

PSIA-AASI
Eastern Region



Alpine
Assessment Guide

Updated: January 2023

PSIA-E ALPINE ASSESSMENT GUIDE

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Published by: Professional Ski Instructors of America – Eastern Region
5 Columbia Circle, Albany, NY 12203
Printed in the United States of America
Revised – January 2023

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 assessment.

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](#) (2022)
PSIA-AASI Children's Instruction Manual (2008)
PSIA-AASI Teaching Children Snowsports (2021)
PSIA-AASI Core Concepts for Snowsports Instructors Manual
32 Degrees – The Journal of Professional Snowsports Instruction – PSIA
PSIA-AASI – E-Learning <https://lms.thesnowpros.org/>

Available through PSIA Eastern Region:

PSIA-E Alpine Assessment Guide (2023)
PSIA-E Snow Pro (Newsletter)

Additional Reading

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

Available through PSIA National Office:

PSIA-AASI Adaptive Alpine Technical Manual (2017)
PSIA-AASI Freestyle Technical Manual (2016)
PSIA-AASI Children's Alpine Teaching Handbook (2010)
PSIA-AASI Children's Instruction Manual (2008)
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
Adaptive Snowsports Instruction

Other Suggested Resources:

[Legacy: Austria's Influence on American Skiing](#) – Documentary Film Series; www.culturefilms.com
“Alpine Assessment Tasks”, video produced by David Capron, December 2014;
dcapron1@myfairpoint.net

PSIA-E Alpine Standards DVD (2010)

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 paying dues to the association on an annual basis and by obtaining a total of 6 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) every season or 12 CEUs every other season.

INTRODUCTION

This manual contains information about the Alpine Certification Program of the Professional Ski Instructors of America - Eastern Region. It outlines Alpine assessment 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 Regions, 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 assessment process.

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.

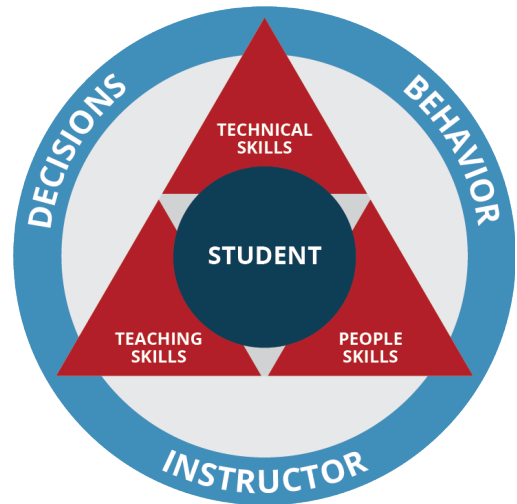
PSIA offers certification events as a member benefit. Certification is encouraged but not required. Most of the organization's events are primarily educational in content. It is quite acceptable for members to attend only the required educational events. If you are interested in certification, be assured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

WHAT ARE THE NATIONAL STANDARDS?

American ski instruction demands versatility. PSIA-AASI members teach guests in a wide variety of skiing environments – from groomed trails to off-piste terrain and from hard snow to powder to manmade terrain park features. The types of lessons offered can be similarly diverse, including recreational frontside skiing, racing, big-mountain skiing, and freestyle, to name a few. The objective of these PSIA Alpine Certification Standards is to identify the fundamentals of great skiing, effective teaching, and connecting with students – and to define the assessment criteria within PSIA-AASI’s certification process.

To this end, the Learning Connection Model provides the framework for a balance of crucial people skills, teaching skills, and technical skills; highlighting fundamentals that apply to a variety of technical and tactical decisions based on student ability, motivation, personality, and more.

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. The PSIA National Standards should be reviewed and referenced in its entirety as you progress through the certification levels.



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.

As outlined in PSIA’s Alpine Technical Manual, the American Teaching System™ specifies three skier zones: Beginner/Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced. The PSIA Alpine Certification Standards align the skier zones with assessment parameters for three levels of instructor certification.

- Beginner/Novice-Zone Guests – PSIA-Certified Level I Instructor
- Beginner- to Intermediate-Zone Guests – PSIA-Certified Level II Instructor
- Beginner- to Advanced-Zone Guests – PSIA-Certified Level III Instructor

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 assessments 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.

ASSESSMENT 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 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 ASSESSMENT?

