

The Professional Ski Instructors of America Eastern Division



Alpine Exam Guide

October 2019

PSIA-E Alpine Exam Guide

Professional Development	2
Introduction	3
Certification Path	3
What are National Standards?	3
Exam Preparation	4
Membership Level: Certified Level I	6
The Level I Exam Process	6
The Level I Assessment: What to Expect	7
Membership Level: Certified Level II	9
The Level II Exam Process	9
Level II Online Professional Knowledge Exam	9
Level II Skiing Assessment: What to Expect	11
Description of Skiing Assessment Activities and Criteria	12
Level II Teaching Assessment: What to Expect	16
Level II Teaching Assessment Criteria	17
Membership Level: Certified Level III	18
The Level III Exam Process	18
Level III Online Professional Knowledge Exam	18
Level II Skiing Assessment: What to Expect	20
Description of Skiing Assessment Activities and Criteria	21
Level III Teaching Assessment: What to Expect	27
Level III Teaching Assessment Criteria	28
Alpine Certification Pathway	
Alpine Skiing and Teaching Scorecards	
Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A)	

Professional Development

Required Reading

The following list of educational material is mandatory reading for all working ski instructors and candidates applying for an Alpine Certification exam.

Available through PSIA National Office:

PSIA/AASI Teaching Snowsports Manual (2018)
PSIA/AASI Alpine Technical Manual (2014) and Alpine Skiing Fundamentals appendix (2018)
PSIA National Alpine Certification Standards (2015)
PSIA/AASI National Children's Specialist Standards (2012)
PSIA/AASI Children's Instruction Manual (2008)
PSIA/AASI Core Concepts for Snowsports Instructors Manual
32 Degrees – The Journal of Professional Snowsports Instruction – PSIA
PSIS/AASI – E-Learning <https://lms.thesnowpros.org/>

Available through PSIA Eastern Division:

PSIA-E Alpine Standards DVD (2010)
PSIA-E Exam Guide (2019)
PSIA-E Snow Pro (Newsletter)

Additional Reading

The following educational materials are suggested as additional resources for working ski instructors and exam candidates.

Available through PSIA National Office:

PSIA/AASI Freestyle Technical Manual (2016)
PSIA/AASI Children's Ski and Snowboard Movement Guide (2005)
PSIA/AASI Children's Instruction Handbook (2000)
PSIA Alpine Visual Cues to Effective and Ineffective Skiing
PSIA Alpine Cues to Effective and Ineffective Teaching
Tactics for All-Mountain Skiing (2006)
Vail-Beaver Creek Alpine Handbook

Suggested Reading not Available through PSIA:

Legacy: Austria's Influence on American Skiing – Documentary Film Series; www.culturefilms.com

"Alpine Exam Tasks", video produced by David Capron, December 2014;
dcapron1@myfairpoint.net

Having the skills and knowledge to be a competent, well-rounded skier and Snowsports teacher requires a diverse, broad base of education. Using the reading and video resources listed above should provide substantial help in developing that foundation of knowledge.

Members must maintain their membership status by obtaining a total of 12 Continuing Education Units (CEU) every two seasons and by paying dues to the Association on an annual basis.

Introduction

This manual contains information about the Alpine Certification Program of the Professional Ski Instructors of America - Eastern Division. It outlines Alpine exam procedures, content, and standards.

The basic purpose of the PSIA-E Alpine Certification Program is to evaluate a candidate's knowledge and skills relative to the National Standards of professional ski teaching and other related information. PSIA-E, like other divisions, certifies ski teachers in the American Teaching System (ATS), our national model. Candidates are expected to demonstrate a comprehensive, working knowledge of ATS throughout the examination process. Certification is awarded to those who demonstrate the required level of proficiency in skiing, teaching, and professional knowledge during the examination and have met the prerequisite requirements. Training and continuing education in these three areas are acquired through PSIA-E educational programs; Snowsports school clinics, personal study, and experience.

The PSIA certification pin identifies qualified instructors who are proficient in the three areas of the Learning Connection Model – Technical skills, teaching skills, and people skills. It is an assurance that a specific level of knowledge and competency are present in the areas of skiing, teaching and professional knowledge including guest service and safety/risk awareness.

As a desirable credential, certification becomes an expressed goal for many ski teachers, thus raising the overall standards of professional ski teaching in the United States. Ongoing educational requirements for retaining certification assist in assuring that high standards of performance are maintained. Most professionals view certification as a foundation, rather than an end in itself, and continue to grow and develop far beyond the minimum standards.

PSIA offers certification events as a member benefit. Certification is encouraged but not required. Most of the organization's events are primarily educational in content. It is quite acceptable for members to attend only the required educational events. If you are interested in certification, be assured that PSIA-E strives to deliver fair, consistent, and relevant certification events. It is our goal to examine for success in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible within a structured and meaningful evaluation environment.

What Are the National Standards?

The National Standards provide an extensive list of the exact things that a candidate is expected to be able to do and know to meet certification requirements. The standards have been written so that they give the member a picture of the Technical, Teaching and People Skills expectations of the examiner(s) conducting the exam. The standards are what examiners use to determine whether a candidate meets all criteria for the desired level of certification.

The current PSIA National Standards are referenced in PSIA/AASI's Core Concepts, Alpine Technical Manual and Teaching Manual; terminology consistent with these manuals is used throughout this document. These standards provide a training focus and represent a minimum competency for each level of certification. PSIA has provided updated standards that can be viewed and accessed via the PSIA website at www.thesnowpros.org.

The premise of the certification standards is based upon the concept of "levels of understanding." As certification is a measure of understanding, levels of certification represent stages of understanding. Candidates will be held to the knowledge and skiing performance standards of the level at which they are testing as well as the criteria for all preceding levels.

All references to skills and skill blending refer to Rotary Control Movements, Edge-control Movements, and Pressure-control Movements. The variety of turn size refers to short, medium, and long radius turns.

While specific trail difficulty designations are stated in the National Standards, it is important to note that trail difficulty is often designated relative to the other trails at a given area. Skiing activities during certification exams will be performed on terrain that is deemed appropriate for the task being evaluated. Candidates with disabilities, see “A.D.A. Considerations” elsewhere in this manual.

Note: PSIA’s entry-level membership is “registered” instructorship that is designed to provide an educational introduction to ski teaching. Each “Registered” level event is conducted according to divisional criteria and is not a level of certification recognized nationally by PSIA/AASI. Therefore, the criteria for Registered level instructors within the National Standards (refer to the National Website for complete description – www.thesnowpros.org) serves only as a guideline for establishing divisional education criteria which prepares Registered level instructors to meet future levels of certification according to the nationally recognized standards for Levels I, II, and III.

Exam Preparation

Getting Started

You begin the path to certification by defining your vision or goal. It is essential to evaluate the current reality - your strengths and weaknesses relative to the vision and the Learning Connection Model. Then, develop a plan for getting to the ultimate goal. Having an ability to enjoy the journey despite challenges and disappointments will help you stay on your certification pathway. In charting your path, be realistic about where you are now and what’s required to get to your objective. Be patient and prepared for occasional setbacks or detours. Learn to use both successes and failures as a catalyst to guide you along, not only the certification path but your development as a ski instructor as well.

What Should Take Place Before You Attend an Exam?

Prior to attending a Level I, II, or III exam the following general criteria should be met:

- The candidate has gained the practical experience necessary to understand and apply the American Teaching System to the required levels of skiing and teaching.
- The candidate has progressed in his/her personal and professional development through educational programs conducted by PSIA-E and their Snowsports School.
- The candidate demonstrates professionalism and an understanding of what it means to be a professional ski instructor.
- The candidate has prepared specifically for the exam through conscientious training that focuses on the required National Standards for certification.
- The Snowsports School Director confirms that the exam candidate has properly prepared for the exam and has put in the recommended number of teaching hours. The director believes, without reservation, that the candidate is ready to represent the Snowsports School as a legitimate candidate to be examined.
- The candidate has selected equipment suitable for a wide range of tasks, activities, conditions, and terrain. Candidates should select the ski equipment they perform best on and feel most comfortable using and must have devices to prevent runaway skis and have bindings that are properly set for release. Additionally, all candidates are expected to use ski poles in order to perform some assessment activities at the standard.

- We are teachers of an athletic activity for which physical fitness is an important element in reaching personal potential. Candidates should be aware that the PSIA standards are the standards that the Snow Sports Industry recognizes as the top of the profession. PSIA certified professionals are expected to be able to perform at the PSIA standards at any ski area in the United States. Variable snow conditions, bumps, and altitude are commonly encountered at many areas. To ski dynamically and safely in these conditions requires physical fitness. As such, we reserve the right to ask candidates who pose a risk to themselves or others to leave an exam. (Refer to the PSIA-AASI Eastern Event Member Safety Policy on the eastern website at www.psia-e.org)
- It is recommended that the candidate be engaged in some type of physical training regime (weightlifting, cycling, running) for an extended period of time prior to the exam so that the candidate is able to perform up to the level of the national standard.

