



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

Subject knowledge enhancement operations manual

Academic year 2015/16

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Introduction

- 1 This manual is a guide to requesting National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) funding for subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) programmes that will be completed prior to an award of qualified teacher status (QTS) being made.
- 2 All payment queries should be directed to the Funding Team at SKE.Funding@education.gsi.gov.uk. Any queries regarding eligibility or the purpose of SKE scheme should be directed to ta.ske@education.gsi.gov.uk.

SKE programmes

- 3 SKE programmes are designed to help potential initial teacher training (ITT) trainees gain the depth of knowledge needed to train to teach their chosen subject. The subjects for which SKE funding is available are listed in appendix A.
- 4 School Direct (SD) lead schools/ITT providers can deliver SKE programmes themselves or commission them from any other supplier in any format that is deemed appropriate by the SD lead school/ITT provider.
- 5 SKE programmes **must**:
 - support a place on an ITT course;
 - start and end before the trainee undertaking it completes their ITT programme and before a recommendation for the award of QTS can be made;
 - deliver what is required such that the SD lead school/ITT provider can satisfy themselves that the trainee meets the subject knowledge requirements of the [Teachers' Standards](#) by the time their ITT programme is complete, demonstrating that they have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas; and
 - last between eight weeks and 36 weeks.
- 6 SKE programmes **may**:
 - be delivered before or alongside ITT programmes;
 - be delivered on-line, through distance learning, face to face or be a mixture of these approaches; and
 - include part-time, distance learning and full-time provision. A full time programme equates to 25 hours of engagement per week. 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.

- 7 For an overview of SKE policy and examples of how SKE can be used to support ITT recruitment please read the separate document, '[Subject knowledge enhancement: an introduction](#)'.

Deferral of an ITT place to allow for SKE

- 8 If the length of SKE programme required means that it cannot be completed before, or delivered alongside, an ITT programme, the SD lead school/ITT provider can offer a conditional deferred place on an ITT programme. To do this, the SD lead school/ITT provider will need to record a Delayed Confirmation (DCF) decision on the UCAS system. Please be aware that, under the current model, this does not provide a guarantee of receiving approval to recruit in the future. Should the SD lead school/ITT provider not receive approval to recruit the following academic year, the applicant would need to re-apply for another ITT programme.

SKE funding: general

- 9 SKE funding is made up of SKE programme and SKE training bursary funding.
- 10 SKE programme funding can be claimed for any SKE programme starting on or before 31 March 2017.
- 11 SKE training bursary funding can be claimed for any SKE programme starting before 31 March 2017. We're not yet able to confirm SKE bursary funding that falls beyond this period. Further announcements will be made in due course.
- 12 SKE funding operates on demand, subject to review by NCTL.

Eligibility of the SD lead school/ITT provider

- 13 The SD lead school/ITT provider can only request SKE funding for SKE eligible subjects in which they have NCTL registered ITT courses, subject to the exception outlined in paragraph 8.
- 14 In order for SKE funding to be released, SD lead schools/ITT providers must have signed the Department for Education Terms and Conditions within the SKE Grant Offer Letter (GOL). Please see paragraphs 37 to 40 for further information.
Eligibility of applicant
- 15 For the SD lead school/ITT provider to claim SKE programme funding, the applicant must have accepted a conditional offer of a place, which may be a deferred place as outlined in paragraph 8, on a postgraduate ITT programme in

one of the SKE eligible subjects, prior to the commission of any SKE programmes (except in the case of the exemption outlined in paragraph 18).

- 16 To be eligible for an SKE training bursary, the applicant must also have satisfied the criteria set out in appendix A.
- 17 The SD lead school/ITT provider must have made the judgement that the applicant will not meet the subject knowledge element of the Teachers' Standards without an SKE programme. SKE funding should be claimed solely for the purpose of candidate or trainee teacher subject knowledge development, for initial teacher training.
- 18 An exemption to the requirement for a candidate to have accepted a conditional offer of a place is provided by the SKE pilot (2016) and the criteria for this exemption are set out in appendix B.
- 19 Applicants must be registered on one SKE programme only. NCTL 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. Should it emerge that a trainee is registered on more than one SKE programme, the ITT/SKE provider must immediately contact NCTL at SKE.Funding@education.gsi.gov.uk for further guidance prior to submitting a claim.
- 20 NCTL do not specify that ITT programme entry requirements have to be met prior to an SKE programme commencing. Any entry requirements for an SKE programme specified by the SD lead school/ITT provider must be discussed and agreed with the applicant.