Prior to attending a Level I, II, or III assessment 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 assessment through conscientious training that focuses on the required National Standards for certification.
- 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 assessment. (Refer to the PSIA-AASI [Eastern Event Participant Safety Policy](#) on the eastern website.)
- 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 assessment 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 assessment 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 Assessment. The assessment administrator will determine if the local trail designations adequately reflect the stated national standard concerning terrain. If necessary, trails or sections of trails will be selected to keep assessments consistent across the Region 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:

- Successfully complete the [Level I e-Learning Course](#).
- Be at least 14 years of age by the first day of the assessment.
- Should have training and actual on-hill experience teaching people in the beginner and novice zones.
- Successfully complete the PSIA-E Certified Level I assessment criteria as stated in the National Level I Standards.

For a complete description of the **Assessment Criteria for Level I**, all candidates must go to the [PSIA National Standards](#) and review specific criteria for each category.

LEVEL I ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Level I Assessment is a two-day skiing and teaching evaluation. In addition to candidates being able to display technical understanding of skiing fundamentals, candidates should be prepared to lead the group through some coaching scenarios that would typically be seen with a student in the beginner and novice zone terrain.

This is a **2-day event** and participants **must** attend **both full days** for Level I Certification.

Candidates will be in a group of typically 8 people with one Examiner for the entire two days.

Check your email for the location of your meeting place. This is typically at or near the base area. Be ready to go on snow and ski at 8:50 AM. Please be punctual.

- 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 assessment scoring.
- Participants can expect to have opportunities to share information with the entire group and the Examiner about teaching and skiing experiences as well as their professional knowledge.

LEVEL I ASSESSMENT - WHAT TO EXPECT

Throughout this process Educational Staff will use a variety of assessment activities to evaluate instructor competency of the PSIA Alpine National Standards. These Standards describe how the fundamentals of people skills, teaching skills, and technical skills are assessed at the Level I standard.

Scoring Criteria for Level I Skiing and Teaching

Scoring and evaluation is done by one Examiner. The Examiner will give a score between 1 (lowest) and 6 (highest) for the Assessment Criteria listed in the National Standards. Scoring will be recorded on the National Unified Assessment Form. To be successful, candidates must show that essential elements appear regularly, at a satisfactory level (4) in all Assessment Criteria areas.

<u>The element(s) of the National Standards</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">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.

Professionalism and Self-Management are evaluated at all times and in all assessment categories to ensure that the foundation of professionalism is promoted and verified.

Overview of Professionalism and Self-Management at Level I Proficiency

Level I instructors conduct themselves in a professional manner by being aware of how their decisions and behaviors affect the overall learning environment. Throughout the assessment process, they are respectful of the people around them and participate positively in the group.

Assessment Criteria

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Address group and individual safety and physiological needs.
- Exhibit positive behavior in response to feedback.

THE LEVEL I ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Technical Skills

Overview of Technical Skills at Level I Proficiency

This area validates Skiing Performance, Technical Understanding and Movement Analysis.

Level I instructors ski competently in terrain suitable for skiers in the beginner/novice and intermediate zones. They adjust and adapt their skiing in beginner and easier groomed intermediate terrain in order to demonstrate technique and tactics to their students. Level I instructors use PSIA alpine resources to develop an understanding of the cause-and-effect relationships between body movements and ski performance. They explain interactions between body movements and ski performance in the beginner/novice zone to help students achieve a more effective performance.

Technical (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.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR SKIING PERFORMANCE

Apply tactics and ski performance to:

- Integrate two or more of the Technical Fundamentals through all turn phases to achieve prescribed ski performance
- Use individual Technical Fundamentals as prescribed
- Demonstrate versatility by varying turn shape, turn size, and line through intermediate zone terrain.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR TECHNICAL UNDERSTANDING

Relate information from current PSIA-AASI resources to:

- Describe the application of one or more Technical Fundamentals and respective biomechanics and physics within the turn phases of a specific outcome.
- Compare the application of one or more Technical Fundamental(s) to personal performance.
- Describe the impacts of tactical decisions, equipment choices, physical development, terrain, and snow variation, on a skiing outcome

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR MOVEMENT ANALYSIS

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Observe and describe the application of one or more Technical Fundamental in all turn phases
- Evaluate and describe the cause-and-effect relationships of one or more Technical Fundamental relative to the desired outcome
- Prescribe a specific change, related to one Technical Fundamental, to achieve the desired outcome.