Trail Designations

As each ski resort determines its own terrain difficulty, there is no standard for every trail rating. The levels of all alpine trails are relative to each other. For example, a beginner level trail (green circle) at a steep ski mountain may be markedly more difficult than an intermediate level trail (blue square) at another resort. The exam administrator will select the appropriate trails based on the national standard and not the trail designations by the resort. Below are very generic trail designations and may vary greatly between resorts.

- Green Circle: The easiest trails on a mountain, usually groomed, wide and flat, and not a place for experienced skiers as traffic must remain slow.
- Blue Square: Intermediate trail usually groomed and often the most popular runs.
- Black Diamond: Expert trail may or may not be groomed and can vary from the merely tricky to insanely difficult.
- Double Black Diamond: trails are very challenging. Its slopes are exceptionally steep, coupled with other hazards such as strong exposure to winds, narrow terrain and other difficult conditions. Typically, double black diamond is rated as more than the 40 percent steep grade of the average black diamond trail slope, the ski level before it. This makes the double black diamond slope very steep and difficult to tackle.

Note: Due to variations in trail difficulty designations from one resort to the next, i.e., a Blue Square run at one resort may be designated as a Black Diamond at another resort, it is possible, and probable at some resorts, that the use of ungroomed Blue Square runs may be included in the Level I Exam. The exam administrator will determine if the local trail designations adequately reflects the stated national standard concerning terrain. If necessary, trails or sections of trails will be selected to keep exams consistent across the division and the country.

Membership Level: Certified Level I

Certified Level I is the primary point at which Registered members enter the certification track. This level is where Registered members demonstrate a solid foundation of information and experience necessary to be an effective ski instructor in the beginner and novice zones. The following prerequisites must be met in order to become a Certified Level I member:

- Be 16 years of age or older by the first day of the exam.
- Be an employee of a recognized Snowsports school and have completed a minimum of 50 hours of combined, in-house training and actual on-hill teaching, as attested to by the Snowsports School Director.
- Successfully complete the PSIA-E Certified Level I exam criteria as stated in the National Level I Standards.
- Successfully complete the [Level I e-Learning Course](#).

The Level I Exam Process

The Certified Level I process consists of an assessment of *basic* skiing skills, teaching skills, and professional knowledge (which refers to technical and mechanical knowledge as well as to knowledge of guest service, PSIA, the ski industry, and risk management). The Level I exam is a two-day program consisting of a combination of training and evaluation. The first day will be dedicated to training and coaching the candidates in their areas of need(s). During the second day an assessment as to the candidate's ability to meet the Level I National Standard will be made. Candidates should be prepared to lead the group through some basic ski instruction scenarios.

The National Standards and the list of Level I Skiing Tasks and Teaching Assignments should serve as a guide for training for the Level I exam. It is not expected that Level I candidates will have *in-depth* knowledge and experience in each of the areas of competence listed. It is expected, however, that candidates will be able to show *basic* competence and knowledge in all of these areas. In addition, it is expected that candidates will be able to demonstrate a *significant* level of competency with the skiing and teaching tasks listed specifically for assessment at a Level I event.

Day 1 - Registration begins at 8:00 A.M. Please be punctual.

- The first day of the event will be educational in nature and focus on the areas of need to meet the Level I National Standard by the end of the second day.
- A variety of skiing activities will take place on Green and Blue Terrain. **Note:** If the skill of all members of the group is sufficient to ski groomed black terrain, this may be done for educational purposes but not for exam scoring.
- This is a **2-day event** – participants **must** attend **both full days** for Level I Certification.

Day 2 - Be at the area by 8:00 A.M. Please be punctual.

- The day is spent assessing the skiing, teaching, and professional knowledge of the Level I candidates as compared to the [Level I National Standards](#).
- The assessment atmosphere will be light, constructive, and kept to the level being evaluated.
- Each candidate should be prepared to teach and briefly lead the group.
- A variety of skiing activities will take place on Beginner and Intermediate terrain as deemed appropriate by the Exam Administrator.
- Scoring is done in each of three main categories: Skiing, Teaching, and Professional Knowledge. Candidates will receive marks and standardized comments that will indicate if the Level I standard has been attained.
- An awards ceremony will be held for all groups at the end of the second day. Course conductors will hand out the Level I pin to successful participants at this time.

The Level I Assessment - What to Expect

Level I Skiing Evaluation

At this exam you will be expected to understand, teach and engage students in the Novice Zone.

Candidates should bring activities that they use at their home mountain when teaching students in this zone and be able to share and lead the group through them.

The following assessment activities represent key areas of skill development that need to be understood, demonstrated, and coached. Mastering these activities will empower coaches to teach effectively in the Novice Zone. Your students need to be able to do these things in order to have a few options/tactics for skiing novice terrain.

Your Level 1 event will explore and evaluate your proficiency with some of the following activities. Candidates should be prepared to perform these exam tasks as well as to ski differing lines, speeds, terrain and turns sizes. Terrain and mountain conditions may or may not be suitable for some of these tasks.

Flat Terrain Movements

In order to move forward, backward, up or down the hill, and turn around, new skiers need to know how to **Side Step, walk around on flat terrain, herring bone, and turn around while stopped using methods such as the “Bull Fighter Turn.”**

Learning to **turn the skis by turning the legs** in and out helps new skiers to develop the skills to make a wedge when needed and turn the skis while moving.

Novice Zone Terrain Skiing Tasks

In a slow traverse or descent; **stop with a wedge**. This gives new skiers the confidence that they can stop.

In a slow traverse with skis parallel; **edge both skis slightly towards uphill**. The skis will cut into the snow on both edges and arc uphill to a stop. New skiers discover that ski design can help them turn and stop.

In a slow glide step through a “J-Turn” by taking little steps up the hill that result in stopping. New skiers discover that the movements of walking can be used in skiing.

On a near flat slope experiment with softly tipping the legs from side to side to make **first parallel turns**. (This may work especially well for new skiers with athletic backgrounds)

The **crab walk** is an activity that shows how increasing and decreasing edge angle while in a wedge causes an immediate direction change. New Skiers discover how to tip their legs to engage their edges.

Hopping, bouncing, stepping, and shuffling while turning are all activities that tend to cause a skier to become parallel towards the end of a turn (these are “wedge busting” activities)

By **using terrain** to make a turn on a fall away; it is likely that the inside ski will be flat on the snow and the skis will spontaneously become parallel.

Use **speed and turn radius to encourage a parallel turn completion**. By making short turns on a gentle slope with a little more speed, flattening of the inside ski is likely to occur. Novice zone skiers discover rhythm that develops helpful, identifiable patterns of movement.

Diagonal side slipping is an activity that when practiced helps novice zone skiers develop edge control. This activity can also be a useful tactic to descend a slope that might be difficult for a novice zone skier to turn on.

On a near flat slope, at a slow speed, **do a straight run and hop both skis off the snow** then land balanced. This activity promotes active balancing for students who are movement oriented.

Turn the legs more than the torso. Turning the legs is what skiing is all about. Straight run to gentle “hockey stop” Torso should remain relatively downhill while legs turn across the hill.

Some experience in gates and Terrain Park will also enhance your skill base.

Level I Teaching Evaluation

- Address a student profile, developing a teaching plan for a Novice Zone skier with a specific guest profile, background and students desired outcome.
- Provide activities to lead the student toward development of Fundamental Movements.
- In front of group, demonstrate awareness of a basic teaching process (i.e. introduce and activity, develop that activity, offer feedback and summarize).
- Display a connection with members of the group that fosters trust.

Level I Professional Knowledge Evaluation

- Identify how your lesson activities relate to the development of the Alpine Skiing Fundamentals (in a very **basic** sense).
- Demonstrate an awareness of good safety practices relative to all lesson activities and to your own personal skiing within the group.
- Describe how to change lesson activities in consideration of student age, the weather, snow conditions, or success/failure of attempted task.
- State the basic options, solutions, and benefits that modern ski designs provide.

Here are examples of different student profiles. Rely on your experiences as a ski teacher for this portion of the exam.

- A 16-year-old boy who has never skied. He is athletic, and lives in North Carolina where he spends all his time in-line skating and surfing. What is the path you might take to get him to parallel? He has borrowed some equipment from a friend for this lesson.
- A 42-year-old woman who has never skied before and has no affiliation with any other sports. She and her boyfriend are going on a ski trip out West and he bought her a new pair of skis that are 160cm in length, which she has brought to the lesson.

Membership Level: Certified Level II

The Certified Level II member is one who has demonstrated commitment and dedication to the ski teaching profession and to his/her own personal development. Level II members have proven their competency by successfully completing the PSIA National Level II Standard exam and are considered qualified to provide valuable instruction to students in the intermediate zone. The Level II member is required to meet the following criterion:

- Be an active Certified Level I member of PSIA-E.
- Be an employee of a recognized Snowsports school and have taught a recommended minimum of 150 hours, as attested to by the Snowsports School Director.
- Be current in continuing education credits – preferably with event that will help prepare candidate for exam.
- Successfully complete the PSIA-E Certified Level II exam criteria as stated in the National Level II Standards.

