



## Department for Education

# Subject knowledge enhancement

## What are subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) programmes?

SKE programmes help you recruit to biology, chemistry, computing, design and technology, English, geography, languages, maths, primary maths and physics courses by updating a candidate's subject knowledge so that they are ready to teach. They are widely used, with around a third of initial teacher training (ITT) places in priority subjects being supported by SKE last year.

You may see an applicant who has the potential to become an outstanding teacher in a priority subject, but who needs to increase their subject knowledge before the Teachers Standards can be met.

Don't miss out on a quality candidate. An SKE programme can help you both feel confident that they have the subject knowledge needed to fill your place.

An SKE programme can vary in length from an 8 week refresher or booster programme right through to a 28 week programme. The unique benefit of SKE is that it can be tailored to meet your needs and those of your candidate.

"We've found SKE programmes very useful when recruiting good candidates who just need a little boost in their learning. We often make sure it is a condition of their placement offer before they start their training. Our most recent School Direct candidate had a degree in Spanish and GSCE in French, so to make sure she was confident and ready to teach A-level French classes we agreed she would do an SKE course. We found it worked really well and didn't delay her starting with us."

**Stephen McKenzie, Vice  
Principal, Morley Academy**

## How are SKE programmes funded?

All SKE programmes in priority subjects are funded by DfE. Training bursaries are also available to eligible candidates. For more information please see the SKE operations manual.

## How do I use SKE?

It's easy to find and arrange a programme that will meet the needs of your candidate. This 3-step guide will help you to get started:

1. **Identify the need for SKE.** This is usually done during the recruitment and selection process. Use subject leads at your school to help assess an applicant's existing knowledge. If this is the first time you are using SKE, your partner ITT provider may also be able to help.
2. **Choose the right SKE programme.** SKE can be delivered flexibly to meet your needs and those of the candidate. SKE programmes can be full or part-time and can be delivered online, through distance learning, face-to-face or a combination of both. You may want to consult your candidate about the approach that will suit you both and inform them that they may also be eligible for a bursary during their SKE. You can use the online directory to find existing SKE programmes. Alternatively, speak to your partner teacher training provider(s) to see if they offer SKE.
3. **Finalise SKE arrangements and claim funding.** Once you have agreed on the most appropriate SKE programme, decide whether you or your SKE provider will submit the funding claim form. You should also agree how to keep in touch with your applicant throughout the SKE programme and how progress will be reported back to you.

For more information, including the SKE operations manual and course directory go to:  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-knowledge-enhancement-guide](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-knowledge-enhancement-guide)