People Skills

Overview of People Skills at Level I Proficiency

Level I instructors exhibit a basic understanding of the people-skill fundamentals, using them to develop trust within the learning environment. They show awareness of the likely needs and emotions of people new to Snowsports and communicate clearly to the group, showing respect, patience, and professionalism while providing objective feedback. Level I instructors demonstrate self-awareness by reflecting on their own emotional tendencies and adapting to feedback from others.

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.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Communication:

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Use verbal and non-verbal communication in a professional manner.
- Ask questions to learn about others.
- Deliver feedback that acknowledges the emotions of the group

Relationship with Others

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Initiate group interaction to build group dynamics.
- Identify the motivations and emotions of students.

Teaching Skills

Overview of Teaching Skills at Level I Proficiency

Level I instructors apply the teaching-skill fundamentals, allowing them to plan and organize an engaging learning experience. They present a basic progression in the beginner/novice zone, using study, training, and teaching experiences. A Level I instructor makes minor adjustments to learning experiences based on students' needs, desires, and abilities. They facilitate learning by communicating changes in student performance relative to outcomes.

Fundamentals

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

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Assess and Plan

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Assess students to identify student motivations, performance, and understanding.
- Collaborate with students to select a basic progression with clear direction and focus.
- Plan lessons that involve productive use of movement, practice time, and terrain.

Implement

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Organize the learning environment to align with the initial assessment of the group.
- Give the group relevant information (basic descriptions, demonstrations, and feedback) that encourages learning.
- Manage physical and emotional risk to maintain engagement in the learning environment.

Reflect/Review

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Pace a clear progression to allow students reflection time as they explore, experiment, and/or play toward desired outcomes.
- Communicate changes in performance.
- Relate changes in performance to lesson outcomes.

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES FOR LEVEL I SKIING ASSESSMENT

The following activities represent key areas of skill development that are typically taught and coached in the Novice Zone. At a minimum, candidates should be prepared to perform these activities 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 activities.

Flat Terrain Movements

These are activities that are typically used with a first-time student and involve basic technical fundamentals that develop appropriate body movements for ski/snow interaction.

- Side Stepping
- Walking around on flat terrain
- Herring bone up a slight incline
- Turning around while stopped using methods such as the “Bull Fighter Turn.”

Novice Zone Terrain Skiing Activities

These are activities on a gentle pitch or Novice Terrain that are appropriate for a person at this skill level.

- Straight run to a natural stop
- Stepping out of a straight run (J-Turn) with small steps up hill.
- Gliding Wedge to a stop
- Wedge Turn
- Wedge Christy
- Basic Parallel

Highlighted Activities

These activities are used to show your ability to isolate various skiing fundamentals that are used in developing efficient ski/snow interactions

- Traverse across the hill.
- Hopping, bouncing, stepping and shuffling while turning
- Various basic edging and un-edging activities such as a crab-walk and side slipping

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES FOR LEVEL I PEOPLE, TEACHING AND TECHNICAL SKILL ASSESSMENT

The following activities represent how an assessment of a candidate's People, Teaching and Technical Understanding Skills would take place in an assessment format. 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. Candidates should be observing their peers, describing the observed ski and body performance and prescribe change where appropriate.

- 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.
- Identify how your lesson activities relate to the development of the Alpine Technical Fundamentals (in a very **basic** sense).
- Demonstrate an awareness of good safety practices relative to all lesson activities

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 assessment and are considered qualified to provide valuable instruction to students in the intermediate zone. A candidate for Level II is required to meet the following criterion:

- Be an active Certified Level I member of PSIA
- Should have training and actual on-hill experience teaching people in the intermediate zone.
- Successfully complete the PSIA Certified Level II assessment criteria as stated in the National Level II Standards.

For a complete description of the National Standards, candidates must go to the PSIA website and review the [PSIA National Standards](#).

LEVEL II ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Level II Certification has the following components:

- A skiing or teaching clinic is recommended to help candidate prepare for assessment but is NOT required.
- Before taking the skiing or teaching parts of the assessment, the candidate must successfully complete the online Professional Knowledge Exam with a minimum of 83%.
- Attain Children's Specialist 1 designation prior to the Teaching Assessment.
- Successfully attain all [Skiing Assessment Criteria](#).
- Successfully attain the [Teaching Assessment Criteria](#).

