

Withdrawn



Department
for Education

Further education initial teacher education

**Mathematics subject knowledge
enhancement (SKE) course guide:
academic year 2018/19**

April 2018

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Section 1 – General introduction

Introduction

1. Subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) courses are designed to help training providers recruit the best people on to initial teacher education (ITE) programmes. If a potential trainee for ITE appears 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 SKE to develop that additional knowledge.
2. The Department for Education (DfE), hereafter referred to as the department, is offering funding for SKE in mathematics to support the recruitment of postgraduate, pre-service candidates who will commence their ITE training in 2018/19. The funding is available to all training providers of ITE but the budget is finite and will be allocated “first come, first served” until funding is exhausted. Early applications are therefore advisable.

What is SKE?

3. SKE courses are designed for people applying for ITE who have the potential to become outstanding teachers but may not have enough specific subject knowledge to begin the ITE programme. SKE courses are designed to help these people 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 mathematics, and only for further education (FE) pre-service postgraduate programmes.** SKE courses are specifically to support those programmes that enable trainees to teach mathematics to GCSE and up to level 3.
4. While SKE courses, and their content, are designed to reflect the specific needs of the individual, they all serve the same purpose – to bring the individual’s subject knowledge to the appropriate level needed to start an ITE course.
5. Applicants may not have enough specific subject knowledge to begin an ITE programme for different reasons.

Who would apply for SKE?

6. **The department will only accept applications from training providers on behalf of ITE candidates.** Suitable candidates for SKE could be a person who:
 - has studied mathematics to an advanced level, but over time has lost some of the ‘basics’ needed to teach mathematics to GCSE and up to level 3;
 - has studied a degree related to mathematics, rather than an exact match; or

- has changed career and may have a related degree with a lot of mathematical knowledge.
7. Below are some examples of how SKE could support recruitment into ITE.

Please note – this list is illustrative and not exhaustive. Any number of combinations and programmes are possible.

Trainee A recently graduated with an upper 2nd in pure mathematics and applied for a mathematics ITE programme with a university provider. They completed an 8-week SKE programme to refresh the ‘basics’ that would be required to teach mathematics to GCSE and up to level 3, as this had not been covered since they were at school. The SKE was commissioned as an online package from a third-party provider.

Trainee B held a science degree and applied for a mathematics ITE programme with an FE college. They completed a 12-week mathematics SKE course that was delivered in-house and which was devised and delivered using their own mathematics teachers to ensure that it covered the up-to-date knowledge that is needed to teach.

Trainee C held a degree in engineering. The degree included modules that covered mathematics and physics. The mathematics module did not provide sufficient coverage of the key core areas. They began an 18-week mathematics SKE course, which was commissioned from a local university that provides SKE to a number of providers in the area. The programme was completed prior to them starting the mathematics ITE.

How do training providers know if someone needs mathematics SKE?

8. The need for SKE can be identified by a training provider during the recruitment and selection process, when they consider whether applicants can cover the breadth and depth of knowledge required to teach mathematics to GCSE and up to level 3.
9. Once the need for a mathematics SKE has been agreed with the applicant, completion of an agreed SKE programme is a condition of the ITE offer to the applicant. Once the conditional offer has been accepted, their training provider can request funding and then commission the SKE.

How can mathematics SKE be delivered?

10. SKE can vary in terms of duration, from a short 8-week ‘refresher’ or ‘booster’ course, right through to a more substantial course of up to 20 weeks.
11. SKE course can be delivered by a wide range of suppliers, including:

- a university subject department;
- another training provider;
- a third party supplier; or
- the ITE provider itself, 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; or
- any combination of the above.

SKE and mathematics ITE parallel delivery

13. It might be the case that an SKE course cannot be completed **before** an ITE programme is due to start, particularly for longer courses, or for individuals who apply later in the recruitment year. Therefore, the option of parallel delivery of SKE is available. An individual can start their SKE course and finish it alongside their ITE 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 a trainee might not have completed SKE before starting ITE. It is still the case that all training, including any SKE, must be completed to the requisite standard.

How is SKE funded?

15. SKE courses are funded by the department. Training providers who are in receipt of Office for Students funding, or registered with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as registered training providers, and who are delivering postgraduate, pre-service mathematics training up to GCSE and level 3 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 a “first come, first served” basis, and can only be requested when a conditional offer of an ITE place has been made to an applicant.

17. SKE funding for the academic year 2018/19 is set out in Table 1 below. The maximum amount that the department will fund is based on the amount of full-time study that the SKE course 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 course and cost. The department will fund the actual cost of the SKE course up to the maximum amount set out below, in which case the maximum funding rate for the duration will be paid.

SKE funding rates 2018/19

Table 1: SKE funding rates 2018/19

Weeks of full-time (or equivalent) study)	Maximum Programme Rate
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 bursary is available to support SKE?

