



University of Cambridge

ESOL Examinations

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NOTES TO ACCOMPANY EXAMINER APPLICATION FORMS

If you are applying for the **first time** for examining work in the UK, complete the **Cambridge ESOL Examiners Application Form**.

If you are an **existing** examiner, or if you have **applied previously** and can quote a reference, use the **Cambridge ESOL Examiners Supplementary Form**. However, if your previous application was more than three years ago and you are not *currently* examining for **Cambridge ESOL**, you may be asked to complete another application form. Please ask for guidance if you need it.

If you are applying for examining work **outside the UK**, contact the Centre Examinations Manager of the centre at which you want to examine; nominations for oral examining outside the UK are dealt with by Centre Examinations Managers at the overseas Centres.

Please only apply for examining work if you have the relevant experience, the necessary availability and, where relevant, also meet the geographical requirements. Details are provided in these Notes.

A Qualifications

The minimum professional requirements for ESOL examining work are as follows:

- education to first degree level or equivalent*;
- a recognised TESOL qualification*;
- at least three years' full-time, relevant teaching experience, within the past five years;
- overall language proficiency relevant to the examination level, including clear diction in the case of oral examining.

*An applicant may be exempt either from the formal teaching qualifications or from the first degree/equivalence requirement (but **not** both) if s/he can demonstrate considerable relevant teaching experience supported by positive references.

Because of the commercially sensitive nature of Cambridge ESOL examining work and in order to avoid any potential conflict of interests in the future, applications are *not* invited from those who plan to work or wish to continue working as examiners for other ESOL examination boards

B Examining periods and geographical needs

Written papers marked at home

BEC Vantage, CAE, FCE2, CPE2* and **CPE3*** scripts are marked at home over a period of 3-5 weeks in June/July and December/January. FCE is also marked in March/April. Self-access training materials are provided in advance and there is a preparatory co-ordination meeting which examiners **MUST** attend before marking begins. **Examiners must be resident in the UK during the entire relevant examining periods.**

* At present there are no examining vacancies for **CPE**.

Skills for Life is an on-demand exam; examiners will be expected to offer substantial availability throughout the year and must be available for at least 3 consecutive weeks in June and July. Preference is given to applicants who work in the FE sector and have completed training in the *Adult ESOL Core Curriculum*.

ILEC and ICFE are new internationally recognised high level qualification for learners who work in the legal and financial sectors respectively; it is a test of language not legal or financial knowledge. ILEC and ICFE are offered twice a year and examiners will be invited to mark subject to attendance at a training meeting. Self-access training materials are provided in advance and there is a telephone co-ordination stage. ILEC and ICFE are marked at home in May and November.

Written papers marked on site

PET Writing is marked on-site during weekends in January, April, June, July and December. Self-access training materials are provided in advance. Examiners should live in or have access to accommodation within easy travelling distance of Cambridge or London.

BEC Preliminary and **Higher Writing** are marked on site during weekends in April, June, July and December. Examiners should live in or have access to accommodation within easy travelling distance of sites in Sheffield, Southampton and Bristol.

The number of examiners needed for Writing tests varies from session to session according to the entry. The marking peak is usually in June - July. Successful applicants may not be required immediately but will be contacted for training and co-ordination as soon as there are vacancies on the panel(s) for which they are approved.

Speaking Tests

Applicants interested in examining Upper Main Suite Speaking tests must have the necessary experience to cover all three levels, i.e. **FCE, CAE** and **CPE**. The examining periods for UMS Speaking tests are mid-May to mid-June and mid-November to mid-December; there is an additional period for FCE and CAE in March.

Applicants interested in examining Lower Main Suite Speaking tests must have the necessary experience to cover both levels, i.e. **KET** and **PET**. The examining periods are March-April, May-June, November-December.

Applicants interested in examining BEC must have the necessary experience to cover all three levels, i.e. **Preliminary, Vantage** and **Higher**. The examining periods are March-April, May-June, November-December.

Other levels include **ILEC** and **ICFE**; we welcome applications from appropriately qualified examiners and we will keep these on file. However, there are currently no examining vacancies. The examining periods are May and November.

Training for the all the above levels usually take place during a weekend in April and most co-ordination meetings are held on a Saturday in May. Co-ordination for some levels will be via the Cambridge ESOL online Professional Support Network (PSN).

Skills for Life is an on-demand exam and assessors will be expected to offer substantial availability throughout the year. Assessors should work in the FE sector and, preferably, have completed training in the *Adult ESOL Core Curriculum*. Training will normally be held in January and Co-ordination in February.