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

Scoring for Level II Skiing and Teaching Criteria

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 the Assessment Criteria listed in the National Standards. Scoring will be recorded on the National Unified Assessment Form. To be successful, candidates must show that essential elements appear regularly, at a satisfactory level (4) in all Assessment Criteria areas.

<u>The element(s) of the National Standards</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">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 Online Professional Knowledge Exam

To pass the test you must score 83% on each subcategory (5 out of 6 questions correct). There are a total of 54 questions on the test.

Evaluation is in the following categories:

Teaching Skills (18 questions total = 6 in each subcategory)

- Models
- Learning Theory
- Teaching

Technical Skills (18 questions total = 6 in each subcategory)

- Physics and Biomechanics
- Industry, Equipment, and Technology
- Skills and Fundamentals

People Skills (18 questions total = 6 in each subcategory)

- Communication
- Relationships with Others
- Professionalism and Self-Management

Suggested Educational Events for Preparation of Level II Certification

For the Skiing Assessment

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 the skiing assessment activities that may be present at a Level II certification event.

Suggested events include:

Dynamic Blues	Alpine Level II Skiing College
Alpine Intro to Moguls	Alpine Level II Assessment Prep - Skiing
Alpine Intermediate Moguls	Snow Pro Jam (Skiing Assessment Prep)

For the Teaching Assessment

These courses are designed to help the candidate become better at the teaching part of the assessment 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.
- 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:

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

LEVEL II SKIING ASSESSMENT - WHAT TO EXPECT

Groups will meet at a specified location at 8:45 A.M. Please be punctual. This is a one-day event.

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 activities, and free runs with a focus or focuses. The choice of activities used will help determine if the candidate meets the Assessment Criteria established in the National Standards.

Professionalism and Self-Management

Overview of Professionalism and Self-Management at Level II Proficiency

Level II instructors actively contribute to a professional environment by being aware of how their decisions and behaviors affect individuals and the group as a whole. Throughout the assessment process, they manage how their responses to others benefit group interaction

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Address group and individual needs for belonging.
- Manage behavioral responses.

LEVEL II CRITERIA FOR SKIING ASSESSMENT

Technical Skills

Overview of Technical Skills at Level II Proficiency

Level II instructors ski competently in terrain suitable for skiers in the beginner/novice and intermediate zones, and some low-end advanced terrain. They competently adjust and adapt their skiing in beginner, intermediate and some advanced-zone terrain to demonstrate to their students.

THE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR THE LEVEL II SKIING PERFORMANCE

Adapts tactics and ski performance to:

- Integrate three or more Technical Fundamentals through all turn phases to achieve prescribed ski performance.
- Manage each of the Technical Fundamentals as prescribed.
- Manage turn shape, turn size, and line as needed in beginner through easiest advanced zones.

For a complete description of the National Standards, candidates must go to the PSIA website and review the [PSIA National Standards](#).

DESCRIPTION OF SKIING ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES (TASKS)

Candidates will be asked to perform a variety of Assessment Activities on intermediate to easier advanced terrain in order to evaluate the Technical (skiing) Fundamentals. The activities that are selected will serve as a lens and will allow the Examiners to determine if the Assessment Criteria have been met. 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 activities and may be asked to perform an activity that is not on this list. Guided practice of these activities is likely to enhance the broad and refined skill base necessary to ski at the Level II National Standard.

Technical (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 explain the prescribed skiing activity and the typical terrain that it is performed on as well as the speed, width and length of the area it may be assessed on.

The ***Application of Fundamentals*** describes what the skis and body should be doing when the Technical Fundamentals are applied appropriately for the prescribed activity.

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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- Skis stay in a wedge through all turn phases.
- The edge of the downhill ski is released before turn entry, while skis stay in a wedge.
- 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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- 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 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 equidistant apart throughout the entire turn to help maintain COM over base of support

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

Application of Fundamentals:

- Skis remain parallel and the legs remain a consistent 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.
- Pressure is 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 the apex of the new turn which helps to assist in the releasing of the skis' edges.

Short Radius Turns: These are speed-controlling, short turns that are performed within a corridor of about one groomer width on intermediate or easier advanced terrain.