18. Individuals receiving SKE are not eligible for [Student Finance England](#) (SFE) fee support for this course, if it is undertaken prior to their ITE qualification. In order that they are adequately supported, the department will provide a bursary to those who meet the student loan eligibility criteria. Details of the bursaries that individuals receiving SKE may receive are set out in Table 2 below:

Table 2: SKE bursary rates for 2018/19

Programme length in weeks	Bursary Rate (£200 a week)
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 – SKE award eligibility

1. This part of the guide supports training providers requesting funding for SKE training bursaries. All payment queries should be directed to the Funding Team at ITT.Funding@education.gov.uk. Any queries regarding eligibility or the purpose of the SKE scheme should be directed to the Further Education Teachers and Leaders team via FE.workforceincentives@education.gov.uk.

Eligibility of training providers

2. ITE SKE courses can be delivered by any supplier and in any format that is deemed appropriate by the training provider. It is the training provider who requests SKE funding from the department, using the SKE request form. Training providers may only request SKE funding to support ITE places to study mathematics for the academic year 2018/19. The individual must be undertaking a postgraduate pre-service programme that will enable them to teach up to GCSE and level 3.
3. SKE is only available to training providers who have met financial assurances provided either by meeting the requirements for receiving Office for Students funding or by being included on the ESFA Register of Training Organisations. Providers who do not meet these minimum requirements will not be eligible for SKE funding.
4. The training provider does not need to deliver the SKE programme to be eligible for funding. They have the option to commission it from any other supplier if this is a more suitable solution for the individual(s) they are supporting.
5. In order for SKE funding to be released, training providers must have signed the declaration set out in the SKE funding request that, if successful, funding will only be used to support the named individuals.

Eligibility of individuals

6. Individuals must have applied for, and discussed the offer of, a place on an ITE programme prior to the commission of any SKE courses. The provision of SKE is provided to enable the individual to take up that place once the course has been completed.
7. If the amount of subject knowledge required means that the SKE course cannot be completed before, or delivered alongside, the ITE programme in academic year 2018/19, the training provider cannot make an offer of a place on an ITE programme.
8. Where a trainee is undertaking their SKE in parallel with their ITE qualification and they are in receipt of an FE ITE bursary, the provision of that bursary is also

dependent upon the completion of their SKE. Where a trainee does not complete an SKE course, the department reserves the right to terminate the trainee's ITE bursary, as they will no longer meet the eligibility criteria for their ITE programme.

9. Any entry requirements placed on an individual for an SKE course specified by the training provider must be discussed and agreed with the individual before an application is made for funding.
10. Where an individual has accepted a place on a SKE course that will be completed before they begin their ITE programme, they will be eligible for a SKE training bursary. Training providers will need to claim this bursary alongside the costs of the SKE course, and will receive the SKE training bursary funds from the department on behalf of the individual. They must, in turn, pass on all of the SKE training bursary to the individual.

Section 3 – Structure of SKE training

1. SKE courses should:
 - deliver what is required, such that the training provider can satisfy themselves that the trainee meets the subject knowledge requirements by the time the ITE programme is complete; and
 - be designed so that, by the end of an ITE programme, trainees are able to demonstrate excellent subject and curriculum knowledge in the context of FE.
2. Courses can range from 8 weeks to a maximum of 20 weeks. A full-time course 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 course, where 8 weeks equates to 200 hours of study, regardless of the start and finish dates of the course.

Section 4 – SKE course funding for training providers

1. All training providers who meet the requirements set out above and have ITE places in mathematics can request SKE course funding. Training providers cannot charge any additional fees to individuals for whom they have made an application for funding.
2. Where SKE funding is available, it reflects the actual cost of the SKE course, in-line with the maximum levels indicated in Table 1 on page 6.
3. Training providers should submit their requests for funding electronically on the SKE request form. Where the SKE course is procured and delivered by a third party, the invoice must be retained by the training provider for audit and assurance purposes.
4. Individuals must only be registered on one SKE programme. The department reserves the right to monitor SKE programme take up and spend. Any SKE course funds deemed to have been used inappropriately will be recovered in full.
5. The department will pay the SKE training provider the SKE course funding directly.
6. Payments will be made electronically by BACS at the start of each calendar month. The department aims to pay SKE course funding in full in the next monthly payment run following receipt and acceptance of the SKE request form.
7. Training providers must inform the department at FE.workforceincentives@education.gov.uk as quickly as is reasonably possible if an individual fails to engage in their SKE course, or withdraws, including the date of withdrawal. The department reserves the right to investigate withdrawals from SKE courses and recover any unused funding.

Section 5 – SKE course funding for individuals

1. Training providers should request the SKE training bursaries on behalf of individuals when requesting the course funding using the SKE request form. Details of the bursary payments are set out in Table 2 on page 6.
2. If the SKE course runs in parallel with the full-time ITE programme, only the higher of the 2 training bursaries will be paid.
3. The SKE training bursary will reflect the FTE equivalent duration of the SKE course. For example, if an individual is required to undertake an 8-week SKE course but it is delivered through distance learning over a longer period, the SKE training bursary will be paid for the 8 weeks.
4. Training providers will receive the SKE training bursary on behalf of the individual and in turn must pass this on, in full, to them. SKE training bursary funding will cover the last full month of participation on the SKE course. Any unused SKE training bursary funding issued beyond this date will be recovered in full through the Annual Grant Report that training providers will need to return.
5. The department will pay training providers the SKE training bursary funding directly.
6. Payments for SKE bursary will be made using the process set out in Section 4 of this guide. They will be paid over the duration of the SKE course.