SKE programme funding

- 21 SKE programme funding is available for the actual cost of the SKE programme in line with the maximum levels indicated in Appendix A.
- 22 SD lead schools/ITT providers should request SKE funding from NCTL electronically using the [SKE request form](#). SD lead schools/ITT providers may nominate that funding be paid directly to the SKE provider, where that SKE provider is an existing ITT provider. The SKE funding claim form should include the SKE programme funding and bursary funding.
- 23 If an SKE provider is delivering SKE in relation to their own and other providers' ITT provision they may claim for both their own candidates and any other schools/providers' candidates, on the proviso that the SD lead school/ITT provider has nominated them to receive the funding directly.

- 24 Where the SKE programme is procured and delivered by a third party, the invoice must be retained by the SD lead school/ITT provider for audit and assurance purposes (please see paragraph 39 for more information).
- 25 The SD lead school/ITT provider must inform the SKE Funding Team at SKE.Funding@education.gsi.gov.uk as quickly as is reasonably possible if an applicant fails to engage in or withdraws from their SKE programme, including the date of any withdrawal. NCTL reserves the right to investigate withdrawals from SKE programmes and recover any unused funding.
- 26 It is a condition of SKE programme funding that the SD lead school/ITT provider cannot charge a trainee for undertaking an SKE programme.

SKE training bursaries

- 27 SD lead schools/ITT providers should request the SKE training bursaries on behalf of their trainees when requesting the programme funding using the [SKE request form](#).
- 28 SD lead schools/ITT providers will receive the SKE training bursary on behalf of the trainee and must pass this on in full to the applicant. Trainees should receive their bursary award phased over the course of the SKE programme in equal monthly instalments.
- 29 To be eligible for an SKE training bursary, the applicant must have satisfied the criteria set out in appendix A.
- 30 A SD lead school/ITT provider may elect that funding be paid directly to the SKE provider. This option is only available where the SKE provider is also an ITT provider.
- 31 If an SKE programme runs in parallel with a full time ITT programme the higher of the two training bursaries will be paid. The value of SKE funding requested by providers, and detailed on the claim form, must be reduced to reflect the duration of any parallel delivery.
- 32 The SKE training bursary will reflect the FTE duration of the SKE programme, not the actual duration of the SKE programme. For example, if an applicant is required to undertake an eight-week FTE SKE programme that is delivered through distance learning over a longer period, an eight-week SKE training bursary will be paid.
- 33 If an SKE provider is delivering SKE in relation to their own and other provider's ITT provision they may claim for their own candidates and any other school's/provider's candidates, on the proviso that the SD lead school/ITT provider has nominated them to receive the SKE funding directly.

- 34 SKE training bursaries will be paid to eligible trainees in accordance with the criteria and methodology set out in the [ITT Bursary Guide](#). In order for a trainee to be eligible to receive a bursary the SD lead school/ITT provider must ensure that, from the first day of training, the trainee meets, and continues to meet, the criteria set out within the [ITT Bursary Guide](#).
- 35 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 Audit Grant Report that SD lead schools/ITT providers will need to return. Please see paragraph 40 for more information.

The process of requesting SKE programme and training bursary funding

- 36 The following is an overview of the process for SD lead schools/ITT providers to follow when requesting SKE programme and bursary funding:

Completing the claim form

- The SKE request form should be accessed via the [NCTL funding webpage](#). Requests for multiple trainees can be included on one request form.
- The SKE request form must be completed in full, including the names of all parties involved with the SKE request. SD lead school/ITT providers must ensure that, from the first day of training, the trainee meets, and continues to meet the eligibility criteria in order to receive SKE funding. Providers must complete each section on the request form prior to submission.
- The cost of each SKE programme and SKE training bursary included in the request form should be known before submitting the request.

Submitting the claim form

- Completed SKE request forms should be encrypted and sent to SKE.Funding@education.gsi.gov.uk, the password for the file will then need to be sent to FA.Team@education.gsi.gov.uk. Incomplete request forms will not be processed and providers may be asked to resubmit a completed request form.
- *The first time that a SD lead school/ITT provider claims SKE funding, they must also submit a completed [Grant Offer Letter \(GOL\)](#) The GOL must be received and accepted by NCTL before any funding is released.*
- *Receipt of the SKE request form will be acknowledged by the SKE Funding Team*

Payment

- Payments will be made electronically directly from NCTL by BACS at the start of each calendar month.
- NCTL aims to pay SKE programme funding in full in line with the start of the SKE programme, within the next NCTL monthly payment run and following receipt and acceptance of the completed [SKE request form](#).
- 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.
- To help ensure that payments are made in the correct month, SKE request forms must be received and accepted by the SKE Funding Team before the third Friday of the month preceding the SKE programme start date.
- From 1 March 2016, NCTL will no longer accept claims submitted more than **one week** after the SKE course has started.
- SD lead schools/ITT providers must obtain and retain the invoice for the SKE programmes which they receive funding for the 2015/16 academic year. They do not need to send these to the NCTL.