Application of Fundamentals:

- Skis are parallel with similar edge angles and initiating with movements that originate in the feet and ankles.
- Skis are guided through an arc with leg rotation separate from the upper body to maintain consistent shape and speed that does not increase or decrease as the terrain pitch changes.
- Skis edges are engaged at or slightly above the fall line.
- Pressure is directed toward the new outside ski in the transition between turns.

Medium Radius Turns: Parallel Turns that are on groomed intermediate terrain about 2 ½ groomer widths wide. Speed should be moderate to fast.

Application of Fundamentals

- Progressive tipping movements with high edge angles in the fall-line and little to no skidding.
- Turn shape is consistent and is done primarily from skis being tipped and bent.
- Path of the tail follows the tip of the skis which leave two well defined arcs in the snow.
- Directing pressure towards the outside ski happens early in the turn phase.
- Tipping of the skis originates from the legs with some inclination at the start of the turn and decreases towards the end of the turn.

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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- 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 the center of mass 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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- Short turns have consistent shape and radius.
- Lane changes are performed with medium radius turns that are distinct and of obvious difference in radius to the short turns.
- Lane changes (medium radius turns) 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 DIRT (Duration, Intensity, Rate, Timing) of leg rotation in the short turns and medium turns should be adjusted appropriately and as needed to transition from different turn shapes in the lane changes.

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. [Skating in Fall Line Video](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- Skier should be able to roll ski to inside edge to engage ski from lower body movements.
- Skier moves foot to foot 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 to help maintain COM over BOS
- 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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- 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.

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

Application of Fundamentals:

- Speed is controlled and maintained by adjusting turn shape and tactical choices
- 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.

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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- 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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- Skier is able to stem the ski with movements of the lower body and direct pressure to the outside ski. 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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- 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, separate from the upper body, is used to rotate skis to transition from straight run to side slip from the center of the feet.
- Feet should remain in a corridor roughly determined by the length of their skis.
- Edge set should be crisp, balanced, and timed with a pole touch and have little drifting back or forward both before and after the stop.
- The pole touch should occur as they flex to absorb the pressure from stopping. The pole touch should not be reached for with the arms.

THE LEVEL II TEACHING ASSESSMENT - WHAT TO EXPECT

Candidates meet at a specified location at 8:45 A.M. Please be punctual. This is a one-day event.

Candidates will be divided into small groups of approximately Five and will meet evaluators at 8:45 AM. The Level II Teaching Assessment is conducted in a one-day evaluation. Some of the highlights include:

- Groups are with two Examiners for the entire day.
- Examiners write one scorecard and agree on the result.
- Scoring reflects the Assessment Criteria of the National Standards – Technical, Teaching and People Skills.
- During the day the candidate can expect to have a teaching/coaching session that will run 30 minutes.
- In addition to their own teaching session(s), candidates will be expected to observe, give comments, and actively participate in teaching/coaching discussions as requested by the Examiners.

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. 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 assessment 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 assessment 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.
- Relate how equipment choice affects skiing outcomes.
- Answer follow-up questions from one or both Examiners.

LEVEL II TEACHING ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

People Skills

Overview of People Skills at Level II Proficiency

Level II instructors exhibit a more refined understanding of the people-skills fundamentals, using them to develop trust with all individuals. They demonstrate awareness of the goals, motivations, and emotional needs of each student in the group and use active listening and verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to build connections. Level II instructors demonstrate awareness of their own tendencies and develop strategies to address them.

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.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA CATEGORIES:

Communication:

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Adapt verbal and non-verbal communication based on observations of individuals and the group.
- Use varied, active-listening tactics to learn about others.
- Deliver feedback that adjusts for the emotions of subsets within the group.

Relationship with Others

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Foster interpersonal relationships to support positive group dynamics.
- Adapt to the motivations and emotions of individuals and subsets of the group.

Teaching Skills

Overview of Teaching Skills at Level II Proficiency

Level II instructors demonstrate proficiency in the teaching-skill fundamentals, relying on experience gained while teaching and training. They facilitate learning by planning and adapting the lesson experience based on student needs, desires, and abilities in the intermediate zone. Level II instructors help students recognize and assess their changes in performance.

