# Certification

## Handbook and Study Guide

January 2015

**NAI**
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR
**INTERPRETATION**

# About the National Association for Interpretation

The National Association for Interpretation (NAI) was formed in 1988 from two existing organizations -- the Association of Interpretive Naturalists and the Western Interpreters' Association. Both of those groups were created in the 1950s to provide training and networking opportunities for interpreters of natural and cultural history in nonformal settings (parks, zoos, nature centers, museums, and aquaria).

For over 30 years, the Association of Interpretive Naturalists and Western Interpreters' Association operated as two separate professional organizations with offices in Needwood, Maryland and Sacramento, California, respectively. After merging to form NAI in 1988, a partnership was created with Colorado State University's Department of Natural Resource Recreation and Tourism. CSU students work in the National Office as interns and work-study employees.

NAI strives to meet the needs of interpretation professionals in North America and worldwide. Its certification program is one of many services designed to further the work of the profession. Please let us know what we can do to serve your needs.

The NAI national office is located in Fort Collins, Colorado. For certification information, please contact NAI.

NAI National Office
230 Cherry Street
Fort Collins CO 80521
888-900-8283 (toll-free)
970-484-8283 (Fort Collins, CO)

More information about NAI and other products and services is available on our website: www.interpnet.com

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# 1

## NAI's Certification Program

### History

Long before the National Association for Interpretation came into existence in 1988, individuals who practiced interpretation as a profession began to look at certfication as a way of recognizing that a certain level of proficiency in the art and science of interpretation had been attained.

For over two decades, the issue of certification was hotly debated. Some individuals felt that only those with a college education could consider themselves "professional interpreters," while others felt that natural storytellers with little or no training, but years of experience relating to visitors in an interpretive setting should also be recognized.

Today's certification program, initiated in 1998, has evolved from years of discussion and the efforts of numerous committees formed to study the issue from all sides.

It recognizes that individuals who are committed to interpretation as their profession may come to that calling in a number of ways and with a number of different skill sets.

The certification program is designed to exclude no one who recognizes that interpretation is a profession with its own body of knowledge, principles, and ongoing research, regardless of how they came to be in the field or how their job relates to interpretation.

The program also recognizes that there are different skill sets required for different jobs within the field of interpretation and that not everyone who begins as a front-line interpreter will want to move into other types of work, such as management of interpretive sites, planning, or training.

Therefore, the program currently sustains six categories that recognize six different skill sets. These categories were selected after careful consideration of the types of individuals that make up NAI's membership and the jobs that they hold. Categories were not developed for complementary disciplines for which other certification programs already exist (for example, exhibit designers could choose to become Certified Heritage Interpreters, but their design skills can be certified through the Industrial Design Society of America).

**Program Description**

Certification is a voluntary program that provides recognition of an individual's knowledge and skills related to interpretation.

It is not necessary to become certified to be a member of the National Association for Interpretation and membership is not required for certification.

It is not necessary to attain certification to get a job in the interpretive field; however, many agencies and organizations are beginning to recognize the added value of certification, and some agencies now require their employees or contractors to be NAI-certified.

Applicants are required to sign a letter of understanding about the program (see Appendix A) prior to receiving their initial certification approval.

**Goals**

The mission of NAI is to inspire leadership and excellence to advance natural and cultural interpretation as a profession. In accordance with that mission, the goals for the certification program are:

- to provide an educational program that improves technical competency of interpretation professionals;

- to create incentives for individuals to continue their professional development and excel in the field of interpretation;

- to provide a standard that identifies professionals in the field who have demonstrated a thorough knowledge of interpretive principles, practices, and skills;

- to implement a high level of skill, competency, and education that enhances opportunities for growth, encourages new interpreters, and serves as support for professionals in the field.

**Benefits**

Certification helps you cultivate and build a professional self-image. By studying for and passing the test elements, you reaffirm your commitment to maintaining knowledge and dedication to the principles and skills of interpretation for yourself and your peers.

Certification makes you more competitive and may improve your chances of being hired or getting a promotion.

Certification may improve your opportunities to make job changes or work as a consultant.

The process of becoming certified and maintaining the designation provides incentives to continue professional development and confirms that you excel in this discipline.

Certification helps you maintain cutting edge skills and knowledge in the field of interpretation.

## Administration

Several groups are involved in the administration of the certification program. Your specific needs will determine which of these groups can best serve those needs.

## NAI Board of Directors

(see website for current contact information)

- approves major policy changes
- approves new categories

## NAI Staff

- handles mailing, promotion, and distribution of certification materials
- answers general information questions
- evaluates eligibility and distributes letters of deficiency or confirmation
- grades literature review
- distributes Part 2 (essay) exams and other evidences of performance for reviews
- corresponds with applicants and answers questions during the process
- maintains database of certified and recertified individuals
- trains and selects contracted trainers as needed for certification courses
- conducts periodic job analyses and reviews of the program to ensure compliance with national standards for certification programs
- fulfills orders, audits results of certification classes, and prepares reports as necessary
- monitors instructors and enforces adherence to policies

## Certification Review Board

(no contact by applicants allowed)

The Certification Review Board currently consists of trained and certified individuals in each certification category. These individuals review essay exams and evidences of performance, then submit their evaluations to NAI staff for entry into the database and further handling.