The Level II Exam Process

Level II Certification has the following components:

- Before taking the skiing or teaching parts of the exam, the candidate must successfully complete the online Professional Knowledge Exam with a minimum of 70%.
- Attain Children’s Specialist 1 Professional designation prior to the Teaching Exam.
- Successfully attain all Skiing Assessment Criteria.
 - Mountain Skiing
 - Skiing at Skill Level
 - Agility / Versatility
- Successfully attain the Teaching Assessment Criteria.
- A skiing or teaching clinic is recommended to help candidate prepare for exam but is NOT required.

Important: After taking the online Professional Knowledge exam, candidates have some options as to what courses they take. You may go the traditional route and start with the Skiing Exam. However, if you want to take the Teaching part of the exam first, you must attain the CS1 before attending that exam. **Note:** All exam components must be taken in the same division, these components are not transferrable. Should the exam requirements evolve in the future, PSIA-E will take into consideration the status of each exam candidate

Level II Online Professional Knowledge Exam

Once you purchase your exam, it must be started within 30 days. You will be evaluated in six categories:

- Science of Skiing
- Teaching and Learning Theory
- Movement Analysis
- Tactics and Techniques
- Specific Populations
- Industry, Service and Safety

Each category consists of 10 multiple choice questions, and each category is individually timed and scored. A minimum of 70% must be attained in each category. You must pass your exam at least two weeks prior to attending any on-snow module.

You will have two attempts at each category. If you fail any one category twice, you will have to purchase the exam again and retake all six categories. Once you complete a category, you will be directed to the next category in the overall exam.

Your Snowsports Directors Signature is not required for the online portion of the exam. Your Snowsports Director's signature is required to process all on-snow exam registrations. Studying for the exam ahead of time will ensure you are on the right track to pass the exam the first time you take it.

Should a member require special arrangements for the administering of the exam, or do not have access to take the exam online, arrangements can be made through the PSIA-E Office by contacting the Education and Programs Department at (518) 452-6095.

Suggested Educational Events for Preparation of Level II Certification

For the Skiing Exam

These courses are designed to help the candidate in one or more of the following areas:

- Develop the candidates personal skiing improvement.
- Explore and develop understanding of the Fundamental Mechanics of skiing.
- Prepare and understand key aspects of exam skiing tasks that may be present a Level II certification event.

Suggested events include:

- Skiing Improvement Level 100
- Mogul Series
- Exam Prep – Level II Skiing
- Race Event
- Alpine Level II College
- Level II Skiing Prep 3 Day
- Snow Pro Jam (Skiing Exam Prep Focus)

For the Teaching Exam

These courses are designed to help the candidate become better at the teaching part of the exam and gives the participants an opportunity to:

- Become more effective at understanding what they are seeing in a student's skiing,
- Develop the ability to select meaningful activities for a given situation or student,
- Articulate why the selected activity is appropriate,
- Solve teaching problems with the benefit of immediate feedback from an Educational Staff member, and
- Practice presenting in front of their peers, a selected activity in a manner that will encourage the student to achieve the most success.

Suggested Events Include:

- Exam Prep – Level II Teaching
- Movement Analysis 101
- Practical Teaching
- Snow Pro Jam (Teaching Exam Prep)
- Children's Specialist 1 (Required)

The Level II Skiing Assessment - What to Expect

Registration begins at 8:00 A.M. Please be punctual. This is a one-day event.

At registration the skiing tasks for the day will be posted for the candidate to review. If unfamiliar with the skiing tasks, Candidates are encouraged to review the posted tasks in the exam guide prior to the beginning of the exam. Candidates will be placed in groups of no more than 10. Each group will be assigned two evaluators who will ski with the group for the entire day. Candidates will be asked to perform a variety of tasks, activities, and free runs with a focus or focuses. Candidates will be evaluated in these three performance areas in both the morning and afternoon session.

- Mountain Skiing – Candidates will be asked to show advanced applied fundamentals in their skiing.
- Agility/Versatility - Candidates will perform common tasks used in teaching that isolate or highlight specific fundamentals.
- Skiing at Skill Level – Candidates will be asked to show appropriate application of basic applied fundamentals which are at or slightly above the student's ability level.

Results for Level II Skiing Evaluation

Scoring is done by two examiners who agree on the result. Only one score card will be written. The examiner pair will give a score between 1 (lowest) and 6 (highest) for each task in the performance area.

The element(s) of the National Standards:

1. Essential Elements were not observed or not present.
2. Essential elements are beginning to appear.
3. Essential elements appear, but not with consistency.
4. Essential elements appear regularly, at a satisfactory level.
5. Essential elements appear frequently, above required level.
6. Essential elements appear continuously, at a superior level.

The scores of the tasks within each performance area will be averaged, and the candidate will need to have an average of 4 or better to be successful in that performance area. The exception is in the Mountain Skiing task where the candidate will still need an average score of 4 or higher, but no single score can be below a 3 for the candidate to be successful. A sample scorecard is provided at the end of this Exam Guide for your reference.

Candidates will be required to meet the Level II Standard in all three Performance Areas to be successful. Once the candidate has shown competency in a performance area, his/her success will be valid for life based on continuous active membership. The candidate will receive six continuing education credits for an attempted exam. Results will be recorded in the Eastern Office.

If an exam candidate is successful in one or more performance areas, that candidate may attend a skiing reassessment for the performance area they were not successful in. For example, an exam candidate was successful in the Agility/Versatility performance area and the Skiing at Skill Level performance area on first exam attempt. This candidate may attend a skiing reassessment to be evaluated in Mountain Skiing only. This reassessment will be held in conjunction with another scheduled Skiing exam.

Description of Skiing Assessment Activities

Candidates will be asked to perform a variety of assessment activities on intermediate to easier advanced terrain. Each activity serves as a lens for the examiner to evaluate the candidates skiing. Activities may be done using a variety of formats i.e. call down, pairs skiing, line rotation, etc. Candidates should be prepared to ski any of the assessment activities listed. Candidates may or may not be asked to do these tasks and may be asked to perform a task that is not on this list. Guided practice of these tasks is likely to enhance the broad and refined skill base necessary to ski at the Level II National Standard.

The fundamental mechanics of skiing, outlined below, remain consistent through all levels of Certification. The performance criteria for these fundamentals will vary based on the application to common beginner, intermediate, and advanced zone outcomes.

Skiing Fundamentals

- Control the relationship of the Center of Mass to the base of support to direct pressure along the length of the skis.
- Control pressure from ski to ski and direct pressure toward the outside ski.
- Control edge angles through a combination of inclination and angulation.
- Control the skis' rotation with leg rotation, separate from the upper body.
- Regulate the magnitude of pressure created through ski/snow interaction.

Note: Due to variations in trail difficulty designations from one resort to the next, i.e., a Blue Square run at one resort may be designated as a Black Diamond at another resort, it is possible, and probable at some resorts, that ungroomed or Black Diamond bumped runs may be included in the exam. In addition, trail difficulty may vary due to snow conditions improving or deteriorating throughout the day. The exam administrator will determine if the local trail designations and conditions adequately reflect the stated national standard concerning terrain. If necessary, trails or sections of trails will be selected to keep exams consistent across the division and the country.

Skiing tasks are listed as ***Assessment Activities***.

The Assessment Activities generally describe the task and explain what terrain it is performed on, the speed, width and length of the area it may be assessed on.

The Assessment Criteria gives specific points on what the skis and body should be doing for the activity to be performed correctly.

Level II Assessment Activities

Wedge Turn: Slow speed turns on novice pitched terrain. Feet are hip to shoulder width apart with ski tips closer together than tails of skis. Skis are on opposing edges the entire time skier is connecting turns on novice terrain. [Wedge Turn Video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- Skis stay on opposing edges through all turn phases.
- Wedge remains relatively the same size during the entire run and feet should be roughly hip to shoulder width.
- Skis are guided through round turns with steering from the feet and legs.
- Joint use allows skier to accurately direct pressure along length of skis.
- Pressure is directed towards the outside ski.

Wedge Christie: Performed on green or easy blue terrain at novice zone speeds. At turn entry, both skis are released, but edge change occurs at different rates. As the skis begin to turn down the hill, this differing rate of edge change leaves the skis on opposing edges. As the turn develops, the inside ski will flatten, returning the skis to corresponding edges, allowing the skis to become parallel. The timing of the inside ski edge change will determine the location at which the skis become parallel and may occur at different locations throughout the turn, depending on terrain, speed, and student confidence level. [Wedge Christy Video](#) [Advanced Wedge Christie Video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- Convergence of the skis occurs as the new outside ski is able to be steered faster than the new inside ski. The skis should not be pushed or stemmed into a wedge.
- A skidded arc is accomplished with the turning of the legs, separate from the upper body.
- At turn initiation, the COM moves towards the apex of the new turn, not to the outside of the turn.
- Turning or rotation of skis is progressive, not abrupt, and originates from the feet and legs.
- The pivot point of the skis is under the foot.
- Feet should remain hip width or slightly wider and equidistance apart throughout the entire turn.

