Profile of a Cambridge ESOL Speaking Examiner

A Cambridge ESOL Speaking Examiner is regarded by the organisation as having a key role in the whole process of assessing a candidate's English language ability. The mark for speaking skills constitutes at least 20% of the overall score of a Cambridge candidate and can clearly make a significant difference to whether a candidate is awarded a certificate or not. Furthermore, the Speaking Examiner is perceived by many candidates as the 'face' of Cambridge ESOL.

Cambridge ESOL therefore places a very high store on the professionalism of Speaking Examiners and has developed a major programme to standardise the procedures used in the recruitment, induction, training, co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation (RITCME) of Speaking Examiners.

One of the main aims of the RITCME programme is to convey the message that becoming a Cambridge ESOL Speaking Examiner is something special and something that, in fairness to the candidates, requires an ongoing commitment to professional development.

A Cambridge ESOL Speaking Examiner:

1. Has a suitably professional background, meeting the specified minimum requirements such as:
   - Education to first degree level or equivalent preferably in a TESOL-related subject*;
   - At least three years’ relevant, full-time and recent teaching experience;
   - A recognised TESOL teaching qualification*;
   - Aged over 25 and under national retirement age on appointment (in accordance with local legislation).

   *an applicant may be exempt from either, but not both, of these in the light of considerable teaching experience supported by positive references.

2. Demonstrates the following English language competencies such as:
   - Overall language proficiency relevant to the examination level.(This should be at least two levels on CEFR above the level the examiner is examining).
   - Clear diction including intelligibility outside the region/country where examining takes place
   - Linguistic accuracy.
   - Ability to judge the grammaticality, acceptability and appropriateness of spoken English at the relevant examination level.

3. Has the necessary personal qualities and inter-personal skills such as:
   - Willingness to observe the need for confidentiality and security in all aspects of the work;
   - Responsibility, conscientiousness, with attention to detail;
   - Ability to interact appropriately with the type of candidates for the examination(s) in question.