

*Promoting Quality in Teacher Education*



22 March 2024

Rt. Gillian Keegan MP  
Secretary of State  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London SW1P 3BT

Dear Secretary of State,

**SKE changes**

We are writing to express our concern about the decision, made without prior warning or discussion, to restrict the number of subjects eligible for Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) funding in the current year.

SKE makes an invaluable contribution to both teacher supply and to how prepared new teachers are to teach their chosen specialist subject. Withdrawing financial support from SKE in primary maths, D&T, English, biology and RE programmes will reduce the number of student teachers recruited to these key subject areas, adding even further to the shortages that schools face. There will also be implications for those who are recruited to programmes as they will be less prepared to begin their training and may struggle to remain on course. Suggesting, as the department has done, that ITE providers give more time to providing additional subject knowledge support on what are already overcrowded courses of just 10 months duration will not in many cases be an option.

The timing of the announcement is problematic. Making changes like this part-way through a recruitment cycle is unprecedented and will inevitably give rise to questions about the underlying reasons for the decision. Prospective teachers will have applied for ITE programmes on the understanding that SKE support will be available. Giving ITE providers just a couple of weeks, over the Easter holiday period, to make offers conditional on SKE being undertaken is unreasonable.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Rogers', is positioned above the printed name of the Executive Director.

James Noble-Rogers  
Executive Director