Basic Parallel: On intermediate or easy black terrain, skis are guided through a skidded arc, with the feet staying the same distance apart. A functional pole touch, and an appropriate speed with blending of fundamentals for an intermediate level skier being used. [Basic Parallel Video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- Skis remain roughly the same distance apart through all phases of the turn.
- Both skis' edges are released at the same rate and remain on corresponding edges through all turn phases. The skis turn at similar rate to maintain parallel ski relationship.
- Steering of the skis and turning comes from the leg rotation separate from the upper body.
- Turning is primarily accomplished through steering.
- Pressure should be directed towards the outside ski and the relationship of COM to the base of support should be maintained to direct pressure towards the center of the skis.
- Pole swing and touch should be directed roughly towards apex of new turn and should assist the release of old and engagement of new turns.

Leapers: Medium radius, parallel turns on intermediate terrain with moderate speed. The skier leaps through the transition from one turn to the next turn. The skis should take off from, and land in a medium radius turn path. [Dynamic Medium Radius Leapers Video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- The leap is performed from extension movements with both skis coming off the snow at the same time and landing back on the snow at the same time.
- The direction of the leap should be towards the start of the next turn.
- Take off occurs on the uphill edges and landing on the downhill edges.
- Edge change occurs while in the air.
- Skis should be guided through the arc to maintain speed control.
- Joints flex to absorb energy when landing and allow skier to control relationship of COM in relationship to the base of support.

Lane Changes: On intermediate terrain, using the width of approximately two groomers. Starting with a pre-assigned number of short turns (in a one groomer width corridor), with the last turn entering a medium radius turn. This medium turn should bring the skier across the hill to the next groomer width corridor, where short turns are again started. This is frequently performed with 5 short turns – one medium lane change – back to 5 short turns. [L2 Lane Change Video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- Short turns should have consistent shape and radius.
- Lane change should be distinct and of obvious difference in radius to the short turns.
- Medium turn going across hill must have shape and not be a traverse.
- Going from medium back to short turns should have grip and shape above the fall line.
- The timing and intensity of movements should be adjusted appropriately for the different turn shapes.
- The first short turn in each lane should be short, not medium

Skate Down the Fall Line: Skating is performed down a consistent fall line on gentle, novice terrain, for approximately 20-50 yards. Each skating movement should provide propulsion.

Assessment Criteria: [Skating in Fall Line Video](#)

- Skier should be able to roll ski to inside edge to engage ski from lower body movements.
- Skier moves off an engaged ski.
- Body should move forward towards the direction of the new gliding ski.
- The gliding ski should be kept close to the fall line.
- Skis should remain with tips farther apart than tails.
- Upper body should remain facing down the fall line.
- The skier should propel forward from glide ski to glide ski to maintain the relationship of the COM with the base of support.

Basic Parallel turns - No Poles: Basic Parallel turns are performed with no pole swing or touch. Poles are usually held halfway between ski pole handle and ski pole basket, so poles cannot be dragged on snow. Performed on intermediate to easy advanced terrain. [Basic Parallel No Poles Video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- It is evident that turn shape comes from the legs turning under a stable upper body. Refer to assessment criteria in Parallel Turns disregarding the pole use criteria.
- Balance should be maintained without the aid of the poles.

Railroad Tracks: Performed on novice terrain, using a narrow corridor approximately the width of one groomer. Skier uses the sidecut of skis to perform pure carving, with no skidding, while moving from one set of edges to the other. [Railroad Track Video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- Tipping movements start in the boots with small movements that originate from the feet. As speed and turn shape increase, more joints progressively become involved in edging, including knees, legs and hips.
- Skis are tipped simultaneously and sidecut engages as skis travel forward along their length.
- Turning comes from sidecut of the ski and develops a natural arc with the tail following the exact path as the tip leaving two clean arcs in the snow.
- Pressure is directed from outside ski to outside ski.

Stem Turn: At turn initiation uphill ski is moved uphill (stem) as the skier directs pressure towards it, placing the skis in a converging relationship. As turn develops the inside ski is stepped or slid back into a parallel relationship with outside ski to finish turn in parallel relationship. This task is done to show the skier's versatility and agility to cut off the top of turn to negotiate difficult terrain like a skinny narrow line, or to help students negotiate terrain when a pure round turn could be difficult. [Stem Turn Video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- Skier is able to stem the ski with movements of the lower body. This is accomplished with new outside foot and leg moving, *not* from moving the COM uphill to step or brush the ski.
- Old outside ski is released as it is in a wedge turn, with the COM moving toward new turn.
- Skier is able to brush or step the inside ski into parallel relationship at end of turn.

Straight Run to Hockey Stop: Straight run 5-8 ski lengths to a pivot of skis into a vertical sideslip 3-4 ski lengths down the fall line to an edge set which has a corresponding pole plant. The skier should then hold this stopped position, without movement, for a count of 3.

*Need to be able to do this task by pivoting both to the right and the left. [Straight Run to Hockey stop Video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- Feet should remain in a corridor the width of one ski length.
- Skis should remain parallel from start to finish.
- Joints are flexed to manage pressure from foot to foot and to control pressure along length of skis.
- Leg rotation is used to rotate skis to transition from straight run to side slip from under the feet.
- Edge set should be crisp, timed with a pole touch and have little lateral deviation both before and after the stop.
- The pole touch should occur by the skier moving towards the touch as they flex to absorb the pressure from stopping. The pole touch should not be reached for with the arms.
- Skier holds the pole touch for 3 seconds without losing balance or drifting back or forward.

Bumps: Intermediate terrain bumps with linked rhythmical turns. [L2 Bumps](#) (First half of video only)

Assessment Criteria:

- Speed is controlled and maintained.
- Shape of turn is made with skis turning more than upper body.
- Upper body remains stable with little effect from lower body movements.
- Ski/Snow contact is maintained through progressive flexion and extension of ankles, knees, hips and spine.

The Level II Teaching Assessment - What to Expect

Registration begins at 8:00 A.M. Please be punctual. This is a one-day event.

Candidates will be divided into small groups of approximately eight and will meet evaluators at 8:30 am. The Level II Teaching Assessment is conducted in a one-day evaluation. Some of the highlights include:

- Two Examiners have the group for the entire day.
- Examiners write one scorecard and agree on the result.
- Scoring reflects the Learning Connection Model – Technical, Teaching and People Skills relative to the National Standard.
- During the day the candidate can expect to have two teaching sessions that will run up to 20 minutes in length.
- In addition to their own teaching session(s), candidates will be expected to observe, give comments and actively participate in teaching discussions as requested by the Examiner.

On Hill Experience

The day will typically start with free runs, where candidates will have guided practice with selected activities appropriate to intermediate zone teaching. The group is encouraged to watch each other perform, taking some observational notes of the skiing qualities of the group that may be helpful in developing a program where coaching of individual performance can be accomplished.

Candidates will have multiple opportunities to teach and show their knowledgebase through group and individual participation, as well as through questions by the evaluators. Candidates will also be asked to coach Level II skiing activities in the *skiing at skill level or agility versatility* category. These tasks are commonly used by instructors teaching in the intermediate zone. Candidates should coach and use these activities to improve the group's performance in intermediate zone skiing. Additionally, while candidates are not leading the group, they may be asked to observe and share feedback on any of the items listed below or in the Learning Connection Model. Candidates must be able to:

- Share how they teach skills and movements relative to the activities being discussed.
- Show how they incorporate Teaching Styles and VAK into their coaching to enhance learning.
- Use language and activities to convey how the body should move and how the skis should interact with the snow.
- Interact with the exam group and the examiner in such a way that it is evident that the candidates are paying attention to and understanding how their activities and directives affect the group's performance and directives.
- Recognize and describe what body parts move to apply the skills and movements of effective skiing.
- Draw conclusions about relationships between body movements and performance outcomes.
- Provide potential solutions about what to change to reach desired outcomes.
- Choose wording that could provide accurate, concise and tactful advice for other exam candidates and/or potential students as it relates to the activities and discussions.
- Share how you would adapt activities and communication for different ages and stages of development.

The element(s) of the National Standards:

1. Essential Elements were not observed or not present.
2. Essential elements are beginning to appear.
3. Essential elements appear, but not with consistency.
4. Essential elements appear regularly, at a satisfactory level.
5. Essential elements appear frequently, above required level.
6. Essential elements appear continuously, at a superior level.

Level II Teaching Assessment Criteria

Technical Skills

The instructor is able to consistently demonstrate competence as a skier in all Beginner, Intermediate, and some Advanced zone terrain. They are able to adjust and adapt their skiing in this terrain to demonstrate a range of applications to their students and their skill application to illustrate the technical content being delivered in Beginner and Intermediate zone lessons. The instructor is able to observe and describe the student's movements as they relate to the Skiing Fundamentals and begin to identify basic inter-relationships of cause and effect.