Section 6 – The process of requesting SKE funding and monitoring arrangements

The following is an overview of the process for training providers requesting and receiving funding:

1. The cost of each SKE programme included in the request form should be known before submitting the request.
2. The SKE funding request form can be downloaded from [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk). Requests for multiple trainees can be included on one request form.
3. SKE training bursary and SKE course funding requests relating to the same trainee must be made on the same request form.
4. Once completed, the SKE request form should be sent to ITT.Funding@education.gov.uk and copied to FE.workforceincentives@education.gov.uk
5. Receipt of the SKE request form will be acknowledged by the Funding Team. If there are any queries about the form the Funding Team will inform the training provider.
6. The department aims to pay the course costs in full the month following the course start. Bursary payments will commence at this point and will be distributed across the academic year.
7. SKE course funding is paid by the department to the training provider to cover the cost of running SKE course (i.e. programme cost) and any bursary. There is no additional funding to cover administration relating to SKE courses or bursaries.
8. Training providers must obtain and retain the invoice for the SKE courses that they receive funding for over academic year 2018/19. They do not need to send these to the department.
9. Training providers will be asked to complete a report at the end of each academic year to reconcile funding from the department and actual spend.
10. The data submitted in SKE request form will form part of a regular analysis and review by the department to monitor and evaluate take-up of the SKE scheme.
11. Training providers using a third party to deliver an SKE course should also retain all invoices corresponding to the SKE request form, as they could be subject to an audit during the year. They may also be asked to submit these invoices to the department at the end of the year.
12. At the end of the 2018/19 academic year, training providers will be required to complete a short report, signed by the appropriately authorised responsible person, confirming that the SKE course and bursary funds have been spent in accordance with the funding offer letter.

Annex – Frequently asked questions

Q1. What is SKE?

SKE courses are intended to help providers recruit the best people on to ITE programmes. If training providers see someone at interview who has the right skills and aptitude to be a good mathematics teacher, but has not had the opportunity to develop their subject knowledge, then they can discuss with them the possibility of completing an SKE programme.

The training provider should agree with that candidate what the content and duration of the SKE will be, dependent upon how much they need to learn in order to meet the requirements for their ITE.

The department is offering SKE to support mathematics recruitment for candidates who will commence their ITE training in 2018/19. The department only funds SKE up to a maximum of 20 weeks.

Q2. Which subjects can I use SKE for?

The department is currently only funding SKE for mathematics in FE ITE.

Q3. How is it funded?

SKE is directly funded by the department.

The funding levels depend upon the length of the course; they are set out in terms of weeks. The funding levels are set out in Tables 1 and 2 on page 6 of this guide.

Q4. Can the SKE course be less than eight-weeks' duration?

Yes, but if it is substantially less then a training provider can expect to be challenged as to the need for the course.

Q5. How do training providers get the funding?

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

Q6. Who sets the content of SKE?

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

The department expects training 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 training provider 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.

Q7. Is this a separate qualification?

No, SKE is a course funded by the department to support the development of candidates for mathematics ITE. The purpose of the funding is to provide the candidate with access to the best subject knowledge. The training provider who requests the funding can spend it as they see fit in order to meet the needs of the candidate.

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

Training providers and candidates can decide how this is best achieved.

Q8. How do you measure if SKE has been successful?

There is no requirement for the SKE to be formally assessed or certificated, although training providers will want to be assured that the individual has achieved all that is necessary at the end of the course. It is for training providers to decide how to do this.

Q9. How is the trainee supported? If they need an SKE can they get a student loan?

No, SKE courses are not eligible for a student loan. If the SKE is delivered before they begin their ITE programme and the individual meets the criteria for a student loan however, they are eligible for a bursary from the department. The rates for the bursary are set out in table 2 on page 6 of this guide. Their training provider should apply for the bursary on their behalf when they apply for the programme funding.

Q10. Is SKE separate from ITE?

Yes, it is funded separately and not all individuals will need to undertake an SKE programme. Where a training provider has identified the need for SKE they can make a conditional offer of a place on an ITE programme subject to successful completion of the SKE. Training providers who use UCAS Teacher Training will usually make a conditional offer based on completion of the SKE.

Q11. What happens if the trainee does not complete the SKE?

Where an individual does not complete an SKE course that has been agreed as part of their acceptance on to an ITE programme, then we expect their training provider to review the offer of a place. Trainees who are also in receipt of a FE ITE mathematics bursary may have that withdrawn, as they no longer meet the entry criteria for their ITE programme.



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