## Special Accommodations

NAI's Certification Program does not discriminate in determining eligibility on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Individuals with disabilities requiring special accommodations in establishing eligibility or in completing the certification requirements, can include a letter with the application form explaining their needs. Any necessary arrangements, if approved by staff, will be provided at no additional charge.

# Categories, Eligibility, & Costs

**Categories**

There are two general classifications of certification categories: Training and Professional. The Training categories are designed for interpreters who are seasonal, temporary, new hires, or volunteers who have little or no experience in interpretation, while the Professional categories target those with four or more years of education or experience in the field. There are currently six specific certification categories.

**Training Categories**

*Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG)*
Theory and practice of oral interpretive communication skills in a 32-hour training program

*Certified Interpretive Host (CIH)*
Combines customer service with informal interpretation in a 16-hour training program for those who have contact with the public but do not give programs (e.g., reception, sales, law enforcement, maintenance, etc.)

**Professional Categories**

*Certified Heritage Interpreter (CHI)*
Someone on the "front line" who actually gives programs and develops non-personal media

*Certified Interpretive Manager (CIM)*
Someone who manages an interpretive facility, supervises staff, prepares budgets, or is otherwise responsible for daily operations of an interpretive site

*Certified Interpretive Trainer (CIT)*
Someone who trains others in an interpretation related activity

*Certified Interpretive Planner (CIP)*
Someone who prepares master plans, exhibit plans, or other comprehensive planning efforts

**Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities**

*Certified Interpretive Manager*
The Certified Interpretive Manager must demonstrate a basic knowledge of:

- history of the interpretive profession

- principles of interpretation

- current literature in the interpretive field

- sound business practices

- and demonstrate the following skills and abilities:

  - leadership
  - supervision of subordinate staff
  - meeting management
  - budget development and administration
  - business planning
  - writing measurable objectives
  - use of interpretation to accomplish management objectives

*Certified Interpretive Planner*
The Certified Interpretive Planner must demonstrate a basic knowledge of:

- history of the interpretive profession

- principles of interpretation

- current literature in the interpretive field

- marketing, management, and maintenance of interpretive programs and facilities

- and demonstrate the following skills and abilities:

  - meeting facilitation
  - cost estimating
  - business and strategic planning
  - assessment of natural, cultural, and operational resources
  - development of thematic guidelines
  - writing measurable objectives
  - formative and summative evaluation
  - development of media guidelines and descriptions
  - market analysis

*Certified Interpretive Trainer*
The Certified Interpretive Trainer must demonstrate a basic knowledge of:

- history of the interpretive profession

- principles of interpretation

- current literature in the interpretive field

- training opportunities available in the interpretive field

- and demonstrate the following skills and abilities:

  - facilitation of training sessions
  - evaluation and coaching
  - writing measurable objectives
  - planning and administration of training sessions

*Certified Heritage Interpreter*
The Certified Heritage Interpreter must demonstrate a basic knowledge of:

- history of the interpretive profession

- principles of interpretation

- current literature in the interpretive field

- techniques for delivery of personal programs

- techniques for development of nonpersonal media

- group dynamics

- and demonstrate the following skills and abilities:

  - development and delivery of thematic interpretive presentations
  - effective interpersonal communication
  - writing measurable objectives
  - development and conceptual design of publications, signs, exhibits, and other nonpersonal media
  - interpretive writing

*Certified Interpretive Guide*
The Certified Interpretive Guide must demonstrate a basic knowledge of:

- history of the interpretive profession

- principles of interpretation

- current literature in the interpretive field

- and demonstrate the following skills and abilities:

  - outlining a thematic interpretive presentation with the following elements:

    - audience
    - goal(s)
    - measurable objective(s)
    - theme
    - introduction
    - subthemes
    - conclusion

- delivery of a thematic interpretive presentation

*Certified Interpretive Host*

The Certified Interpretive Host must demonstrate a basic knowledge of:

- history of the interpretive profession

- principles of interpretation

- current literature in the interpretive field

- and demonstrate the following skills and abilities:

    - use of informal interpretation in communications
    - excellence in customer service
    - writing measurable objectives

## Eligibility

Membership in NAI is not required to be certified by NAI; however, members receive a discount on the certification application fee.

The only eligibility requirement for the CIG and CIH categories is that the applicant be a minimum of 16 years of age.

*For all other categories*, the following qualifications must be met prior to applying for certification:

Completion of an associate's degree in science, business, or arts with at least 21 credit hours related to natural/cultural/historical sciences, communications, or performing arts and 5,000 hours of experience in the category for which certification is requested.

> *OR*

Completion of a bachelor's degree in science, business, or arts with at least 40 credit hours related to natural/cultural/historical sciences, communications, or performing arts.

> *OR*

Completion of at least 64 credit hours from a college or university with at least 24 of those hours in science, business, history, arts, or humanities and 5,000 hours of experience in the category for which certification is requested.

> *OR*

Completion of a total of four years (8,000 hours) experience in the category for which certification is requested.

A form to substantiate employment is included in Appendix B.

## Costs

Initial certification application fee costs $125 for members of NAI. Non-members may apply for certification at a cost of $200.

Recertification application (see Section 4) for members costs $35. For non-members, the cost is $85.

Payment must accompany the application form. You are paying for an application fee, not purchasing certification. No refunds will be made if an applicant changes his or her mind about certifying, does not submit materials in a timely fashion, or fails the review of requirements.