Fundamentals

- Describe skier performance, relative to any single skiing fundamental in all phases of the turn.
- Describe how moving certain body parts effects ski performance.
- Prescribe a specific change in one skiing fundamental to create a change in desired outcome.
- Relate how equipment choice affects skiing outcomes through the intermediate zone.

Teaching Skills

The instructor demonstrates refinement of the Teaching Fundamentals, allowing them to plan and implement engaging learning environments. They foster learning by facilitating greater understanding and performance. The instructor is able to develop a learning environment through the intermediate zone and terrain.

Fundamentals

- Collaborate on long-term goals and short-term objectives.
- Promote exploration, experimentation, and play.
- Facilitate the learner's ability to reflect upon experiences and sensations.
- Manage information, activities, terrain selection, and pacing.
- Adapt to the changing needs of the learner.
- Manage emotional and physical risk.

People Skills

The instructor can relate to the student and create an environment where trust can be built between the instructor and student. The instructor has developed some refined communication with active listening and various tactics that include verbal and nonverbal methods.

Fundamentals

- Develop relationships based on trust.
- Engage in meaningful two-way communication.
- Identify, understand, and manage your emotions and actions.
- Recognize and influence the behaviors, motivations and emotions of others.

Membership Level: Certified Level III

The Certified Level III member is one whose high levels of skill and knowledge allow him/her to make an uncompromised contribution to the customer, the Association, and the ski industry. Newly certified Level III members are capable of teaching students of any ability level in any conditions on any open terrain throughout the country. Certified Level III members have proven their competency by successfully completing the PSIA National Level III Standard exam. The Level III member is required to meet the following criteria:

- Be a Certified Level II member of PSIA-E.
- Be an employee of a recognized Snowsports school and have taught a recommended minimum of 300 hours; of which ideally, 150 were at advanced levels, as attested to by the Snowsports School Director.

The Level III Exam Process

Level III Certification has the following components:

1. Before taking the skiing or teaching parts of the exam, the candidate must score 70% or greater on the professional knowledge online exam
2. Candidates must attend one, qualified prerequisite event.
3. Successfully attain all three Skiing Assessment Criteria.
 - Mountain Skiing
 - Agility/Versatility
 - Skiing at Skill Level
4. Successfully attain the Teaching Assessment Criteria.

Important: After taking the online Professional Knowledge online exam, candidates may take either the Skiing part of the exam or the Teaching part of the exam first. **Note:** All exam components must be taken in the same division; these components are not transferrable. Should the exam requirements evolve in the future, PSIA-E will take into consideration the status of each exam candidate.

Level III Online Professional Knowledge Exam

Once you purchase your exam, it must be started within 30 days. You will be evaluated in six categories:

- Science of Skiing
- Teaching and Learning Theory
- Movement Analysis
- Tactics and Techniques
- Specific Populations
- Industry, Service and Safety

Each category consists of 10 multiple choice questions, and each category is individually timed and scored. A minimum of 70% must be attained in each category. You must pass your exam at least two weeks prior to attending any on-snow assessment.

You will have two attempts at each category. If you fail any one category twice, you will have to purchase the exam again and retake all six categories. Once you complete a category, you will be directed to the next category in the overall exam.

Your Snowsports Directors Signature is not required for the online portion of the exam. Your Snowsports Director's Signature *is* required to process all on-snow exam registrations.

Studying for the exam ahead of time will ensure you are on the right track to pass the exam the first time you take it.

Should a member require special arrangements for the administering of the exam, or does not have access to the exam online, arrangements can be made through the PSIA-E Office by contacting the Education and Programs Department at (518) 452-6095.

Level III Skiing or Teaching Prerequisites

Level III Exam candidates are required to take one exam prerequisite course. Candidates are not required to take a prerequisite course for both the skiing and teaching exam. It is advisable for candidates to prepare for and ask questions in areas where they may feel weak or uncertain, so that the specific needs of each individual can be addressed by the course conductor to the fullest extent possible. A prerequisite is good for the season in which it was taken and the following two seasons.

Level III Exam –Acceptable Skiing Prerequisites Events:

These courses are designed to help the candidate in one or more of the following areas:

- Develop the candidates personal skiing improvement.
- Explore and develop understanding of the Fundamental Mechanics of skiing.
- Prepare and understand key aspects of exam skiing tasks that may be present a Level III certification event.

The candidate may choose one of the following events to meet the requirements of the Level III Exam prerequisite.

- Master Series Skiing
- Race Clinic
- Level 3 Exam Prep – Skiing
- Snow Pro Jam Level 3 Exam Prep
- Gateway to Dynamic Skiing
- Advanced Bumps

Level III Exam – Acceptable Teaching Prerequisites Events:

These courses are designed to help the candidate become better at the teaching part of the exam and gives the participants an opportunity to:

- Become more effective at understanding what they are seeing in a student's skiing,
- Develop the ability to select meaningful activities for a given situation or student,
- Articulate why the selected activity is appropriate,
- Solve teaching problems with the benefit of immediate feedback from an Educational Staff member, and
- Practice presenting in front of their peers, a selected activity in a manner that will encourage the student to achieve the most success.

The candidate may choose one of the following events to meet the requirements of the Level III Exam prerequisite.

- Coaching High-End Skiing
- Level 3 Exam Prep – Teaching
- Freestyle Specialist 2
- Stance and Alignment
- Movement Analysis 201
- Children's Specialist 2
- Snow Pro Jam Level 3 Exam Prep

The Level III Skiing Assessment - What to Expect

This is a one-day event. Registration begins at 8:00 A.M. Please be punctual.

At registration, the skiing tasks for the day will be posted for the candidate to review. If unfamiliar with the skiing tasks, Candidates are encouraged to review the posted tasks in the exam guide prior to the beginning of the exam. Candidates will be placed in groups of no more than 10. Each group will be assigned two evaluators who will ski with the group for the entire day. Candidates will be asked to perform a variety of tasks, activities, and free runs with a focus or focuses. Candidates will be evaluated in these three performance areas in both the morning and afternoon session.

- Mountain Skiing – Candidates will be asked to show advanced applied fundamentals in their skiing.
- Agility/Versatility - Candidates will perform common tasks used in teaching that isolate or highlight specific fundamentals
- Skiing at Skill Level – Candidates will be asked to show appropriate application of basic applied fundamentals which are at or slightly above the student's ability level.

Results for Level III Skiing Evaluation

Scoring is done by two examiners who agree on the result. Only one score card will be written. The examiner pair will give a score between 1 (lowest) and 6 (highest) for each task in the performance area.

The element(s) of the National Standards:

1. Essential Elements were not observed or not present.
2. Essential elements are beginning to appear.
3. Essential elements appear, but not with consistency.
4. Essential elements appear regularly, at a satisfactory level.
5. Essential elements appear frequently, above required level.
6. Essential elements appear continuously, at a superior level.

The scores of the tasks within each performance area will be averaged, and the candidate will need to have an average of 4 or better to be successful in that performance area. The exception is in the Mountain Skiing tasks, where the candidate will still need an average score of 4 or higher, but no single score can be below a 3 for the candidate to be successful. A sample scorecard is provided at the end of this Exam Guide for your reference.

Candidates will be required to meet the Level III Standard in all three Performance Areas to be successful. Once the candidate has shown competency in a performance area, his/her success will be valid for life based on continuous active membership. The candidate will also receive six continuing education credits for each performance area they are successful. Results will be recorded in the Eastern Office.

If an exam candidate is successful in one or more performance areas, that candidate may attend a skiing reassessment for the performance area they were not successful in. For example, an exam candidate was successful in the Agility/Versatility performance area and the Skiing at Skill Level performance area on first exam attempt. This candidate may attend a skiing reassessment to be evaluated in Mountain Skiing only. This reassessment will be held in conjunction with another scheduled Skiing exam.

Description of Skiing Assessment Activities

The following Level III assessment activities require refined skiing skills and represent a wide range of movement patterns. Each activity serves as a lens for the examiner to evaluate the candidate's skiing. Candidates may or may not be asked to do these activities and may be asked to perform a task that is not on this list. Guided practice of these tasks is likely to enhance the broad and refined skill base necessary to ski at the Level III National Standard.

The fundamental mechanics of skiing, outlined below, remain consistent through all levels of Certification. The performance criteria for these fundamentals will vary based on the application to common beginner, intermediate, and advanced zone outcomes.

Skiing Fundamentals

- Control the relationship of the Center of Mass to the base of support to direct pressure along the length of the skis.
- Control pressure from ski to ski and direct pressure toward the outside ski.
- Control edge angles through a combination of inclination and angulation.
- Control the skis' rotation with leg rotation, separate from the upper body.
- Regulate the magnitude of pressure created through ski/snow interaction.

Skiing tasks are listed as ***Assessment Activities***.

The Assessment Activities generally describe the task and explain what terrain it is performed on, the speed, width and length of the area it may be assessed on.