Fundamentals

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

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA CATEGORIES:

Assess and Plan

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Periodically reassess student motivations, current performance, and understanding.
- Collaborate with students to establish and adapt a lesson plan with clear direction and focus.
- Plan playful and/or exploratory lessons with productive use of movement, practice time, and terrain.

Implement

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Adapt the learning environment to align with the needs of the group.
- Provide clear and relevant information (descriptions, demonstrations, and feedback) that encourages learning.
- Manage physical and emotional risk to promote engagement in the learning environment.

Reflect/Review

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Pace learning activities to allow students reflection time as they explore, experiment, and/or play toward desired outcomes.
- Help students recognize and understand change in performance relative to outcomes.
- Help students apply gained skills to skiing situations.

Technical Skills (Technical Understanding and Movement Analysis)

Overview of Technical Skills at Level II Proficiency

Level II instructors relate the Alpine Skiing Fundamentals (also known as alpine fundamentals) to ski performance through observation, evaluation, and prescription. They identify basic interrelationships of the alpine fundamentals up to some advanced-zone terrain to help students achieve desired performance objectives.

Technical Alpine Skiing Fundamentals

- Convey and apply accurate technical information.
- Observe, evaluate, and prescribe (through movement analysis).

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA CATEGORIES

Technical Understanding

Apply information from multiple PSIA-AASI resources to:

- Describe the application of two or more Technical Fundamentals and respective biomechanics and physics within the turn phases of a specific outcome.
- Compare the application of two or more Technical Fundamentals to personal performance.
- Describe the impacts of tactical decisions, equipment choices, physical development, terrain, and snow variation, on a skiing outcome.

Movement Analysis

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Observe and describe the application of two or more Technical Fundamentals in all turn phases.
- Evaluate and describe the cause-and-effect relationships of two or more Technical Fundamentals relative to the desired outcome.
- Prescribe a specific change, related to one or more Technical Fundamentals, to achieve the desired outcome.

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 assessment. The Level III candidate is required to meet the following criteria:

- Be a Certified Level II member of PSIA-AASI.
- Should have training and actual on-hill experience teaching people primarily in the advanced zone.

LEVEL III ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Level III Certification has the following components:

1. Before taking the skiing or teaching parts of the assessment, the candidate must successfully complete the online Professional Knowledge Exam with a minimum of 83%.
2. Candidates must attend one, qualified prerequisite event.
3. Successfully attain all Skiing Assessment Criteria.
4. Successfully attain the Teaching Assessment Criteria.

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

Scoring for Level III Skiing and Teaching Assessment Criteria

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 the Assessment Criteria listed in the National Standards. Scoring will be recorded on the National Unified Assessment Form. To be successful, candidates must show that essential elements appear regularly, at a satisfactory level (4) in all Assessment Criteria areas.

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 Online Professional Knowledge Exam

To pass the test you must score 83% on each subcategory (5 out of 6 questions correct). There are a total of 54 questions on the test.

Evaluation is in the following categories:

Teaching Skills (18 questions total = 6 in each subcategory)

- Models
- Learning Theory
- Teaching

Technical Skills (18 questions total = 6 in each subcategory)

- Physics and Biomechanics
- Industry, Equipment, and Technology
- Skills and Fundamentals

People Skills (18 questions total = 6 in each subcategory)

- Communication
- Relationships with Others
- Professionalism and Self-Management

Level III Skiing or Teaching Prerequisites

Level III Assessment candidates are required to take one assessment prerequisite course with either a skiing or teaching focus. Candidates are not required to take a prerequisite course for each of the skiing and teaching assessments. 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 Assessment – 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 the skiing assessment skiing assessment activities that may be present at a Level III certification event.

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

- Level 3 Prep @ Snow Pro Jam
- Level 3 Assessment Prep – Skiing
- Intermediate Moguls
- Advanced Moguls
- Dynamic Diamonds
- Alpine Race Clinic
- Any Freestyle Specialist

Level III Assessment – Acceptable Teaching Prerequisites Events:

These courses are designed to help the candidate become better at the teaching part of the assessment 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.
- 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 Assessment prerequisite.

- Level 3 Prep @ Snow Pro Jam
- Level 3 Assessment Prep – Teaching
- Coaching High-End Skiing
- Children's Specialist 2
- Any Freestyle Specialist
- Stance and Alignment (On-Snow)
- Movement Analysis 201

THE LEVEL III SKIING ASSESSMENT - WHAT TO EXPECT

Groups will meet at a specified location at 8:45 AM. This is a one-day event. Please be punctual.