*For the CIG and CIH categories:* Certification application costs $80 for members of NAI (membership must be current at time of application or purchased for $50 at time of application). Non-members may apply for certification at a cost of $135.

Recertification application (see Section 4) for members costs $35. For non-members, the cost is $85.

Certification application fee for CIG and CIH does not include costs for the required workshop. Workshop costs may vary depending on location and sponsorship of class.

## Requirements

*Certified Interpretive Manager*

- 50-question open book multiple-choice literature review

- essay exam (answer four of six questions provided in 500 words or less)

- 2 examples of management work products (planning document, budget, operations manual, grant proposal, etc.)

- 20-30 minute DVD of management meeting or business plan presentation facilitated by applicant

*Certified Interpretive Planner*

- 50-question open book multiple-choice literature review

- essay exam (answer four of six questions provided in 500 words or less)

- 2 examples of plan documents

- 2 examples of something that has been implemented from a plan you've done (examples can be photographs, DVDs, or actual products)

NOTE: If a Process of Interpretive Planning workshop is taken, the class project substitutes for one plan document as long as CIP is applied for prior to workshop or within one month of workshop completion.

*Certified Interpretive Trainer*

- 50-question open book multiple-choice literature review

- essay exam (answer four of six questions provided in 500 words or less)

- 2 examples of outlines and evaluations from a training session you have presented at any time in your career

- 20-30 minute DVD showing an entire segment of training from start to finish

NOTE: Candidates for CIG and CIH Instructors must take a Certified Interpretive Guide Trainer or Certified Interpretive Host Trainer workshop to be eligible to teach NAI's CIG or CIH curricula.

*Certified Heritage Interpreter*

- 50-question open book literature review (multiple-choice)

- essay exam (answer four of six questions provided in 500 words or less)

- 2 examples of nonpersonal media you have helped create

- 20-30 minute DVD of thematic interpretive presentation

*Certified Interpretive Guide*

- 50-question open book multiple-choice literature review

- presentation outline

- 10-minute thematic interpretive presentation

- attendance at 32-hour CIG training workshop

*Certified Interpretive Host*

- attendance at 16-hour CIH training workshop

- 50-question open book literature review and video exam (multiple-choice)

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## Step-By-Step Guide to the Certification Process

### Application

The CIG category is a special category that requires attendance at a 32-hour NAI-sanctioned training workshop. Participants in the workshop must prepare a presentation outline, perform a 10-minute program, and pass the literature review with a score of at least 80% to achieve CIG certification status.

The CIH category is a special category that requires attendance at a 16-hour NAI-sanctioned training workshop. Participants must pass a written exam with a score of at least 80% to achieve CIH certification status.

Successful CIG or CIH candidates can apply for professional certification categories if they complete the appropriate education or work history required for eligibility in those categories.

*For all other categories:* An application form has been provided on page 38 of this booklet. You may photocopy the form or simply remove the last page and return it with your documentation of eligibility and fee.

Workshops are not required except for those who wish to teach the CIG and CIH courses. CIG Instructors must take the CIG Train the Trainer course offered by the NAI National Office and have taken the the CIG workshop within five years of applying for instructor status. CIH Instructors can either take a four day Certified Interpretive Host Trainer course (if not current instructors) or the two day add on if current CIGTs. During either the CIGT or 4 day CIHT workshop, CIT applicants can complete the Part 1 literature review and the required presentation video. Participants in the interpretive planning workshop offered by the NAI national office may choose to apply for certification. Those who do will have the opportunity to complete the Part 1 Literature Review during the workshop. As part of the class, participants will also complete and present a field check that may substitute for one of their required evidences of performance (interpretive plan). Other workshops may be offered by the NAI national office from time to time that may also be applied to certification requirements as specified in the workshop description.

If you choose to participate in a workshop, you can apply for certification with your workshop registration; however, you must still provide documentation of transcript or experience prior to the workshop.

If you choose not to participate in a workshop, please be sure to check the category for which you are applying on the application. You may apply for more than one category, but each category requires a separate application and fee.

### Documentation of Eligibility

If you have attended college or university classes that apply to your certification category, a photocopy of your transcript is required (see Section 2, Eligibility). A copy of your diploma is not acceptable.

If you are using volunteer or paid work experience to meet the minimum qualifications, you must provide a letter from your employer(s) or supervisor(s) or some other work record that clearly states the length of service, type of work performed, and agency or organization for whom the work was performed.

If you have been self-employed, you must sign an affidavit of eligibility (see Appendix C), or provide letters from clients that clearly state the type of work performed, number of hours worked and dates of service.

A verification letter is provided in this booklet (see Appendix B). It may be photocopied and distributed to your employer or supervisor.

If you are using a combination of classes and work experience, please be sure to include all necessary verification (transcripts and letters from employers) with your application to expedite the process.

When you have gathered all necessary documentation of eligibility and have completed the application, send to the NAI national office for further processing:

- ❑ application form
- ❑ eligibility documentation
- ❑ appropriate fee
- ❑ signed certification agreement (page 25)

Please note that any misstatement or falsification on work records or transcripts will result in denial or cancellation of certification.

### Receiving and Completing the Certification Packet

Once the NAI office receives your application materials, your name is entered into the certification database. If you are missing any materials that establish eligibility, you will be notified and asked to correct the deficit before continuing. If everything is in order, you will be sent a confirmation letter and certification packet for the category you requested.