End of year activity

- SD lead schools/ITT providers will be asked to complete an Audit Grant Report at the end of the academic year to reconcile funding from the NCTL and actual spend. Funding will be recovered in full for any trainee that did not start the SKE programme. Providers in receipt of any SKE funding will be required to report directly to NCTL in relation to unspent funding when requested.

Monitoring and analysis of SKE Scheme

- 37 SKE programme funding is paid by NCTL to SD lead schools/ITT providers to cover the cost of running SKE programmes. There is no additional funding to cover administration relating to SKE programmes or bursaries.
- 38 The data submitted in the [SKE request form](#) will form part of a regular analysis and review by NCTL to monitor and evaluate take up of the SKE scheme.

Financial audit of the SKE Scheme

- 39 In order for SKE funding to be released, all recipients of SKE funding must have a Department for Education Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) in place. This agreement is in place once the SKE GOL has been signed by SD lead school/ITT provider. In doing so, SD lead schools/ITT providers are agreeing to the Terms and Conditions of the SKE grant.
- 40 All recipients of SKE funding must complete all highlighted sections in the GOL, which can be found at the [NCTL's Financial Requirements webpage](#). Annex A of the GOL must be signed by your Accounting Officer, and returned with the SKE request form to the SKE Funding Team at SKE.Funding@education.gsi.gov.uk. This document must be received and accepted by NCTL before any funding is released. This action only needs to be taken once.
- 41 Recipients of SKE funding may be subject to audit during the year and must, therefore, retain all invoices corresponding to the SKE request form. Recipients of SKE funding may also be asked to submit relevant documentation to NCTL at the end of the year.
- 42 An Audit Grant Report (AGR) will be sent out by NCTL to all recipients of ITT related funding at the end of the 2015/16 academic year. SKE funding will be incorporated within this return. The recipient must complete the relevant section(s) of the AGR, arrange for the AGR and Annex G of the GOL to be signed by a registered independent external auditor and submit to the NCTL by 31 December 2016, at financial.monitoring@education.gsi.gov.uk

Appendix A: SKE subjects and maximum funding rates

Eligible ITT subjects

Subject	Minimum degree classification required in order to be eligible for an SKE training bursary.
Physics	3 rd *
Mathematics	3 rd *
Chemistry	2:2
Languages	2:2
Computing	2:2
Design & technology	2:2
Geography	2:2
Biology	2:2

*Trainee teachers in maths and physics with a relevant 3rd class degree require at least a B at A level in maths, further maths or physics to meet this criterion for the SKE training bursary. Trainees with a 2:2 or above do not need the A level to meet this criteria for the SKE bursary. Please refer to Annex B in the [ITT training bursary manual](#) for the list of relevant degree subjects.

Maximum Funding rates

Programme duration	Programme length in weeks	Maximum Programme Funding *	Maximum Training bursary*
Short	8-11	£1,910	£1,600
	12-15	£2,810	£2,400
Medium	16-19	£3,705	£3,200
	20-23	£4,605	£4,000
Long	24-27	£5,500	£4,800
	28-31	£6,115	£5,600
Long	32-35	£6,725	£6,400
	36	£7,340	£7,200

*Any eligible SKE programme that commences before 31 March 2017 and continues beyond this date will receive training programme funding. We are not yet able to guarantee SKE bursary funding for the 2017 to 2018 financial year; however, further announcements will be made in due course.

Appendix B: Early SKE pilot programme

NCTL is piloting a change to the funding conditions for the SKE programme to test out the benefits of training eligible ITT candidates before they submit an ITT application or receive a conditional offer of acceptance for an ITT place from a SD school or ITT provider. The terms and conditions of funding for this pilot are as follows:

- 1 Funding will only be committed for up to 50 eligible candidates nationally for SKE training in mathematics or physics courses starting after 18 January 2016 and completing by 31 June 2016 which are delivered by approved SKE providers.
- 2 Eligible candidates will be registrants to the Teacher Information Line whom meet ITT eligibility criteria and whom have been identified and encouraged to undertake the pilot by NCTL representatives of the Teacher Information line.
- 3 Approved providers for the pilot were agreed in 2016 following an open and transparent process. The approved providers are:

Bradford College	St Mary's University
Canterbury Christ Church University	Sunderland University
Edge Hill University	University of Birmingham
Greenwich University	University of Cumbria
Hibernia College UK	University of Reading
Liverpool Hope University	University of Roehampton
Newman University	University of Southampton
Nottingham Trent University	University of Sussex

- 4 Trainees and providers will be expected to contribute feedback to NCTL as part of an evaluation of the pilot.
- 5 All other funding conditions and guidelines apply.

For any more information on this pilot, contact TA.SKE@education.gsi.gov.uk



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