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.

Professionalism and Self-Management

Overview of Professionalism and Self-Management at Level III Proficiency

Level III instructors actively promote a professional environment by being aware of and adapting how their decisions and behaviors affect individuals and the group as a whole. Throughout the assessment process, they demonstrate self-awareness by modifying their behaviors to benefit group dynamics.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Address group and individual needs for esteem.
- Adapt behaviors for positive group and individual interactions.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR LEVEL III SKIING

Technical Skills

Overview of Technical Skills at Level III Proficiency

Level III instructors apply all the Alpine Technical (skiing) Fundamentals, with accuracy, to achieve the desired outcome through all terrain suitable for advanced-zone skiers. They adapt ski performance and the application of the fundamentals to illustrate the technical content being delivered in beginner/novice-, intermediate-, and advanced-zone lessons.

THE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR THE LEVEL III SKIING PERFORMANCE

Continuously adjusts tactics and ski performance to:

- Integrate the Technical Fundamentals through all turn phases to achieve prescribed ski performance.
- Adapt and blend each of the Technical Fundamentals as prescribed.
- Vary turn shape, turn size, and line as needed or prescribed in all skier zones.

For a complete description of the National Standards, candidates must go to the PSIA website and review the [PSIA National Standards](#).

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.

Technical (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 explain the prescribed skiing activity and the typical terrain that it is performed on as well as the speed, width, and length of the area it may be assessed on.

The ***Application of Fundamentals*** describes what the skis and body should be doing when the Technical Fundamentals are applied appropriately for the prescribed activity.

LEVEL III ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

Short Radius Turns: These are speed-controlling, short turns that are performed in a corridor about ½ a groomer width on advanced terrain.

Application of Fundamentals

- Skis are parallel with similar edge angles, releasing and engaging simultaneously.
- Skis are guided through an arc with leg rotation to maintain consistent shape at a high speed.
- Upper body is stable and not involved in directing the skis.
- Rhythmical round turns are performed for the entire run where speed is consistent and maintained OR able to be changed as directed.
- Skis edges are engaged at or slightly above the fall line. Progressive flexion of the joints helps to regulate the magnitude of pressure created through ski/snow interaction

Medium Radius Turns: Linked high performance turns that are on groomed intermediate terrain about 3 groomer widths wide. Predominantly carved turns where the speed should be moderate to high.

Application of Fundamentals

- Progressive tipping movements with high edge angles in the fall-line and little to no skidding.
- Turn shape is consistent and is done primarily from skis being tipped and bent.
- Path of the tail follows the tip of the skis which leave two well defined arcs in the snow.
- Directing pressure towards the outside ski happens early in the turn phase.
- Tipping of the skis originates from the legs with some inclination at the start of the turn and decreases towards the end of the turn.

Performance Short Radius Turns: - 1.5 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 allow the skier to reach the edges of the corridor. [Performance Short Turns Video](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- Ski performance is as carved as possible in shaping phase, given terrain, conditions, and ski design.
- These are not fall line oriented, speed controlling short radius 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 skis are steered back under the body through edge change.

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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- The skier changes and releases 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, stem, 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 performance short turns.

Application of Fundamentals:

- The skier shows propulsive skating, blending to shaping, and then to performance 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.
- Skier controls the DIRT of pressure to the outside ski to move from skating to shaping.

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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- Short radius turns should have consistent shape and radius.
- Lane change is 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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- 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 continuous, 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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- Both skis leave, and land on, the snow at the same time using primarily leg extension rather than retraction.
- The pivot point is under the feet with the legs turning under a stable upper body with equal turning of the tips and tails vs. the tails moving farther or quicker.
- With the COM over the BOS, the skis are generally level with the snow surface – not tip or tail high.
- 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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- Tipping movements start in the boots with small movements that 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.

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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- 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 center of mass 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 legs, 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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- 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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- 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 center of mass in relationship to the base of support to maximize ski performance through the shaping phase.
- Lateral movements should be appropriate 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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- 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.

Application of Fundamentals:

- 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.

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](#)

Application of Fundamentals:

- All turns along the path are 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, through, 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.