The certification packet includes:

- ❑ literature review (50 multiple-choice questions). The questions are taken from a number of interpretive textbooks available from the NAI association store. The review may be completed with open books and in the company of colleagues with open discussion about the questions.

- ❑ an essay exam (answer 4 of 6 questions provided, using 500 words or fewer for each response). This exam portion must be completed individually and responses may not be copied from copyrighted or other written sources.

- ❑ requirements for evidence of performance. These requirements vary according to category, but may include samples or photographs of interpretive products; DVD of programs, training sessions, or meetings; plans or other documents you have prepared for your job. Please note that these materials will not be returned to you. Do not send irreplaceable items or request their return.

You have one year to complete all elements of the certification packet. Once you have completed all the elements required, return them to the NAI office for further processing.

Packets can be sent to the office at any time. It takes approximately 60-90 days to complete the review process.

If you do not submit your materials within one year, your application is nullified and no refund will be made. A new application form and fee must be sent to begin the process again.

NOTE: Once the literature review has been satisfactorily completed for any category, it does not have to be retaken when applying for a different category. The one exception is the CIH exam, which is different from the other categories.
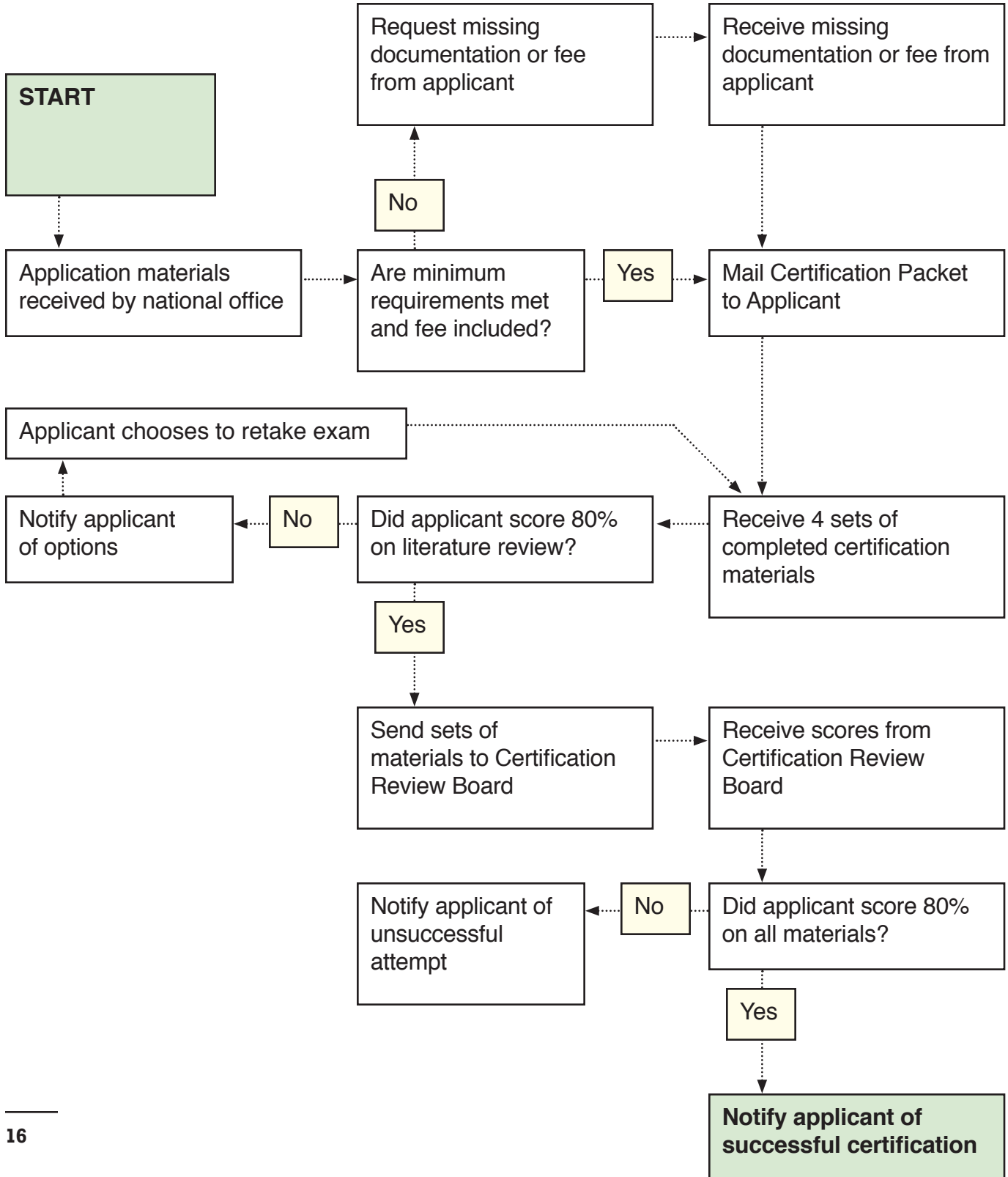
**Notification**
Once the NAI certification office receives your completed packet, your literature review is graded. You must achieve a score of 80% or better on the literature review to be considered passing. If you do not pass the literature review, you will be notified and given the option of taking it again and resubmitting it within 90 days. If you pass the literature review, your remaining materials (essay exam and evidence of performance) will be forwarded to the Certification Review Board where they will be examined and scored by three individuals. This is a blind review process and reviewers do not consult each other on their scores. Scores are then returned to the certification office and entered into the database. Your scores are strictly confidential and cannot be obtained by phone, e-mail, or fax.

