

Subject Knowledge
Enhancement (SKE):
**A guide for initial teacher
training (ITT) providers**



Charlie Fitt, SKE Physics learner

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What is **Subject Knowledge Enhancement**?

Subject Knowledge Enhancement courses (SKE) are designed to help **improve a trainee teacher's subject knowledge** before or alongside their initial teacher training. The courses can range in length from an 8-week refresher to a more in depth 28-week programme, dependant on both the needs of the trainee and the course length available.

Courses available:

Biology, chemistry, computing, English, French, geography, German, maths, physics and Spanish

How can SKE help your trainees?

Your trainees could benefit from an SKE course if:

- Their degree is closely related, but not specific to their chosen subject
- They are returning to teach their degree subject, after spending time working in a different field
- They don't have an A-level in their chosen subject
- They lack confidence in their subject

Shortage subjects

Tes Institute offers courses in: biology, chemistry, computing, English, French, geography, German, maths, physics and Spanish. As shortage subjects, funding is available for trainees from the Department for Education (DfE) to cover the full cost of the course, with the administration handled by Tes Institute. Eligible candidates also have the possibility of an additional tax-free training bursary.

Eligibility criteria

Your trainees will be eligible for a funded place on an SKE course if they meet the ITT eligibility criteria and you provide them with a conditional offer of a place on your programme that states they must complete an SKE course in their chosen subject.

Additional eligibility criteria may be required for the SKE bursary funding, please see page 8 for details.

In addition, we can now offer funded SKE courses to PE ITT trainees who have an A-level in an Ebacc subject (English, maths, geography, history, the sciences, computing or a language) and meet all other SKE eligibility criteria.

Flexible learning

At Tes Institute, courses are delivered 100% online, allowing trainees to fit learning around their other commitments. They can study at a time and in a place that suits them, and they can overlap the SKE course with their initial teacher training if necessary. If a trainee chooses to do this they will continue to receive course funding (if eligible) but, if they are eligible for an ITT bursary, they will no longer receive SKE bursary funding during the overlap. Due to the workload involved with undertaking an SKE alongside teacher training, we recommend that the overlap is kept to a minimum.

Sarah Bridges, Tes Institute qualified teacher

Funding and fees

Funding is available from the DfE to cover the full cost of the course as long as you include a condition in the trainee's offer letter stating that they must complete a subject knowledge enhancement course. If your trainee has a degree score of 2:2 or above then they may also be able to access a tax-free training bursary of up to £5,600, depending on the course length.

Subject	Programme length	SKE course fee (funding available*)	Max. SKE bursary
Biology, chemistry, computing, English, French, geography, German, maths, physics or Spanish	8 weeks	£1,600	£1,600
	12 weeks	£2,400	£2,400
	16 weeks	£3,200	£3,200
Biology**, chemistry, computing, French, German, maths, physics or Spanish	20 weeks	£4,000	£4,000
	24 weeks	£4,800	£4,800
Chemistry, maths or physics	28 weeks	£5,600	£5,600

*DfE funding is subject to conditions and not guaranteed. For full entry criteria and funding details, view the DfE SKE Funding Manual 2018/19.

**The maximum course length we offer for biology is 20 weeks.

Making **SKE** part of your **recruitment**

Choosing your SKE provider should be part of your recruitment plans.

Tes Institute's ethos is to help ITT providers and schools to **attract, train and retain the best teachers**, with a number of in-house services that start with SKE. Our SKE courses can help you to:

- Widen your pool of possible candidates to include those with the potential to be great teachers but who hold a non-subject specific degree, a lower classification of degree or lack confidence in their chosen subject
- Recruit more trainees in shortage subjects that are difficult to recruit
- Provide your trainees with a boost in subject knowledge, pedagogy and confidence before they begin ITT
- Recruit strong candidates with life and industry experience who need to refresh their curriculum knowledge

How to decide if an applicant needs SKE

SKE can also be the basis of an ITT offer. In the case of a single-language graduate for example, the course could be offered on the condition of improving their second language.

It's the responsibility of both the trainee teacher and the ITT provider to decide whether SKE is needed - this can be based on the individual's degree module breakdown, A-level results and/or a discussion about their past experience. If you are still unsure whether SKE is needed, ask the trainee to complete a practise GCSE or A-level paper to identify areas for improvement.

Please note that SKE courses are not designed to teach your ITT trainee a subject from scratch but to enhance their existing GCSE level subject knowledge.

How long should the course be?

ITT providers are expected to play a prominent role in deciding on the length of an SKE course. As a rule of thumb an 8-week course would be aimed at trainees who are relatively proficient in their subject area but need a top up, whereas a 24 to 28 week course would be more appropriate for those looking for a more in depth development of their KS3–KS5 knowledge.

A trainee can extend the length of their SKE programme once started, if the learner feels it is necessary to do so and only with the permission of their ITT provider (but not beyond 28 weeks).

Why Tes Institute?

We have delivered over one million SKE learning hours to help more than 4,000 trainee teachers improve their subject knowledge, making us the largest provider of SKE courses in England.

