



Department  
for Education

# **Further education initial teacher training**

**Mathematics subject knowledge  
enhancement (SKE) programme guide  
academic year 2016 to 2017**

**September 2016**

# Contents

Section 1 General Introduction	3
Introduction	3
What is Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE)?	3
Who can apply for a SKE?	3
How do I know if someone needs a mathematics SKE?	4
How will mathematics SKE be delivered?	4
SKE and mathematics ITT parallel delivery	5
How is mathematics SKE funded?	5
What is the incentive for the SKE applicant?	6
Section 2 Core SKE Award Eligibility	7
Eligibility of ITT Providers	7
Eligibility of Applicants	7
Section 3 Duration of SKE Training	9
Section 4 SKE Programme Funding for Training Providers	10
Section 5 SKE Programme Funding for Trainees	11
Section 6 The Process of Requesting SKE Funding	12
Section 7 Monitoring, Analysis and Financial Audit of SKE Programme	13
Annex : Frequently Asked Questions	14

# Section 1 General Introduction

## Introduction

1. Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) courses are designed to help providers recruit the best people on to Initial Teacher Training (ITT) programmes. If an applicant for ITT shows to have the right skills and aptitude to be a good teacher, but has not had the opportunity to develop their knowledge in a particular subject area, then they can undertake a SKE to develop that additional knowledge.
2. The Department for Education (DfE) is offering funding for a SKE in mathematics to support the recruitment of post graduate, pre-service candidates who will commence their ITT training in 2016/17. The funding is available to all providers of ITT but the budget is finite and will be allocated on demand until it is exhausted. Early applications are therefore advisable.

## What is Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE)?

3. SKEs are designed for people applying for ITT who have the potential to become outstanding teachers but may not have enough specific subject knowledge to begin the ITT course. SKE programmes are pre-ITT programmes designed to help these applicants gain the depth of subject knowledge needed to train to teach. **This particular SKE funding is only available to those candidates in the subject of maths, and only for FE pre-service post graduate programmes.** They are specifically to support those programmes which enable trainees to teach mathematics to GCSE level and above.
4. While SKE programmes, and their content, are designed to reflect the individual needs of the applicant, they all serve the same purpose – to bring an applicant's subject knowledge to the appropriate level needed to start an ITT course.
5. Applicants may not have enough specific subject knowledge to begin an ITT course for different reasons.

## Who can apply for a SKE?

6. Candidates for a SKE could be:
  - A person that has studied maths to a highly advanced level, but over time has lost some of the 'basics' needed to teach at secondary level
  - A person who has studied a degree which is related to maths, rather than an exact match
  - A person who has changed career and may have a related degree with a lot of knowledge

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

*Please note – there is complete flexibility with SKE and this list is illustrative not exhaustive. Any number of combinations and programmes are possible.*

**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 via 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 maths 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 them starting the maths ITT course in October.

## How do I know if someone needs a mathematics SKE?

8. The need for SKE can be identified by a provider during the recruitment and selection process, when they consider whether applicants can cover the breadth and depth of knowledge required to teach maths to level 2 and above.
9. Once the need for a maths SKE has been agreed with the applicant, completion of an agreed SKE programme is a condition of the ITT offer to the applicant. Once the conditional offer has been accepted, you can request funding and then commission the SKE.

## How will mathematics SKE be delivered?

10. SKE can vary in terms of duration, from a short circa eight week ‘refresher’ or ‘booster’ programme right through to a more substantial programme of up to 20 weeks.
11. SKE programmes can be delivered by a wide range of suppliers and you can consider different options depending on your needs. Suppliers may include:
  - A university subject department
  - another ITT provider
  - a third party supplier
  - delivering the SKE in-house

12. 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

## SKE and mathematics ITT parallel delivery

13. It might be the case that an SKE programme cannot be completed **before** an ITT course is due to start, particularly for longer course, or for applicants who apply later in the recruitment year. 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.

14. 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.