The Assessment Criteria gives specific points on what the skis and body should be doing in order for the activity to be performed correctly

Level III Assessment Activities

Pivot-slips: On groomed, advanced terrain, the skis are turned from right to left and left to right with legs rotating primarily from the hip socket – Skier performs these pivots as the skis slip down the fall line. [Pivot Slip Video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- The skier changes the edges of both skis, simultaneously.
- Stance width allows for the inside ski to be steered and remains relatively constant throughout the performance.
- The skier uses leg rotation to turn the skis smoothly and continuously, versus abruptly, and/or with whole body rotation.
- The legs turn before the hips start to turn. The rotation of the hips occurs at the limits of leg rotation.
- The path of the feet is down the fall line, even though the skis may turn 180 degrees left or right.
- Skis should remain parallel at all times.
- The skier is able to maintain a roughly, 1 ski-length corridor.
- A change in direction of the skis should NOT begin with a hop, up-unweighting, blocking pole touch or other influence other than a clean release and leg turning.

Skate - to shape - to short turns: On groomed, intermediate terrain, forward oriented skating blends over distance to skating that provides turn shape and then to short turns.

Assessment Criteria:

- The skier should show propulsive skating, blending to shaping, and then to short turns using about one third of the allotted space for each, identifiable segment of the task.
- The lifted ski should be level with the surface, or slightly tip down, and remain closely directed towards the fall line.
- The skis should move primarily forward, leaving a clean slice at the end of the skating step.
- The skier should be in a balanced state and in control when moving from foot to foot through the entire task.

Performance Short Radius Turns: - 1 groomer width corridor on groomed intermediate or easy advanced terrain. The skier performs round, short turns utilizing ski design. Ski design and speed should provide energy that allows the skier to reach the edges of the corridor. [Performance Short Turns video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- Ski performance is carved as possible in shaping phase, given terrain, conditions, and ski design.
- The line taken by the skis sends the center of mass across the hill at least one meter; consistent tempo (1 turn/sec) is maintained through the run.
- These are not fall line oriented, short swing turns.
- The skis are tipped and engaged before they are turned.
- The skis are parallel with similar edge angles.
- Both skis are engaged and bent in shaping phase of the turn. Speed is controlled through turn shape.
- Fore/aft pressure control is managed through proportional flexion and extension of all joints.
- The torso remains stable and disciplined.
- The stretching of the legs and the forward movement of the center of mass enables the skier to maintain pressure on the turning edges.
- The skis are steered back under the body through edge change.

Lane Changes: On intermediate or advanced terrain, using the width of approximately three groomers. Starting with a pre-assigned number of performance short turns in a one groomer width corridor, the last turn enters is a medium radius turn. This medium turn should bring the skier across the center groomer width to the next corridor where short turns are again started. This is frequently performed with 5 short turns – one medium lane change – back to 5 short turns. [L3 Lane Change](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- Performance short turns should have consistent shape and radius.
- The lane change should be distinct, and of obvious difference in radius to the short turns.
- Medium turn going across hill must have shape and not be a traverse.
- The medium turn should carry energy across the fall line.
- All turns should have grip and shape above the fall line.
- The timing and intensity of movements should be adjusted appropriately for the different turn shapes.
- The first turn in each lane should be short, not medium.

1000 Steps: Diverging, forward oriented, stepping off an edged and holding outside ski during dynamic medium radius turns. [1000 Steps](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- The skier maintains proper alignment of body segments without tipping in, or over rotating.
- The skis move primarily forward rather than sideways.
- Each step should move the skier inside of the existing arc. – This is not simply marching through a medium turn.
- The skier maintains speed control by using diverging steps to get to, through and out of the fall line.

Simultaneous, parallel hop turns: Roughly one ski width corridor on advanced, groomed terrain. The skier hops in the air and the skis are pivoted in alternating directions while skis are off the ground. The skier leaps and pivots the skis in one direction while airborne and lands in a way that allows another leap and pivot. This process is continued for 10 – 15 hop turns. [Hop turns Video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- The skis leave, and land on, the snow at the same time.
- The pivot point is under the feet, with equal turning of the tips and tails vs. the tails moving farther or quicker.
- The skis are generally level with the snow surface – not tip or tail high.
- The skier uses leg extension rather than retracting the legs in order to have skis leave the snow surface.
- The skis are pivoted across the fall line enough to maintain speed control.
- Each hop immediately follows the landing, with no time taken to regain balance or prepare to leap.

Railroad Tracks: Performed on intermediate terrain using a corridor approximately the width of one to two groomers. Skier uses the sidecut of skis and appropriate movements to perform pure carved turns, with no skidding. The skis should be managed to provide a radius inside that provided by their equipment. [Railroad Track Turns](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- Skier must be able to bend the ski, not just ride the sidecut.
- Tipping movements start in the boots with small movements originate from the feet. As speed and turning forces increase, the skier's body moves to the inside of the turn. As these forces are released, the body moves out of the turn and into the next.
- Balance and correct alignment of the body segments is maintained to allow the skier to direct pressure to the outside ski.
- Skis are tipped simultaneously and sidecut engages as skis travel forward along their length.
- Turning comes from sidecut and bending of the ski. leaving two clean arcs in the snow.

Pain in the S: Short radius turns are made on a long radius turn path on advanced, groomed terrain. Work to keep the same level of ski design involvement no matter where the turns are in relation to the fall line. [Pain in the S Video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- All turns should be round, not pushed, regardless of relationship to the fall line.
- The bottom of the turns should not be edge sets or jammed.
- It should take several turns to get to, though, and out of the fall line portion of the long radius turn path.
- Appropriate blend of fundamentals should be used to maintain ski performance throughout all short turns.

Skiing on One Ski: This task may be varied based upon terrain, conditions and other factors. The skier may be asked to keep one ski off the snow through a series of turns or may be asked to repeatedly lift a ski in the same portion of a turn. [Skiing on One Ski Video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- The skier can lift one ski off the snow through a series of turns, or repeatedly lift a ski at the same place in a turn while maintaining fore / aft and lateral balance.
- The lifted ski should be level or slightly tip down.
- Shape of the turns should be round. These are indicators of an accurate COM to base of support management (fore-aft and lateral balancing skills).
- A light dragging of the pole is acceptable; however, the pole usage should not be used to significantly impact balance.
- Turning should be accomplished by a turning of the leg, separate from the upper body.
- The ski should not be pushed into a turn.
- Tipping movements should begin in the feet and legs.

Hop to Short: Skier performs this activity on advanced terrain, in a one groomer width corridor, in a variety of potential conditions. This activity starts with a hop, landing with the skis in or near the fall line and ends with a shaping of a short radius turn. [Hop to Short video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- Direct hop at start of turn, through leg extension, towards apex of new turn.
- Skis are guided in the air towards the apex of the new turn.
- Skis land on the snow close to the fall line.
- Joints flex to absorb energy, allowing the skier to land in balance so they can immediately begin shaping the turn.
- Skis continue to shape the turn and control speed through leg rotation.
- Energy from shaping the bottom of the turn is used to initiate the next hop.

Leapers: Medium radius, dynamic turns on groomed, advanced terrain with moderate speed. The skier leaps through the transition from one turn to the next turn. The skis should take off from and land in a medium to long radius turn path. [Leapers video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- The leap is performed from extension movements with both skis coming off and landing back on the snow at the same time.
- The turn shape helps create energy for the leap.
- The direction of the leap should be towards the start of the next turn.
- Edge change occurs while in the air.
- Skis land on the downhill edges and carving starts above the fall-line.
- Joints flex to absorb energy when landing and allow skier to control relationship of COM in relationship to the base of support to maximize ski performance through the shaping phase.
- Lateral movements should be appropriate to the lateral forces generated upon landing, allowing the skier to direct pressure to the outside ski.

Outside Ski Turns: On intermediate or easy advanced terrain, the skier performs medium to long radius, dynamic turns, balancing against the outside ski from initiation through the shaping/control phase of the turn. The skier switches skis just prior to edge change, and glides on the uphill edge of the new outside ski for 1 ski length before changing edges. The turn shape is relatively round, and speed is consistent throughout the task. [Outside Ski Turns video](#)

Assessment Criteria:

- The inside ski is off the snow through the initiation and shaping/control phase of the turn.
- During the completion phase of the turn, the skier transfers pressure to the uphill edge of the inside ski and is able to glide on this edge for approximately 1 ski length and through transition.
- In the turn transition, the skier shows control of ski to ski pressure by gliding onto the uphill edge of the uphill ski and lifting the downhill ski off the snow.
- The skier shows appropriate edging and pressure control movements as they flatten and change edges.
- The ski is guided to maintain speed control. This is not a carved turn.

Tuck turns: In a corridor the width of one to two groomers, on intermediate terrain, Short to medium radius turns done from a medium or high tuck, reaching the skis to the edges of the pre-defined corridor.

Assessment Criteria:

- The legs should extend as they reach for the edges of the corridor and retract as they come back towards the middle. The skier can stretch and bend the legs in tuck turns without vertical movement of the torso.
- The skier is able to maintain the relationship of the COM to the BOS to actively direct pressure along the length of the skis while in a tuck.
- The skier is able to use tipping movements in the feet and legs to provide edge angle while in a tuck
- The skier is able to utilize turning of the legs, separate from the upper body while in a tuck.