Tes Institute offers a holistic approach to teaching, allowing teachers with little or no experience to develop and teach with confidence.

Choosing Tes Institute for SKE also makes your life simple: we handle all administration including bursary payments and any supplementary bursary payments on your behalf.

What makes an SKE from Tes Institute different?

Our SKE courses are delivered 100% online and on-demand via an award-winning platform called Learn, so your trainees can study in their spare time and fit the course around their existing commitments.

Regular tutor support and feedback

All trainees are appointed a subject specialist pathway tutor who will mentor and coach their subject knowledge and skill development. They will also provide you with regular checkpoint reports that detail your trainee's progress and comprehensive feedback at the end of the course. These reports will give you an insight into your trainee's development at key stages of their SKE course, as well as outlining any areas for development that can be built into their teacher training if needed.

How to apply for an SKE course

Once you have given your candidates a conditional offer they can apply directly on our website, tes.com/SKE.

FAQs

These questions are **commonly asked** by ITT providers and should help to answer any other queries you have about SKE.

Does an SKE course cost anything for the ITT provider?

It doesn't cost the ITT provider anything and Tes Institute will organise all of the administration for applicants who are eligible for bursaries.

How will it be assessed and will we receive feedback?

The course is comprised of a series of sessions, with each one taking around two weeks to complete, based on a trainee spending 20-25 hours per week learning. Each session is assessed through one summative assessment and you will receive a regular report detailing strengths, weaknesses and areas for further improvement for the trainee.

What support will the trainee receive?

Every trainee is assigned a subject specialist Pathway Tutor who will review work online, provide regular feedback and answer subject knowledge queries, as well as monitoring Learning Diary entries and other contributions.

What's the difference between online and face-to-face learning?

SKE learning can be delivered online, face-to-face or as a blend of both. While each method has its own merits, it is generally down to the individual's learning style as to which suits them more. When choosing a provider it is important that the

trainee is fully supported and regular feedback is given to both them and their provider.

All of Tes Institute's SKE courses are delivered online to provide maximum flexibility. Your trainees are able to fit the course around their existing personal and professional commitments: whether they are currently abroad, at University or in a job, learning can be done 24/7 across the world, from any device that can access the internet.

How do Tes Institute's SKE courses work?

At the start of the course each trainee will complete a subject audit which will help the dedicated pathway tutor to tailor the learning around their needs. Course content is kept constantly up to date and is delivered in a variety of ways including: pre-recorded interactive lectures, reading-related articles, self-assessment exercises, subject-focused

activities for discussion on class forums and Learning Diary reflections. Each trainee will also be able to collaborate with their peers on the forums, and will have to complete assessments, designed to consolidate their learning, throughout the course.

When do the courses start?

There are multiple start dates throughout the year with courses starting every fortnight. Our website has up to date information.

What if the trainee has no teaching experience?

Applicants can complete a Tes Institute SKE course prior to their ITT training year. The course offers development of the trainee's subject pedagogy skills and helps in developing ideas and activities to use in the classroom. It also starts to build the skills needed to become an outstanding teacher.

Case study

Stuart Russell from Kent and Medway Training talks about his experience of developing a partnership with Tes Institute for SKE courses.

"As an established, large and successful SCITT, the past few years have led to us achieving our highest ever levels of employment and trainee teacher outcomes at the end of the training period. We feel that one of the key contributors to this has been our developing partnership with SKE and Tes Institute. Outstanding teachers have to have excellent subject knowledge for teaching, so enabling trainees to have access to the SKE courses at an early stage provides them with a really strong foundation to build on.

Enabling trainees to have access to the SKE courses at an early stage provides them with a really strong foundation to build on.

While the courses are subject specific, they are always clearly linked to pedagogy and the trainees are constantly able to link theory with practice.

We have recommended an increasing number of trainees to the SKE courses each year, and

the communication and prompt responses that we receive enable our trainees to register and get going really quickly once they have accepted our conditional offer.

The fact that the SKE courses have a fortnightly start date also fits very nicely alongside our on-going recruitment procedures. The pathway tutors carry out the monitoring and assessment of the modules and all progress is shared with the subject specialists at our SCITT and myself as Course Director. Such clear communication enables us to have a clearer insight into the trainees' potential and it also enables us to intervene where necessary.

While deadlines are firmly in place, the SKE courses are very flexible and bespoke to the trainee's needs so that a range of modules can be completed prior to, or by the beginning of, the ITT period.

We have no doubts that, as we expand, we'll continue to work with the Tes Institute SKE courses and I'm confident that this will also lead to other collaborative workings in the future."

Contact us

To contact us you can **email** institute@tesglobal.com or alternatively **call one of our enrolment advisors on:** +44 (0) 203 194 3200.

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Contact us for further information and advice

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Please note that we have endeavoured to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this prospectus at the time of publication. However, this information is issued as a guideline to ITT providers and interested parties. While we aim to implement what is outlined in the prospectus, we cannot undertake any obligation to provide the programmes and facilities as stated and we reserve the right to amend course information, cancel, suspend or modify the courses or change the entry requirements at any time. Correct at time of issue: March 2019