## How is mathematics SKE funded?

15. SKE programmes are funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and managed by National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) which is part of the Department for Education. ITT providers who are in receipt of HEFCE funding, or registered with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) as Registered Training Providers, and who are delivering post graduate, pre-service maths training to at least GCSE level will be able to request funding for SKE. Details of the SKE application process are set out in the second part of this guide.

16. Funding will operate on demand and can only be requested when a conditional offer of an ITT place has been made to an applicant.

17. SKE funding for the academic year 2016/17 is set out in table one below. The maximum amount that DfE 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. Each request for SKE funding will need to set out the duration of the SKE programme and cost. DfE 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.

**Table 1 SKE funding rates 2016/17 – mathematics**

<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

## **What is the incentive for the SKE applicant?**

18. Applicants to SKE are not eligible for Student Loans Company (SLC) fee support for this programme. In order that they are supported we will provide a bursary to those who meet the SLC conditions. Details of the bursaries that applicants for SKE may receive are set out in the table below:

**Table 2 Bursary support rates for SKE programmes**

<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

## Section 2 Core SKE Award Eligibility

1. This part of the guide supports providers requesting NCTL funding for pre-ITT SKE programmes and SKE training bursaries. All payment queries should be directed to the 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 DfE via the email address: [FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk)

### Eligibility of ITT Providers

2. Pre-ITT SKE programmes can be delivered by any supplier and in any format that is deemed appropriate by the ITT provider. It is the ITT provider who requests SKE funding from the NCTL, using the SKE request form. As there is a limited budget for SKE, the funding will operate on demand, subject to regular review. ITT providers may only request SKE funding to support ITT places to study maths for the Academic Year (AY) 2016/17. The applicant must be undertaking a post graduate pre-service programme that will enable them to teach at GCSE level or higher.
3. SKE is only available to providers who have met financial assurances provided either by meeting the requirements for receiving HEFCE funding or by being included on the SFA Register of Training Organisations. Providers who do not meet these minimum requirements will not be eligible for SKE funding.
4. The ITT provider can deliver the programme or commission it from any other supplier.
5. 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.

### Eligibility of Applicants

6. The applicant must have applied for and discussed the offer of a place on an 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.
7. If the amount of subject knowledge required means that the SKE programme cannot be completed before, or delivered alongside, the ITT programme in 2016/17, the ITT provider cannot make an offer of a place on an ITT programme.
8. 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.

9. It is a DfE 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.
10. In certain circumstances trainees who have accepted a place on a pre-ITT SKE maths programmes may be eligible for an SKE training bursary. ITT providers will receive the SKE training bursary funds from the NCTL on behalf of the trainee and must in turn pass on all of the SKE training bursary to the applicant. It is for the provider to determine whether an applicant is eligible for an SKE bursary.



## Section 3 Duration of SKE Training

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
- 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

2. ITT providers may commission SKE programmes that will best meet the needs of applicants. These can range from circa eight weeks to a maximum of 20 weeks. This may include part-time, distance learning and full-time programmes. A full time programme would equate 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.

## Section 4 SKE Programme Funding for Training Providers

1. All providers who meet the requirements set out above and have ITT places in maths can request pre-ITT SKE programme funding. It is a condition of SKE programme funding that the ITT providers cannot charge applicants fees for undertaking a SKE programme.
2. Where SKE funding is available it reflects the actual cost of the SKE programme in-line with the maximum levels indicated in table 3 below.

**Table 3 SKE Funding Rates**

<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

3. 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. 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.
5. The NCTL will pay the SKE ITT providers the SKE programme funding directly.
6. 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.
7. ITT providers must inform the NCTL 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 their SKE programme, or withdraws, including the date of withdrawal. We reserve the right to investigate withdrawals from SKE programmes and recover any unused funding.

## Section 5 SKE Programme Funding for Trainees

1. ITT providers should request the SKE training bursaries on behalf of their trainees when requesting the programme funding using the SKE request form. Details of the bursary payments are set out below:

**Table 4 Bursary Funding Rates**

<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

2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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. The NCTL will pay ITT providers the SKE training bursary funding directly.
6. 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.