If the scores average 80% or better for each piece submitted, you will be sent a congratulatory letter and a certificate with your certification number and dates of validity (see Section 4).

If you pass the literature review, but fail to meet the 80% criteria on any of the remaining portions (essay exam or evidences of performance), you will be notified of the failure and given comments with which to improve your performance. You may resubmit the failed portion one time. If it passes the second time, certification will be granted immediately; however, if it fails a second time, certification will be denied. You can then reapply and start the process again at any time. Reapplication requires a new application fee and complete fulfillment of all requirements.

Counseling for those who fail to achieve certification can be made available on request to help pinpoint areas that need improvement.

# The Process at a Glance

**START**

Application materials received by national office

Are minimum requirements met and fee included?

**No** → Request missing documentation or fee from applicant

Request missing documentation or fee from applicant → Receive missing documentation or fee from applicant

**Yes** → Mail Certification Packet to Applicant

Mail Certification Packet to Applicant → Receive 4 sets of completed certification materials

Receive 4 sets of completed certification materials → Did applicant score 80% on literature review?

**No** → Notify applicant of options

Notify applicant of options → Applicant chooses to retake exam

**Yes** → Send sets of materials to Certification Review Board

Send sets of materials to Certification Review Board → Receive scores from Certification Review Board

Receive scores from Certification Review Board → Did applicant score 80% on all materials?

**No** → Notify applicant of unsuccessful attempt

**Yes** → **Notify applicant of successful certification**

# Recertification

**Period of Validity**

Certification does not last a lifetime. To keep your certification current, you must continue your education by attending training approved by NAI. Certification must be renewed every four years.

Recertifications are given a 30-day grace period from the certification expiration date to turn in materials without additional fees or requirements.

If an individual recertifies after the 30-day grace period but within 6 months of the original expiration date, they must pay the entire certification fee ($125 member/$200 nonmember) as well as provide their 40 hours of continuing education. If they pay the full fee, they do not need to go through the certification course or peer review process again.

If a person audits a professional certification workshop within a year of their expiration date, they can re-certify by paying the full certification fee ($125 member/$200 nonmember) and forgo the peer review process. In addition, they must also provide the 40 hours of continuing education received during the time of their original certification.

If an individual's certification is expired more than a year, they would have to re-apply and re-complete the requirements for that specific certification.

**Education and Training Requirements**

Each category is considered separately for recertification. To keep your certification valid, you must attend training that directly applies to your certification category. Recertification application fees can be applied to only one category, but half of your training hours can be counted for more than one certification category. For example, someone with both a CIG and CIT certification could submit 60 total hours of continuing education hours and recertify in both categories. A total of 40 hours training must be completed within the four-year certification period, for each category in which you can recertify.

The 40 hours can be from a combination of sources. Some examples include:
- college course (3 credit hours equals 40 training hours)
- NAI National Workshop or International Conference (40 hours each)
- NAI Regional Workshop (24 hours)
- other workshops or seminars (1 day attended equals 8 hours of training unless otherwise specified)
- Presentations at professional conferences (giving a 1-hr presentation equals 6 hours of additional training; please note that interpretive presentations given in the regular course of job duties does not qualify)

- National Park Service/Eppley on-line courses: Basic Certificate (8 hours) in any of the listed courses
- review of certification application packets (2 hours each)

Training must have a direct relationship to the category for which recertification is sought. It can be provided from any source as long as a direct relationship can be demonstrated. For more information, please refer to interpnet.com/recertify.

NAI reserves the right to disqualify training that does not appear to have a direct relationship to the category in question. This is a continuing education requirement; therefore, regular job duties, performance of contract duties, or development of programs or other activities (such as planning a workshop) do not count towards the requirement.

Some examples of accepted training content include:
- resource content
- communication skills
- computer skills
- interpretation
- arts
- management
- planning.

If you are uncertain whether a particular training opportunity is applicable, contact the National Office Certification Department.

### Documentation of Training
Any of the following can be submitted:
- grade report from university or college class
- CEU certificate
- registration confirmation letter
- certificates of completion or attendance

Documentation must clearly specify the date, place, subject, sponsor, and total hours of training. Any combination of supportive evidence may be used, but the total hours must equal 40.

NAI does not keep a running total of your training and education. It is up to you to keep records of continued training. Those records can be sent into the national office only if they show the required total of 40 hours and are accompanied by the recertification application and fee.

If you accumulate over 40 hours of training in a four-year period, the overage cannot be held for future recertification efforts. You must document that the 40 hours have been accumulated since your last valid date of certification in that category.

### Costs
If your NAI membership is current at the time you submit your application for recertification, the cost is $35. Non-members pay $85. Only individual memberships apply to the certification program.

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## Sample Test Questions

The certification exam consists of two portions. Part 1 is an objective open-book literature review with multiple-choice responses. The purpose of the review is to acquaint you with interpretive literature, the history of interpretation and interpretation theory.

Part 2 is an essay exam that allows you to demonstrate the applicability of theory to interpretive situations.