Training and co-ordination is compulsory for all Cambridge ESOL Speaking tests in order to examine.

Speaking tests may take place during morning, afternoon and evening sessions on Mondays to Fridays and during morning and afternoon sessions on Saturdays (and Sundays for some tests in some areas). Please note that Skills for Life tests are usually held during the week on Mondays to Fridays though Oral Examiners/Assessors are not normally expected to undertake more than two sessions a day.

Please do not apply for oral examining work unless you are reasonably available, i.e. able to examine on some weekdays/evenings as well as Saturdays.

Geographical requirements

Geographical requirements as well as qualifications are taken into account in appointing new examiners for both Speaking tests and Writing papers that are marked on site. You must live or work within reasonable travelling distance of the relevant Cambridge ESOL examination Centres or marking venues, but you would not be assigned to any Centres where you are in professional or social contact with candidates. If you meet the minimum professional requirements but there are currently no vacancies in your area, your details will be kept on file (see part **D** below).

C Completing the form

Please write as clearly as possible or type.

Box 1

Tick the box to indicate which level(s) you wish to examine and whether you are applying for **Speaking tests** or **Written paper marking**; you should only apply to examine those qualifications for which you have recent, adequate experience.

Some examinations require special experience, e.g. a background in teaching Business English for BEC; if you are not sure of the requirements, please contact Cambridge ESOL before submitting your application form.

Box 4a

Include here subjects for which degrees/certificates have been awarded.

Box 5

If you are now working in a freelance capacity, please give details of activities, e.g. type of private teaching, publishing work, etc.

Box 8

Include here details of non-ESOL as well as ESOL experience. If you have been an Oral Examiner overseas, please state level(s) and country; if possible give Centre number(s).

If you have previously worked for other ESOL examining boards, please give details of the board and the dates between which you worked. If you are still working for that board and intend to continue, please make this clear on the application form.

Box 10

A standard document requesting a personal **or** professional reference is enclosed with this application form. You may return the reference with your application form or ask your referee to return the reference directly to Cambridge ESOL. The second reference, which **must** be a professional reference, will be obtained by Cambridge ESOL. Please supply email addresses where available; references may be requested or supplied by email to avoid delay. Please note that at least one reference should relate to ESOL teaching or examining experience.

Cambridge ESOL will not chase up non-receipt of references. If we do not receive one or both references within four weeks of request, you will be notified in writing indicating which reference has not been received. You may then follow up the original reference yourself or supply an alternative referee to Cambridge ESOL.

Supplementary applications

If you are already an examiner and you are completing a supplementary application form, please add details of relevant recent experience in Box 3.

Applications for **IELTS** examining should be referred to the British Council at 10 Spring Gardens, London, SW1A 2BN (Tel: 0207 389 4272).

D Application processing

You will not receive an acknowledgement of your completed application form but every effort will be made by Cambridge ESOL Examiners and Pretesting Administration (EPA) Unit to obtain your second reference as quickly as possible. Your application will then be considered and appropriate decisions made which lead to one of the following actions:

If your application is accepted

Written papers

You will receive a letter containing your UCLES Creditor number and your name will be placed on the reserve list of examiners for the paper(s) in question. An invitation to mark will be sent to you as soon as there is a vacancy on an appropriate panel. New examiners are usually needed during the summer months when entries are higher; if insufficient existing examiners are able to accept the initial invitations and/or there is a significant increase in entries, new examiners may be invited to fill vacancies, sometimes at a comparatively late stage. If additional vacancies occur shortly before the start of the examining period, new examiners will be telephoned to check that they are still available.

Speaking Tests

You will receive a letter containing your UCLES reference and your name will be placed on the reserve list of examiners for the Speaking Tests in question. Applications for oral examining are retained until a vacancy is identified in your area. One of the Regional Team Leaders for the Speaking Tests will contact suitable applicants by telephone. If you are contacted and you meet all the professional and availability requirements, you will be invited to a training session as a potential Oral Examiner for the subsequent administration. You will then receive a letter containing your UCLES ID and your Creditor number.

If your application is not accepted

If you do not meet all the requirements, you will receive a letter and a "Supplementary" form. Ineligibility is often due to lack of relevant teaching experience and you are invited to complete and return the Supplementary Form when you have obtained further experience, should you wish to do so.

If you are not available for sufficient examining sessions, or if you do not live in an area where examiners are required, your name will not be kept on the reserve list.

If you have any queries, please contact Cambridge ESOL EPA Unit at the address on the first page.