The Level III Teaching Assessment - What to Expect

Registration begins at 8:00 A.M. Please be punctual. This is a one-day event.

Candidates will be divided into small groups of approximately eight and will meet evaluators at 8:30 am.

The Level III Teaching Assessment is conducted in a one-day evaluation. Some of the highlights of the exam process includes:

- Two Examiners have the group for the entire day.
- Examiners write one scorecard and agree on result.
- Scoring reflects the Learning Connection Model – Technical, Teaching and People Skills.
- During the day, the candidate can expect to perform a teaching session of approximately 30 minutes in length.

On-hill Experience:

The day will typically start with free runs, where candidates will have guided practice with selected activities appropriate to advanced zone teaching. The group is encouraged to watch each other perform, taking some observational notes of the skiing qualities of individual group members that may be helpful in coaching of individual performance.

Candidates will have an opportunity to coach the group for approximately 30 minutes. Additionally, while candidates are not leading the group, they may be asked to observe and share feedback on any of the items listed below or in the Learning Connection Model. Teaching must be done in or lead to significant time spent in conditions and speed appropriate to the Level III zone of certification. The activities chosen for this must be actual mountain skiing and/or Agility/Versatility tasks appropriate to teaching in the advanced zone.

- Share how they teach skills and movements for activities being discussed.
- Show how they incorporate Teaching Styles and VAK into their coaching to enhance learning.
- Use language and activities to convey how the body should move and how the skis should interact with the snow.
- Interact with the exam group and the examiner in such a way that it is evident that the candidates are paying attention to and understanding how their activities and directives affect the group's performance and directives.
- Recognize and describe what body parts move to apply the skills and movements of effective skiing.
- Draw conclusions about relationships between body movements and performance outcomes.
- Provide potential solutions about what to change to reach desired outcomes.
- Choose wording that could provide accurate, concise and tactful advice for other exam candidates and/or potential students as it relates to the activities and discussions.
- The candidate should be aware of their own actions and adjust as necessary to maintain a positive learning environment
- Share how you would adapt activities and communication for different ages and stages of development.

The element(s) of the National Standards:

1. Essential Elements were not observed or not present.
2. Essential elements are beginning to appear.
3. Essential elements appear, but not with consistency.
4. Essential elements appear regularly, at a satisfactory level.
5. Essential elements appear frequently, above required level.
6. Essential elements appear continuously, at a superior level.

Level III Teaching Assessment Criteria

Technical Skills

A L3 instructor is able to consistently demonstrate competence as a skier in all in-bounds terrain in most conditions. They are able to adjust and adapt their skiing to demonstrate a range of applications in all conditions to their students. They can adapt their skill application to illustrate the technical content being delivered in Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced zone lessons. They are masters of current and historic PSIA alpine educational information to aid relating personal and student performance as well as equipment impacts to performance. Instructor can observe and evaluate complex relationships with body mechanics and ski performance and accurately identify skill inter-relationships.

Fundamentals

- Describe skier performance relative to the interrelationship of the fundamentals in all phases of the turn.
- Describe ski and body performance evaluating how movements affect ski performance within any fundamental and its effect on other fundamentals.
- Prescribe specific change in multiple skiing fundamentals to create a change in desired outcome.
- Identify and manage equipment issues in relationship to the student and their objectives in the advanced zone.

Teaching Skills

The instructors can demonstrate mastery of the Teaching Fundamentals, allowing them to plan and fluidly implement highly engaging learning environments where they foster learning by facilitating in-depth understanding and enhanced performance for individuals within the group. The instructor can creatively develop an environment in the advanced zone and creatively use terrain that is customized to individuals within a group.

Fundamentals

- Collaborate on long-term goals and short-term objectives.
- Promote exploration, experimentation, and play.
- Facilitate the learner's ability to reflect upon experiences and sensations.
- Manage information, activities, terrain selection, and pacing.
- Adapt to the changing needs of the learner.
- Manage emotional and physical risk.

People Skills

The instructor has refined people skills, relating to others in a productive way showing genuine desire to establish an environment where positive outcomes can be achieved. Instructors at this level can communicate effectively to achieve favorable outcomes and can merge positive internal dialogues with outwardly visible actions where an environment is created for success.

Fundamentals

- Develop relationships based on trust.
- Engage in meaningful two-way communication.
- Identify, understand, and manage your emotions and actions.
- Recognize and influence the behaviors, motivations and emotions of others.

Alpine Certification Pathway

Alpine Level 1 Certification

Prerequisites

- Minimum 16 years of Age
- Be a current employee of a snowsports school
- Have taught a recommended minimum of 50 hours of combined in-house training and actual on-hill teaching, as approved by the Snowsports School Director
- Be a current Registered Member of PSIA-AASI in good standing
- Complete the Alpine Level I eLearning Course prior to exam
- The Level I Workbook is recommended prior to exam
- Successfully pass an on-snow exam

Requirements

- At this exam you will be expected to understand, teach and engage students in the Novice Zone
- If candidate attends Alpine First Chair Clinic, the member would be eligible for a one-day exam.
- Or, the candidate may attend a 2-day Level I Exam.
- Or, the candidate may attend the 5-day Level I College

Alpine Level 2 Certification

Prerequisites

- Alpine, Snowboard or Tele Level 1 Certified
- Be a current employee of a snowsports school
- Have taught a recommended minimum of 150 hours of combined in-house training and actual on-hill teaching, as approved by the Snowsports School Director
- Be current in continuing education credits – preferably with events that will help prepare candidate for exam
- Pass the online Level 2 Online Professional Knowledge Exam prior to any on-snow components
- Attain Children’s Specialist 1 prior to taking the Teaching exam.

Requirements

- One-day Level II Skiing Exam: Candidates will be evaluated in three performance areas; Agility/Versatility, Mountain Skiing and Skiing at Skill Level. Any performance area in which the candidate is successful will be banked for life, based on continuous membership.
- One-day Level II Teaching Exam: Candidates will have multiple opportunities to teach and show their knowledgebase through group and individual participation and questions by the evaluators. Scoring will reflect the Learning Connection Model – Technical, Teaching and People Skills.
- If the candidate prefers, there is an option to attend a five day skiing or teaching college.

Alpine Level 3 Certification

Prerequisites

- Alpine, Snowboard or Tele Level 2 Certified
- Be a current employee of a snowsports school
- Have taught a recommended minimum of 300 hours; of which ideally, 150 were at advanced levels as approved by the Snowsports School Director.
- Be current in continuing education credits with an event that qualifies as a prerequisite
- Pass the online Level 3 Online Professional Knowledge Exam prior to any on-snow components.

Requirements

- One-day Level III Skiing Exam: Candidates will be evaluated in three performance areas; Agility/Versatility, Mountain Skiing and Skiing at Skill Level. Any performance area in which the candidate is successful will be banked for life, based on continuous membership.
- One-day Level III Teaching Exam: Candidates will have multiple opportunities to teach and show their knowledgebase through group and individual participation and questions by the evaluators. Scoring will reflect the Learning Connection Model – Technical, Teaching and People Skills.
- If the candidate prefers, there is an option to attend a five-day skiing or teaching college.

Alpine Educational Staff Pathway

Development (DEV) Team

Prerequisites

- Alpine Level 3 Certified
- Be a current employee of a snowsports school
- Be a current member of the Eastern Division
- Be current in continuing education credits

Requirements

- Two Day demanding and competitive exam. Successful candidates will show solid skiing performance above the National Level III Standard
- Professionalism
- Potential: Solid team player, solid communication, coachable, open to explore different approaches, and actively participating in discussions.
- Technically accurate in demos and discussions.
- Successful candidates will be required to attend annual training and understudy events as recommended by the DEV team coach.
- Development Team is a 4-year commitment.

Examiner Training Squad (ETS)

Prerequisites

- Be a current or former Alpine Development Team Member in good standing
- Complete all required understudies
- Be a current employee of a snowsports school
- Be a current member of the Eastern Division
- Be current in continuing education credits

Requirements

- After serving a minimum of 2 years on the DEV team, candidates are invited to the Examiner Training Squad exam.
- ETS Exam is a two-day demanding and competitive exam. Successful candidates will show solid skiing performance above the National Level III Standard.
- Successful candidates will be required to attend annual training and understudy/work a minimum of 15 events each season.
- Understudy Level 2 and Level 3 exams (practice scoring and compare their scores with the Examiners)
- Candidates will be considered for elevation to Examiner after two seasons. Maximum term on ETS is four years.

Examiner

Prerequisites

- Be a current Examiner Training Squad Member in good standing
- Complete all required understudies
- Be a current employee of a snowsports school
- Be a current member of the Eastern Division
- Be current in continuing education credits

Requirements

- ETS members who have completed all apprenticeship requirements and have consistently demonstrated the ability to be fair and objective are recommended for elevation to Examiner by the ETS Coach.
- Examiners are required to attend annual training.
- Examiners are required to submit a minimum of 10 days availability each season.