The following sample questions are provided as a study guide to help you prepare for the exam by illustrating the type of questions that might be asked; however, these specific questions are not likely to appear on your actual exam. For help in answering the questions on your actual exam, you will be told the specific books from which your literature review questions were taken.

For each question, highlight (circle, underline) the correct answer.

To help you check your work, correct answers to the Part 1 sample questions are provided in Appendix G.

**Part 1: literature review**

1) Dr. Sam Ham's book, Environmental Interpretation, is based on the assumption that:

   a) good interpretive programs are built on large budgets
   b) budgets should not be an obstacle to practicing the craft of environmental interpretation;
   c) environmental issues cry out for more professional interpreters.

2) Translating the technical language . . . is how

   _____

   refers to interpretation.

   a) Dr. Ted Cable
   b) the National Association of Interpretation Mission Statement
   c) Dr. Sam Ham
   d) Enos Mills

3) What is the theory that proposes that behavior is guided by intention?

   a) theory of reasoned action
   b) self perception theory
   c) environmental learning theory
   d) behavioral change theory

4) In Sam Ham's book, what is most closely associated with an interpreter appealing to non-captive audiences:

   a) state of the art technology
   b) intrinsic satisfaction
   c) sense of humor
   d) theatrical skills

5) Pleasurable thought stimulates the brain to produce endorphins and dopamine while excessively difficult information causes the brain to seek more gratifying information elsewhere.

   a) true
   b) false

6) Based on the "2-3-1 Rule" for preparing the interpretive presentations, you should always begin by selecting your title.

   a) true
   b) false

7) Who said, "Not with the names of things, but by exposing the soul of things—those truths that lie behind what you are showing your visitor, nor yet by sermonizing; nor yet by lecturing; not by instruction but by provocations"?

   a) Enos Mills
   b) Freeman Tilden
   c) Teddy Roosevelt
   d) John Muir

8) Tilden defines the difference between education and interpretation as:

   a) not instruction so much as provocation
   b) entertaining instruction
   c) formal versus informal instruction
   d) none of the above

9) In *Interpreting for Park Visitors*, the 3 elements which William Lewis says are critical for good interpretation are called:

   a) themes, goals and objectives
   b) style, poise and confidence
   c) the interactive threesome, you, visitors and place
   d) none of the above

10) According to Gross and Zimmerman, allowing visitors to go at their own pace and timing, read at leisure, available to visitors at all times, not schedule dependent, and more cost-effective for reaching larger numbers of people are all:

   a) advantages of non-personal interpretation techniques over personal programs
   b) methods of planning for trails and rest facilities
   c) dependent upon agency budgets
   d) part of the visitor analysis that should be considered when doing interpretive planning

**Part 2: Essay Exam**

The following questions are typical of what might be found on the essay portion of the certification exam. For each of the four professional categories (CHI, CIT, CIM, CIP), six questions are provided that directly relate to that category. You must select four of the questions to answer, with each answer not to exceed 500 words.

**Sample Question #1 -- CHI or CIM**

You have been asked to make a presentation about the career of interpretation for a children's TV show whose audience ranges in age from 8 to 12. How would you relate the importance of the profession and why they might want to consider it as a potential career?

**Sample Question #2 -- CHI**

You are with a group of young professionals who are conservationists and you find an area with many dead and dying animals from what you believe to be a natural phenomenon. Your crew has decided not to intercede or try to rescue dying animals. How will you interpret this to your audience?

**Sample Question #3 -- CIP or CIM**

You are facilitating a public input meeting regarding development at a planned interpretive site. A minority of vocal townspeople have taken out a full-page ad in the local paper against the project, but the project is federally funded and must go forward. How do you handle hostile audience members that come prepared to disrupt your public meeting yet still make significant progress with your project?

**Sample Question #4 -- CIT**

As a trainer, you recognize that people have different learning styles. Describe at least four different learning styles and how you would address each learning style while teaching a day-long class on interpretive techniques.

# 6

## Appendices

**Appendix A: Brief Bibliography of Interpretive Resources**

*For your continuing education, we recommend the following materials. Listings marked by an "a" are key resource books for study and reference related to certification. Those marked by a "b" are available through NAI's Association Store at www.interpnet.com/shop.*

Alderson, William T., and Shirley Paine Low. 1985. *Interpretation of Historic Sites.* 2nd ed. Nashville, TN: The American Association for State and Local History.

Association of Nature Center Administrators. *The Director's Guide to Best Practices* Series.

Bailey, Heidi. 2009. *Putting Interpretation on the Map.* Fort Collins, CO: InterpPress.[b]

Ballantyne, Roy, Karen Hughes, and Gianna Moscardo. 2007. *Designing Interpretive Signs: Principles in Practice.* Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing.

Beck, Larry, and Ted Cable. 2010. *Interpretive Perspectives.* Fort Collins, CO: InterpPress.[b]

Beck, Larry, and Ted Cable. 2011. *The Gifts of Interpretation: Fifteen Guiding Principles for Interpreting Nature and Culture.* Urbana, IL: Sagamore Publishing.[a,b]

Brochu, Lisa. 2014. *Interpretive Planning: The 5-M Model for Successful Planning Projects,* second edition. Fort Collins, CO: InterpPress.[b]

Brochu, Lisa, and Tim Merriman. 2008. *Personal Interpretation: Connecting Your Audience to Heritage Resources* (second edition). Fort Collins, CO: InterpPress.[a,b]

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**Appendix B: National Park Service Equivalencies**

The National Association for Interpretation recognizes the National Park Service competencies in the following areas.