LEVEL III TEACHING ASSESSMENT - WHAT TO EXPECT

GROUPS WILL MEET AT A SPECIFIED LOCATION AT 8:45 A.M. PLEASE BE PUNCTUAL. THIS IS A ONE-DAY EVENT.

CANDIDATES WILL BE DIVIDED INTO SMALL GROUPS OF APPROXIMATELY FIVE AND WILL MEET EVALUATORS AT 8:45 AM.

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

- Groups will be with two Examiners 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/coaching 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.

- 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 individuals in the 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 individual'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 assessment 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.
- Evaluate equipment-based cause and effect relationships relative to the student and their objectives in all skier ability zones.
- Identify how they capitalized on strengths and managed weaknesses in the group.

LEVEL III TEACHING ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

People Skills

Overview of People Skills at Level III Proficiency

Level III instructors exhibit a refined understanding of the people-skill fundamentals, using them to develop trust with and between all students through the entire lesson. They actively support the emotional needs of individuals while managing and influencing group dynamics to maintain and promote trust. Instructors at this level anticipate challenges and adapt their own style of interaction to achieve favorable outcomes and tailor experiences to individuals. Level III instructors demonstrate growth in self-awareness and can identify their own emotional intelligence and behavioral management.

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.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA CATEGORIES:

Communication:

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Customize verbal and non-verbal communication to match or influence individuals.
- Use varied, active-listening tactics to personalize the experience.
- Deliver feedback that supports the emotions of the individuals in the group.

Relationship with Others

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Manage the group dynamic to positively influence individual experiences.
- Support and manage the motivations and emotions of all.

Teaching Skills

Overview of Teaching Skills at Level III Proficiency

Level III instructors demonstrate mastery of the teaching fundamentals, based on experience gained while teaching and training. They plan, implement, and customize an engaging learning experience in the advanced zone. Level III instructors make proactive adjustments to learning experiences based on group and individual student needs, desires, and abilities. They foster learning by helping students interpret their changes in performance, develop new understanding, and apply what they've learned.

Fundamentals

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

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA CATEGORIES:

Assess and Plan

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Continually assess student motivations, performance, and understanding.
- Collaborate with students to establish and adapt a lesson plan with a common theme, a clear direction, and individualized focus throughout the lesson.
- Plan creative, playful, and exploratory learning experiences in which movement, practice time, and terrain are optimized for individuals

Implement

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Tailor the learning environment to align with the needs of individuals.
- Provide clear and relevant information (descriptions, demonstrations, and feedback) that encourages individualized learning.
- Proactively manage physical and emotional risk to optimize engagement in the learning environment for individuals.

Reflect/Review

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Customize and pace learning activities to allow students reflection time as they explore, experiment, and play toward desired outcomes.
- Encourage the students to communicate change in performance and/or understanding.
- Collaborate with students to apply gained skills to skiing situations.

Technical Skills (Technical Understanding and Movement Analysis)

Overview of Technical Skills at Level III Proficiency

Level III instructors have a working knowledge of current and historic PSIA resources and information. Level III instructors use the alpine fundamentals through observation, evaluation, and prescription to enhance the desired ski performance. They evaluate complex relationships of body and ski performance.

Professional-Knowledge Fundamentals

- Convey and apply accurate technical information.
- Observe, evaluate, and prescribe (through movement analysis).

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA CATEGORIES

Technical Understanding

Synthesize information from multiple PSIA-AASI and Snowsports industry resources to:

- Describe the application of the Technical Fundamentals and respective biomechanics and physics within the turn phases of a specific outcome.
- Compare the application of the Technical Fundamentals to personal performance.
- Describe the impacts of tactical decisions, equipment choices, physical development, terrain, and snow variation, on skiing outcomes.

Movement Analysis

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

- Observe and describe the application of multiple Technical Fundamentals in all turn phases and from turn to turn.
- Evaluate and describe the cause-and-effect relationships between multiple Technical Fundamentals relative to the desired outcome.
- Prescribe a specific change, related to multiple Technical Fundamentals, to achieve the desired outcome.

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 assessment, 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 assessment due to disability, may take the non-skiing skill portions of the PSIA-E certification assessments 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 assessments 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 assessment, 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 Assessment Guide” for further information about Adaptive Certification standards and format.

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