**PSIA/AASI - Eastern Division
Skiing Certification
Exam Assessment**

Candidate: _____ **Tag#:** _____

Evt#: _____ **Date:** _____

Examiner: _____

Location: _____

Agility/Versatility Maintain / Attain

Must have combined score averaging 4 or higher.

Task # _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
Task # _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
Task # _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
Task # _____	1	2	3	4	5	6

Agility/Versatility Activities

1. Lane Changes (L2)
2. Skate Down Fall Line (L2)
3. Straight Run to Hockey Stop (L2)
4. Step Christie (L2)
5. Leapers (L2, L3)
6. Railroad Tracks (L2, L3)
7. Parallel Turns No Poles (L2, L3)
8. Tuck Turns (L3)
9. Hop to Short (L3)
10. 1000 Steps (L3)
11. Simultaneous Parallel Hop Turns (L3)
12. Skate to Shape to Short Turn (L3)
13. Pain in the S (L3)
14. Outside Ski Turn (L3)
15. Pivot Slips (L3)
16. One Ski (L3)

Mountain Skiing Maintain / Attain

Must have combined score averaging 4 or higher;
must score 3 or above on all scored tasks.

Task # _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
Task # _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
Task # _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
Task # _____	1	2	3	4	5	6

Mountain Skiing Activities

17. Free Run
18. Off Piste Variable Condition
19. Bumps
20. Short Radius Turns
21. Medium Radius Turns

The element(s) of the National Standards:

1. Essential Elements were not observed or not present.
2. Essential elements are beginning to appear.
3. Essential elements appear, but not with consistency.
4. Essential elements appear regularly, at a satisfactory level.
5. Essential elements appear frequently, above required level.
6. Essential elements appear continuously, at a superior level.

Skiing at Skill Level Maintain / Attain

Must have combined score averaging 4 or higher.

Task # _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
Task # _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
Task # _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
Task # _____	1	2	3	4	5	6

Skiing at Skill Level Activities

22. Wedge Turns
23. Wedge Christie
24. Open Track Parallel
25. Performance Short Radius
26. Performance Medium Radius

Comments



**PSIA/AASI - Eastern Division
Teaching Certification
Exam Assessment**

Alpine PSIA Exam For: Level II

Candidate: _____

Location: _____

Examiners: _____

Attain/Maintain

Date: _____

Technical Skills

The Instructor is able to evaluate students' movements, identify cause and effect relationships and adapt their own skiing to illustrate content being delivered through intermediate zone lessons.

- Describe skier performance, relative to any single skiing fundamental in all phases of the turn.
- Describe how moving certain body parts effects ski performance.
- Prescribe a specific change in one skiing fundamental to create a change in desired outcome.
- Relate how equipment choice affects skiing outcomes through the intermediate zone.

Score: _____

Teaching Skills

The instructor demonstrates refinement of the Teaching Fundamentals, allowing them to plan and implement engaging learning environments. They foster learning by facilitating greater understanding and performance.

- Collaborate on long-term goals and short-term objectives.
- Promote exploration, experimentation, and play.
- Facilitate the learner's ability to reflect upon experiences and sensations.
- Manage information, activities, terrain selection, and pacing.
- Adapt to the changing needs of the learner.
- Manage emotional and physical risk.

Score: _____

People Skills

The instructor can relate to the student and create an environment where trust can be built between the instructor and student. The instructor has developed some refined communication with active listening and various tactics that include verbal and nonverbal methods.

- Develop relationships based on trust.
- Engage in meaningful two-way communication.
- Identify, understand, and manage your emotions and actions.
- Recognize and influence the behaviors, motivations and emotions of others.

Score: _____

Total must add up to at least 12 with no score being lower than a 4 in order to be successful at this level.

Total Score: _____

The element(s) of the National Standards

1. Essential elements were not observed or not present.
2. Essential elements are beginning to appear.
3. Essential elements appear, but not with consistency.
4. Essential elements appear regularly, at a satisfactory level.
5. Essential elements appear frequently, above required level.
6. Essential elements appear continuously, at a superior level.



**PSIA/AASI - Eastern Division
Teaching Certification
Exam Assessment**

Alpine PSIA Exam For: Level III

Candidate: _____

Location: _____

Examiners: _____

Attain/Maintain

Date: _____

Technical Skills

The Instructor is able to evaluate students' movements, identify cause and effect relationships and adapt their own skiing to illustrate content being delivered through advanced zone lessons.

- Describe skier performance relative to the interrelationship of the fundamentals in all phases of the turn.
- Describe ski and body performance evaluating how movements affect ski performance within any fundamental and its effect on other fundamentals.
- Prescribe specific change in multiple skiing fundamentals to create a change in desired outcome.
- Identify and manage equipment issues in relationship to the student and their objectives in the advanced zone.

Score: _____

Teaching Skills

The instructors can demonstrate mastery of the Teaching Fundamentals, allowing them to plan and fluidly implement highly engaging learning environments where they foster learning by facilitating in-depth understanding and enhanced performance for individuals within the group. The instructor can creatively develop an environment in the advanced zone and creatively use terrain that is customized to individuals within a group.

- Collaborate on long-term goals and short-term objectives.
- Promote exploration, experimentation, and play.
- Facilitate the learner's ability to reflect upon experiences and sensations.
- Manage information, activities, terrain selection, and pacing.
- Adapt to the changing needs of the learner.
- Manage emotional and physical risk.

Score: _____

People Skills

The instructor has refined people skills, relating to others in a productive way showing genuine desire to establish an environment where positive outcomes can be achieved. Instructors at this level can communicate effectively to achieve favorable outcomes and can merge positive internal dialogues with outwardly visible actions where an environment is created for success.

- Develop relationships based on trust.
- Engage in meaningful two-way communication.
- Identify, understand, and manage your emotions and actions.
- Recognize and influence the behaviors, motivations and emotions of others.

Score: _____

Total must add up to at least 12 with no score being lower than a 4 in order to be successful at this level.

Total Score: _____

The element(s) of the National Standards

1. Essential elements were not observed or not present.
2. Essential elements are beginning to appear.
3. Essential elements appear, but not with consistency.
4. Essential elements appear regularly, at a satisfactory level.
5. Essential elements appear frequently, above required level.
6. Essential elements appear continuously, at a superior level.

Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.)

The A.D.A. requires testing entities such as PSIA-E to make “reasonable modifications” in testing procedures for candidates with disabilities who need such modifications in order to take the test. Only certain types of modifications are “reasonable.” Under the A.D.A., PSIA-E is not required to make any change to testing procedures that would “fundamentally alter” the test; that is, to change what is being tested. It is imperative that members with disabilities, who are considering applying for a certification exam, contact the PSIA-E office to discuss their situations.

What is being tested is clearly presented in this guide. The standards are national in scope and their maintenance is necessary in the interests of public safety, effectiveness, value for the consumer, and guest/employer expectations.

As examples, PSIA-E certification tests a candidate’s ability to “Wedge consistently with appropriate skill blending through a series of turns” and “Demonstrate matching of the skis in a variety of places in the turn, depending on speed, terrain or intention. Matching should be accomplished by steering the inside ski.”

These test requirements cannot be modified without changing what is being tested. All candidates will, therefore, be tested on their ability to perform these and other stated standards. PSIA-E recognizes that these specific standards, and others similar to them, require candidates to ski upright, on two skis, and that this is not possible for some skiers with disabilities. While PSIA-E cannot fundamentally alter what is being tested by removing or modifying these standards, it does offer two alternatives to candidates who are unable to meet these standards due to disability.

First, candidates may consider PSIA-E Adaptive certification. While there are still physical standards to meet, and the required level of professional knowledge is high, the Adaptive process and the Adaptive examining staff are geared to accommodate most disabilities.

Second, candidates unable to meet the skiing skill requirements of the exam due to disability, may take the non-skiing skill portions of the PSIA-E certification exams along with other candidates, and be tested on their teaching ability and professional knowledge. If successful in these two categories, they will receive a Certificate of Successful Completion.

The Teaching and Professional Knowledge portions of PSIA-E certification exams test candidates on their ability to observe students skiing and advise them accordingly. PSIA-E recognizes that such observation may not be possible for visually impaired candidates. PSIA-E is not required to change what is being tested by removing or modifying this requirement.

Candidates who are deaf, or otherwise hearing or speaking impaired, such that they are not able to hear and/or speak independently to students, are not necessarily precluded from taking an exam, and may meet the communication requirements through the use of an interpreter. Of course, all candidates, including those with hearing or speaking disabilities will be held to the same standard of substantive knowledge, and their ability to “get the point across” with appropriate accuracy and clarity. See the “PSIA-E Adaptive Education Workbook and Exam Guide” for further information about Adaptive Certification standards and format.

PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTORS OF AMERICA EASTERN DIVISION

5 Columbia Circle, Albany, NY 12203

(518) 452-6095

www.psia-e.org