Federally-employed interpreters who successfully pass the NPS competency for "Giving an Interpretive Talk" (IDP Module 103) and provide proof of that attainment will be considered as having successfully completed the video requirement for NAI's Certified Heritage Interpreter category. Proof of competency attainment must accompany the applicant's certification materials in lieu of the video.

Other NPS competencies approved for Evidence of Performance equivalencies

Federally-employed interpreters who successfully pass the following NPS competencies can use proof of attainment to replace one certification requirement as specified below:

• Effective Interpretive Writing (IDP Module 230 can be used to replace one example of nonpersonal media for Certified Heritage Interpreter credential)

• Planning Park Interpretation (IDP Module 310 can be used to replace one product example for Certified Interpretive Planner credential unless an NAI planning class project is already being used to replace that requirement)

• Interpretive Media Development (IDP Module 311 can be used to replace one example of nonpersonal media for Certified Heritage Interpreter credential)

• Leading Interpreters: Training and Coaching (IDP Module 330 can be used to replace one example of a training course outline for Certified Interpretive Trainer credential)

• Interpretive Research and Resource Liaison (IDP Module 340 can be used to replace one example of a management document for the Certified Interpretive Manager credential)

May be permitted to use a proof of attainment of any of these competencies as one or more evidences of performance (excluding any video requirement) for any NAI certification category for which it is appropriate.

An Advanced Certificate from NPS/Eppley on-line courses may also be used in lieu of one certification requirement as follows:

• Interpretive Writing Advanced Certificate may be used to replace one example of nonpersonal media for the Certified Heritage Interpreter credential

NOTE: Only one substitution (either IDP Module or Eppley on-line course) per certification category may be used in pursuit of an NAI certification credential.

**Appendix C: Scoring Criteria for Evidence of Performance**

**Evaluation and Score Sheet For Evidence of Performance Certified Heritage Interpreter**

Personal Presentation -- Total available points = 100.

*Technical Skills - Assign score between 0-5 for each item.*

_____        Did introduction include a welcome and set the stage for presentation?

_____        Did applicant work in the name of his/her organization?

_____        Did applicant avoid distracting body movements?

_____        Did applicant use visual aids appropriately?

_____        Did applicant stick to theme and not overdo content?

_____        Did applicant talk with enthusiasm?

_____        Did applicant maintain eye contact with audience?

_____        Did applicant speak in friendly, conversational tone?

_____        Did applicant relate to audience's interests and experience?

_____        Did applicant use stories, examples, questions, or comparisons?

_____        Did applicant use appropriate language for the audience and explain technical terms?

_____        Did applicant vary tone and pace to add emphasis and interest to talk?

*Artistry - Assign score between 0-20 for each item*

_____        Would you have enjoyed and learned from this program if you had attended it on-site?

_____        If you were an interpretive site manager, would you want this person on your staff (based on their performance in this video)?

_____    TOTAL SCORE

Comments:

**Evaluation and Score Sheet for Evidence of Performance**
**Certified Heritage Interpreter**

Non-Personal Media -- Assign numerical score between 0-10 for each item.
Total available points = 100.

Sample type _____

_____    Is selected media appropriate for the suggested audience?

_____    Does the product accomplish the stated objectives?

_____    Does the product communicate the stated theme?

_____    Is the verbal message accurate, brief, and clear?

_____    Does the design of the product contribute to its effectiveness?

_____    Does the product effectively use the principles of interpretation?

_____    Did the applicant have a significant role in production?

_____    How effective is this product (based on the information supplied by applicant)?

_____    Does the product reflect positively on the sponsoring agency or organization?

_____    Overall impression of this sample

_____    TOTAL SCORE

Comments:

**Evaluation and Score Sheet for Evidence of Performance
Certified Interpretive Planner**

Interpretive Plan -- Assign numerical score between 0-5 for each item.
Total available points = 100.

Plan Title _____

_____ Is the plan well organized so that information is easy to find?

_____ Is the plan easy to read and comprehend?

_____ Does the plan avoid the use of jargon, acronyms, or technical terms
without explanation?

_____ Is information in the plan supported by documented references?

_____ Does the plan contain enough background information to give
the reader a clear impression of the site's natural, cultural, and
operational resources?

_____ Does the plan clearly state its purpose or the problem to be addressed
by the plan?

_____ Does the plan succeed in accomplishing its purpose?

_____ Does everything that's included in the plan work towards
accomplishing the plan's purpose (no extraneous material included)?

_____ Does the plan provide relevant information regarding the audiences
to be served?

_____ Does the plan provide analysis of resource and audience information
and state the implications of that information?

_____ Does the plan clearly state management goals and/or objectives?

_____ Does the plan suggest strategies for accomplishing management goals
and/or objectives?

_____ Does the plan include interpretive objectives or behavioral objectives?

_____ Does the plan develop a theme or themes for interpretive elements?

_____ Does the plan demonstrate linkages between suggested media, theme
or themes, objectives, and audiences?

_____ Does the plan include essential operational information necessary for
implementation (for example: staffing, budget, cost estimates, action
steps)?

