Your route from the Leiths Level 7 Advanced Certificate of Professional Development to QTS

Find out which pathway could be right for you.

Do you have a university degree?

A Level 6 bachelor's degree or equivalent.

Please note: A Level 5 foundation degree or diploma does not count for QTS purposes.

NO

The Level 7 cannot lead directly to QTS without a degree.

You do not meet the degree requirement for QTS, and the Level 7 cannot replace this.

The Level 7 can still help you gain a teaching role where QTS is not required.

The Level 7 can support you to apply for food and nutrition teaching roles in independent schools, and in other settings where QTS is not required, subject to each school's recruitment and appointment criteria.

Opportunities in **academies** may be limited, as the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 provides for QTS requirements to be extended to specified academies. Implementation details and timescales are still to be confirmed.

Gain valuable teaching experience.

Working in a school in a food and nutrition teaching role can help you build the experience required if you later decide to pursue QTS. You will need a degree (Level 6 or equivalent) to progress to QTS.

YES

With a degree, the Level 7 can support your progression to QTS via one of two routes:

1 PGCE route to QTS

The Level 7 can be used to support your application for a PGCE with QTS in Food and Nutrition, particularly if your first degree is not related to food education.

Apply for a PGCE with QTS

The Level 7 can be recognised as relevant prior learning, often alongside other relevant experience, when considering your application.

Successfully complete the PGCE

This includes school placements and all programme requirements.

Demonstrate the Teachers' Standards

You will be assessed against the Teachers' Standards, usually through a combination of:

- school-based assessment during placements
- written assignments
- lesson observations
- professional discussions

2 Assessment Only (AO) route to QTS

The Level 7 can help you gain a teaching role in a school, which can provide the employment and experience needed to apply for QTS through the Assessment Only route.

Do you have suitable teaching experience?

You must have at least:

- two years' teaching experience across two different schools; or
- five years' teaching experience in a single school.

The experience must include whole-class teaching and can be in independent schools or other eligible settings.

NO → **Not yet eligible.** Gain more teaching experience (either two years across two schools, or five years in one school).

YES

Do you meet the Teachers' Standards?

You will need to provide evidence that you meet all the Teachers' Standards, assessed through your teaching practice and a portfolio of evidence.

NO → **Not yet eligible.** You will need to gather further evidence to meet all the Teachers' Standards.

YES

Are you employed in, or can you gain access to, a suitable school for assessment?

While national guidance does not require you to be currently employed, you will usually need access to a school where you can be assessed, and the support of an experienced teacher.

NO → **Not yet ready.** You will need to secure a suitable school and the support of an experienced teacher.

YES

Awarded QTS

You can then teach in state-funded schools as a qualified teacher.

Please note: The Level 7 Advanced Certificate of Professional Development does not itself award QTS or guarantee admission to a PGCE or Assessment Only programme. Eligibility is assessed individually by the relevant accredited provider, and additional entry requirements may apply.