

Sample Certification Items

Five retired items from the Certified Navigator examination, with the answer and the scoring rationale.

WHO THIS IS FOR	READ TIME	EDITION
Anyone judging the standard	5 minutes, 2 pages	August 2026

IN BRIEF

- The full exam is 100 points across six sections, closed book, ninety minutes.
- Passing is 80 points overall, with a 75 percent floor in Arizona instruments and case classification, the two places where a wrong answer costs a young person money.
- These five items are retired and published so a director can see the standard before sending staff.

How the exam is built

SECTION	WHAT IT TESTS	SAMPLE ITEM
A. Foundations	The Transition Justice pillars and their order	Item 1
B. Arizona instruments	What each instrument delivers and does not; quoted from memory, with a 75 percent floor	Item 2
C. Navigation capacity	Reading a case and naming which of the four components is failing	Item 3
D. Anchor relationships	Applying the coverage rule on an anchor function map	Item 4
E. Case classification	Sorting cases into the four activation states, with a 75 percent floor	Not sampled
F. Practice judgment	Scope of practice and honest description of the tools	Item 5

The five items

ITEM 1 | SECTION A, FOUNDATIONS | ONE POINT

Which pillar is analytically prior to the other three, and why?

- a) Reparation, because it is the pillar that moves money
- b) Institutional reform, because it prevents recurrence
- c) Acknowledgment, because a duty to respond cannot follow until harm and its institutional source are formally recognized
- d) Accountability, because it names who answers

ANSWER

c. Acknowledgment.

Why it is scored this way. It is analytically prior, the least expensive to deliver, and the most structurally consequential. Candidates who choose reparation are reasoning from budget rather than from sequence.

ITEM 2 | SECTION B, ARIZONA INSTRUMENTS | THREE POINTS

The foster care tuition waiver has three features that determine what it actually delivers. Name all three.

ANSWER

It is a last dollar award, reduced by other federal aid, scholarships, and public grants received through the institution. Eligibility requires foster care involvement at age 14 or older, total personal assets below \$10,000, and enrollment in an accredited program. It reaches tuition and mandatory fees only.

Why it is scored this way. One point each. This item is closed book because a navigator quotes these figures in a room with a young person, not from a search result.

ITEM 3 | SECTION C, NAVIGATION CAPACITY | TWO POINTS

A young person can recite the eligibility criteria for four benefits accurately and has submitted no applications. Which component is failing?

ANSWER

Procedural competence.

Why it is scored this way. The knowledge is present and nothing executes. This is the high literacy, low procedural profile: high awareness, low take up. Candidates who answer benefits literacy have scored the wrong component and will supply information to a person who already has it.

ITEM 4 | SECTION D, ANCHOR RELATIONSHIPS | TWO POINTS

On an anchor function map, what has to be true before you may write *covered* next to a function?

ANSWER

At least one adult scored present on that property and answered no to the boundary question, meaning they do not disappear at closure. Partial scores do not cover a function, and two partials do not add up to coverage.

Why it is scored this way. One point for the present plus boundary test, one for the rule that partials never cover. This is the single most common scoring error in practice.

ITEM 5 | SECTION F, PRACTICE JUDGMENT | TWO POINTS

A colleague calls the Navigation Capacity Practice Profile a validated assessment in an email to a funder. State what the instrument actually is, and write the sentence you would send correcting it.

ANSWER

It is a structured practice tool, not a validated instrument. It has no norms, no established reliability, and no cut scores.

Why it is scored this way. One point for the correction, one for a sentence that says so plainly without hedging. This is a scope of practice item, and a miss here is discussed in the debrief even when the candidate passes.