of the year.
13. At the end of the 2015/16 academic year ITT providers will be required to complete a short report, signed by the appropriate responsible person, confirming that the SKE programme and bursary funds have been spent in accordance with the funding offer letter.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent  
to: [FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk)



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