## Section 6 The Process of Requesting SKE Funding

1. The following is an overview of the process for ITT providers when requesting and receiving funding:
  - a) The cost of each SKE programme included in the request form should be known before submitting the request.
  - b) The SKE funding request form can be downloaded from [gov.uk link]. Requests for multiple trainees can be included on one request form. Additional copies of the request form can be obtained directly from NCTL by emailing [FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk).
  - c) SKE training bursary and SKE programme funding requests relating to the same applicant must be made on the same request form.
  - d) Once completed, the SKE request form should be sent to [FA.TEAM@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FA.TEAM@education.gsi.gov.uk) copied to [FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk).
  - e) On receipt of the SKE request form this, it will be checked and when approved a Funding Offer Letter (FOL) will be issued by NCTL which will set out the funding approved and the terms and conditions of its use.
  - f) Receipt of the SKE request form will be acknowledged by the ITT Funding Team. If there are any queries about the form, the ITT Funding team will contact the ITT provider.
  - g) NCTL's aim is to pay the programme costs in full the month following the start of the course. Bursary payments will commence at this point and will be distributed across the academic year.
  - h) 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.
  - i) ITT providers must obtain and retain the invoice for the SKE programmes which they receive funding for over AY 2016/17. They do not need to send these to the NCTL; and
  - j) ITT providers will be asked to complete a report at the end of each academic year to reconcile funding from the NCTL and actual spend.

## Section 7 Monitoring, Analysis and Financial Audit of SKE Programme

1. The data submitted in SKE request form will form part of a regular analysis and review by DfE to monitor and evaluate take up of the SKE scheme.
2. 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 the SKE FOL.
3. 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 the DfE at [FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FEworkforceincentives@bis.gsi.gov.uk)
4. ITT providers using a third party to deliver a SKE programme should retain all invoices corresponding to the SKE request form they could be subject to an audit during the year. They may also be asked to submit these invoices to the NCTL at the end of the year.
5. At the end of the 2016/17 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 FOL.

## Annex: Frequently Asked Questions

### What is Subject Knowledge Enhancement?

Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) is intended help providers recruit the best people on to ITT programmes. If a provider sees 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 the provider can discuss with them the possibility of completing a SKE.

The provider 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.

The DfE are offering SKE to support mathematics recruitment for trainees who will commence their ITT training in 2016/17. 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.

### Which subjects can SKE be used for?

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

### How is it funded?

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

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

<b>Programme length (in weeks)</b>	<b>Provider Funding</b>	<b>Bursary Rate (£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 is substantially less then a provider can expect to be challenged as to the need for the programme.

### **Does a trainee get the funding?**

No, the funding is only available to ITT providers who are either currently in receipt of HEFCE funding or are registered with the Skills Funding Agency 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. The provider use it to pay their programme costs themselves and pass the bursary element to you.

### **Who sets the content?**

The content of an SKE is set by the ITT provider in conjunction with the applicant. Through the selection and interview process the provider 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 focussed on a related subject, with only some maths required. In these circumstances the provider 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.

The provider can then set out the specifics that the trainee needs 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?**

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 the trainee to complete a course of study, either run by their ITT provider or run by another institution. Alternatively it could mean using the provider's existing staff 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 providers measure if it's been successful?**

There is no requirement for the SKE to be formally assessed or certificated; although an ITT provider 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.

### **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(SLC) support. However, if the trainee meets the requirements of the SLC they are eligible for a bursary from DfE, payable by NCTL on our behalf. The rates for the bursary are set out in the table on page 14.

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

Yes, it is funded separately. However we assume that if a provider supports an applicant to undertake an SKE then they will have offered them a place on their 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 a provider thinks that the trainee may be able to complete some or all of the SKE whilst in their SKE 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 a trainee doesn't complete the SKE?**

The trainee cannot begin, or continue, their ITT programme, as their place should have been conditional on completion of SKE. If the trainee is doing the SKE in parallel to ITT, their place on the course should be reconsidered and bursary payments ceased.





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