_____ Does the plan demonstrate originality and creativity?

_____ Does the plan seem feasible given the information presented in the
plan?

_____ Has the plan been successfully implemented (based on information
supplied by applicant)?

_____ Overall impression of the plan

_____ TOTAL SCORE

Comments:

**Evaluation and Score Sheet for Evidence of Performance
Certified Interpretive Planner**

Non-Personal Media -- Assign numerical score between 0-10 for each item. Total
available points = 100.

Sample type _____

_____    Is selected media appropriate for the suggested audience?

_____    Does the product accomplish the stated objectives?

_____    Does the product communicate the stated theme?

_____    Is the verbal message accurate, brief, and clear?

_____    Does the design of the product contribute to its effectiveness?

_____    Does the product effectively use the principles of interpretation?

_____    Did the applicant have a significant role in production?

_____    How effective is this product (based on the information supplied by
           applicant)?

_____    Does the product reflect positively on the sponsoring agency or
           organization?

_____    Overall impression of this sample

_____     TOTAL SCORE

Comments:

**Evaluation and Score Sheet for Evidence of Performance Certified Interpretive Manager**

Personal Presentation -- Assign numerical score between 0-5 for each item. Total available points = 100.

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant set the stage for issues to be covered in meeting?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant provide an agenda?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant work in the name of his/her organization?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant avoid distracting body movements?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant use visual aids appropriately?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant stick to issue at hand?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant finish with a strong, definite conclusion?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant talk with enthusiasm?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant maintain eye contact with audience?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant speak in friendly, conversational tone?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant avoid speech mannerisms like fillers ("uh") and repeated phrases?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant use appropriate language for the audience and explain technical terms?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant adapt volume so all could hear?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant pronounce words correctly and distinctly?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant seem aware of audience reactions and feedback?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant show respect for others?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant make an effort to include all members of the audience?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant respond to audience questions appropriately?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant adequately resolve issues and accomplish objective(s) of meeting?

\_\_\_\_\_ Did applicant start and finish on time?


\_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL SCORE


Comments:

**Evaluation and Score Sheet for Evidence of Performance**
**Certified Interpretive Manager**

Management Document -- Assign numerical score between 0-10 for each item.
Total available points = 100.


Plan Title _____


_____     Is the document well organized so that information is easy to find?

_____     Is the document easy to read and comprehend?

_____     Does the document avoid the use of jargon, acronyms, or technical
terms without explanation?

_____     Is information in the document supported by references?

_____     Does the document contain enough background information to give
the reader a clear understanding of its context?

_____     Does the document clearly state its purpose or the problem to be
addressed?

_____     Does the document succeed in accomplishing its purpose?

_____     Does everything that's included in the document work towards
accomplishing its purpose (no extraneous material included)?

_____     Does the document include essential operational information
necessary for implementation (for example: staffing, budget, cost
estimates, action steps)?

_____     Has the document been successfully implemented (based on
information supplied by applicant)?


_____     TOTAL SCORE


Comments:

**Evaluation and Score Sheet for Evidence of Performance
Certified Interpretive Trainer**

Personal Presentation
Total available points = 100.

*Technical Skills*
Assign score between 0-5 for each item.

_____ Did applicant provide an agenda?

_____ Did applicant avoid distracting body movements?

_____ Did applicant use visual aids appropriately?

_____ Did applicant stick to the topic?

_____ Did applicant maintain eye contact with audience?

_____ Did applicant speak in friendly, conversational tone?

_____ Did applicant use appropriate language for the audience and explain
technical terms?

_____ Did applicant adapt volume so all could hear?

_____ Did applicant show respect for others?

_____ Did applicant make an effort to include all members of the audience?

_____ Did applicant respond to audience questions appropriately?

_____ Did applicant adequately accomplish objective(s) of training sessions?


*Artistry*
Assign score between 0-20 for each item.

_____ Would you have enjoyed and learned from this program if you had
attended it on-site?

_____ If you were an interpretive site manager, would you want this person
on your staff (based on their performance in this video)?


_____ TOTAL SCORE


Comments:

**Evaluation and Score Sheet for Evidence of Performance
Certified Interpretive Trainer**

Training Course Outline
Assign numerical score between 0-10 for each item.
Total available points = 100.

Title of Course _____

_____    Does the course outline follow a logical sequence?

_____    Does the course include hands-on activities?

_____    Is the course relevant to interpretation?

_____    Is information in the course supported by documented references?

_____    Does the course outline seem appropriate for the audience?

_____    Will the course outline adequately accomplish the stated objectives?

_____    Does the course outline provide adequate time to cover the topic?

_____    Are provisions made for addressing the need for additional
           information?

_____    Has the instructor received positive evaluations for this course?

_____    Overall impression of the course outline

_____    TOTAL SCORE

Comments:

**Appendix D: Answers To Sample Questions**

1.  b (from *Environmental Interpretation*)

2.  c (from *Environmental Interpretation*)

3.  a (from *Interpretation of Natural and Cultural Resources*)

4.  b (from *Environmental Interpretation*)

5.  true (from *Environmental Interpretation*)

6.  false (from *Environmental Interpretation*)

7.  b (from *Interpreting Our Heritage*)

8.  a (from *Interpreting Our Heritage*)

9.  c (from *Interpreting for Park Visitors*)

10. a (from Gross and Zimmerman's *Interpretation Handbook* Series)