

# Heritage Interpreter CERTIFICATION

## HERITAGE INTERPRETER

A Heritage Interpreter is an individual who interacts with participants to provide interest, to promote understanding, and to encourage a positive experience of a natural, historical, or cultural theme. The interpreter presents information by relating the subject to the participant's frame of reference, through, for example, culture, ethnicity, or language.

Interpreters can work at, but are not limited to, parks, museums, aquariums, historic sites, art galleries, zoos, industrial sites, interpretive centres, botanical gardens, cultural centres, adventure travel sites, nature sanctuaries, and tour companies.

## DISTRIBUTION OF EXAM QUESTIONS

The Heritage Interpreter exam has 100 questions, and is based on the following breakdown, by Major Category from the occupational standards.

Standards Major Category	Average # of Items
A. Fundamentals of Interpretation	20
B. Professionalism	21
C. Program Development	19
D. Program Delivery	28
E. Risk Management	12

## PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Consists of an on-site evaluation and interview by a qualified evaluator. The on-site evaluation should occur before the interview.

## REQUIRED EXPERIENCE

1200 qualified hours (to be confirmed with evaluator/supervisor that experience has been interpreter-related).

## RECOMMENDED COURSES

First Aid Certification. CPR.  
Interpretive Training Workshop (e.g. through Interpretation Canada).

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- Q1. How can a heritage interpreter increase the level of interaction between the participants and the resource?
1. Use props.
  2. Ask questions.
  3. Use audio/visual aid.
  4. Produce print materials.
- Q2. What can an interpreter ask visitors to do at their site to help achieve a sustainable world?
1. Promote the site to others.
  2. Support local distributors.
  3. Donate to an environmental fund.
  4. Comply with recycling guidelines.
- Q3. While leading a group of participants on a walking tour through a wooded area, a heritage interpreter in a nature reserve finds a previously unknown artifact. Which of the following is the most appropriate course of action?
1. He should not disturb or remove the artifact but report its location.
  2. He should pick up the artifact gently and transport it to his supervisor.
  3. He should pick up the artifact, show it to the tour group, and then replace it.
  4. The action taken is dependent on the value of the artifact.

Answer Key is 1,4,1

## Earning a PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIAL

*emerit* certification is a professional credential recognized by tourism employers across Canada.

Certification is a demonstration of competency, which means that Certified Professionals meet job standards set by industry.

To become certified, individuals must:

- pass a knowledge exam;
- pass a practical evaluation of performance; and
- have the required experience.

Earning this important credential means that you will be recognized as a leading professional in your industry.

By achieving *emerit* certification you earn the right to display your professional designation on business cards and résumés. As a frontline employee, you are eligible for the Tourism Certified Professional (TCP) designation. As a Supervisor you can achieve the Tourism Certified Supervisor (TCS) designation and as a Manager, you are eligible for the Tourism Certified Manager (TCM) designation.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND OPTIONS

*emerit* certification recognizes training from many programs and takes into account experience and knowledge gained on the job. That means you don't have to start from scratch. You can enter the *emerit* certification process at many points, depending on your current knowledge and experience, allowing you to tailor a program that meets your needs.

Call your local certifying  
Organization: 1 800 486-9158

## ABOUT THE EXAM

### Your Choice

The exams are in a multiple choice format. Exams can be written in either English or French (some exceptions apply), and are available online (scheduled at your convenience) or paper-based (scheduled according to set exam dates).

To arrange an exam date, call your local certifying organization or book it online at [www.emerit.ca](http://www.emerit.ca).

To cancel or change your scheduled exam date, call your local certifying organization. A cancellation fee may apply.

### Preparing for the Exam

Exams are based on National Occupational Standards set by industry professionals. Before writing the exam, you should spend time reviewing these standards. Identify your weakest areas or situations that you have not been exposed to, and attempt to gain more knowledge and experience in those areas.

Optional practice exams are available for some occupations at a minimal cost. To inquire about practice exams contact your local certifying organization.

### Study Materials

Optional training materials are available for most programs. Developed and tested by tourism sector employees, employers and educators from across Canada, these training materials are based on National Occupational Standards and can help you prepare for Professional Certification.

Find out more about the training materials by contacting your local certification coordinator, or see examples at [www.emerit.ca](http://www.emerit.ca).

## The Day of the Exam

The exam is supervised by a proctor. Make sure to bring a piece of photo identification, as the proctor will need it for verification.

The exam will start on time. Individuals that arrive late may be asked to reschedule; arriving late can be disruptive to other candidates.

For written exams you will be given an Examination Booklet with all of the required information. For online exams you will be provided with internet access and a personal login code. If support or reference material is required, it will be supplied.

You will be given ample time to write the exam. (Most candidates will take 2 to 3 hours to write the exam.)

## The Exam Passing Mark

Each exam has a unique passing score. This is because exams are built by assembling a random group of questions from a larger bank of questions. Each question has been reviewed and rated by an expert industry committee. Since each exam will be made up of a different mix of questions, the passing score will vary. Typically, the passing score will range between 65% and 85%.

## Scoring

All exams are computer scored and verified. Scores within a few points of the passing mark are automatically verified and scored manually for accuracy. Your local certifying organization will contact you with the results.

## What if You Do Not Pass?

You may rewrite the exam as often as needed. A rewrite fee may apply.

Candidates have the right to appeal examination scores. Any appeal must be filed in writing within 30 days after receiving the results.

## ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The performance evaluation is a test of your skill on the job. The test is based on a selected range of skills from the standards, and may be in one of the following forms:

- in-person observation (may be incognito);
- structured interview or simulations;
- case study; or
- portfolio.

The Self-Review or Supervisor Sign-off Checklist will help you prepare for the evaluation. It contains all of the potential skills you may be tested against. Ideally your supervisor will assist you in ranking the skills listed on this checklist. Once you have mastered all of the skills, your supervisor signs this checklist to indicate that you are ready for the formal evaluation.

## REQUIRED EXPERIENCE

You will need to supply a record of relevant work experience to show that the requirements are met. Backup records (such as pay stubs or letters from employers) may be requested to verify your experience. This information is supplied to your local certifying organization.

Qualified experience must relate to the skills as defined in the National Occupational Standards.

## PREREQUISITES

For some certification programs candidates may be required to meet additional conditions in order to qualify. These conditions usually refer to practices concerning health or safety. For example, candidates may be required to show they have completed a program on basic first aid, gun safety, safe food handling or responsible beverage service.

Documentation that shows evidence of completion of these prerequisites is supplied to your local certifying organization.

**emerit** certification credentials are awarded to candidates based solely on achieving successful pass results on the certification knowledge and performance examinations and on having met the specified experience criteria and prerequisites. The examinations follow generally accepted testing principles. **emerit** guidelines for certification focus solely on recognizing achievements, knowledge, and skills, rather than on, for example, predicting future job performance. **emerit** certification is voluntary.

