

**The Professional Ski Instructors of America  
Eastern Division**



**Alpine  
Exam Guide**

**Revised – October 2011**

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# PSIA-E Alpine Exam Guide

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# Professional Development

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## 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:

2010 PSIA National Alpine Certification Standards  
2010 PSIA/AASI National Children's Specialist Standards  
PSIA/AASI Core Concepts for Snowsports Instructors Manual  
PSIA Alpine Technical Manual: Skiing and Teaching Skills 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (2002)  
PSIA Alpine Visual Cues to Effective and Ineffective Skiing  
PSIA Alpine Cues to Effective and Ineffective Teaching  
PSIA/AASI Park and Pipe Instructors Guide (2005)  
PSIA/AASI Children's Instruction Manual (2008)  
PSIA-E Exam Guide (2011) – Available through Albany Office only  
32 Degrees – The Journal of Professional Snowsports Instruction – PSIA

### Available through PSIA Eastern Division:

PSIA-E Alpine Standards DVD (2010)  
PSIA-E Exam Guide (2011)  
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 Children's Ski and Snowboard Movement Guide (2005)  
PSIA/AASI Children's Instruction Handbook (2000)  
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](http://www.culturefilms.com)

"Alpine Exam Tasks", video produced by David Capron, December 2010;  
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.

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## Introduction

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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 to the ski industry and the skiing public. It is an assurance that a specific level of knowledge and competency are present in the areas as 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.

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## Certification Path

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The traditional pathway to certification for most instructors is as follows:

- **Becoming a new member:** Must be at least 16 years of age, have a minimum of 25 combined hours of teaching and training (as attested to by the Snowsports School Director), be employed at an area snowsports school, complete membership application and pay Registered dues to the association.
- **Level I Certification Exam:** May take in the first season of membership upon completing 50 hours of combined training and teaching as attested to by the Snowsports School Director.
- **Level II Exam Prerequisite:** May be taken in the first season or greater of membership. Please see the Level II Exam Prerequisite explanation elsewhere in this guide for complete information on courses that qualify as exam prerequisites.

- **Level II Exam, Part 1 Skiing:** May be taken in the second season or greater of membership. All Level II Exam components must be taken in the same Division.
- **Level II, Part 2 Teaching:** May be taken in the third season or greater of membership. All Level II Exam components must be taken in the same Division.
- **Level III Exam, Part 1 Skiing:** May be taken in the fourth season or greater of membership. All Level III Exam components must be taken in the same Division.
- **Level III, Part 2 Teaching:** May be taken in the fourth season or greater of membership. All Level III Exam components must be taken in the same Division.

Note: Years of membership must be continuous to qualify for exams.

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## Early Admissions Portfolio

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The Early Admissions program is for individuals who are or have been a national team athlete, high level coach, NCAA athlete or coach, certified pro from a foreign country, or an exceptionally strong skier and teacher with many years of experience who, for whatever reason, never joined PSIA. While there are no set parameters as to who is eligible for application, all candidates are required to submit a portfolio documenting his/her skiing, racing, teaching, and coaching experience. Each candidate is also asked to submit two letters of recommendation. A candidate is invited to pass through all three levels of certification in one season, or to try as many as he or she would like the first year and to complete the program in the second. We open this program to all exceptionally qualified individuals who would like to apply. It is for coaches and competitors and also for area managers, advanced children's educators, heli guides and whomever else has a strong teaching and skiing background.

It is recommended that the candidate obtain their Level I Certification prior to applying for the Early Admissions Program. In order to qualify for the Early Admissions Program, the candidate must submit the following to the PSIA-Eastern office with an application:

- **A \$50 non-refundable fee:** Required with the application to cover the added administrative expenses of tracking Early Admissions individuals through the season and getting them into exams in a timely fashion.
- **One letter of recommendation** from the applicant's Snowsports School Director.
- **One additional letter of recommendation** documenting the applicant's exceptional skiing skill, teaching and coaching ability, and training.
- **One cover letter** detailing why the applicant believes he or she qualifies for the Early Admissions program.
- **One skiing resume**
- **One completed application** for the candidate's first Early Admissions event.

All of the items listed above must accompany the candidate's first application. The application and complete portfolio must be received prior to the first event deadline. Any Early Admissions application received without a completed portfolio will not be accepted. Upon receipt of the candidate's portfolio and application, candidates will be notified within one week regarding the status of their application.

- A member can try to go as far as he/she can (or wants to) in one year. Individuals will have to attend every event required of any other certification candidate, including all prerequisites.
- If at any point along the way a candidate is unsuccessful at an exam, the Early Admission program ends for that season at the last certification level they successfully attained. If the candidate successfully attained Part 1 of an exam, (s)he also retains that part for that season and the following two (the same policy as for all other exam candidates).
- An Early Admission candidate who had been unsuccessful at an exam the previous season may reapply for the program the following year if (s)he did not get as far as desired the first season. After two unsuccessful exam attempts (at any level), the applicant must enter the traditional certification pathway and they are no longer eligible for the Early Admissions Program.

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## What Are the National Standards?

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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 skiing, teaching, and professional knowledge expectations of the examiner(s) conducting the exam. The standards are what examiners use to determine whether or not a candidate meets all criteria for the desired level of certification.

The current PSIA National Standards are referenced in PSIA/AASI's Core Concepts and PSIA's Alpine Technical 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 or at this web link;  
<http://www.thesnowpros.org/index.php/PSIA-AASI/education-station/certification-standards>.

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 balancing movements, rotary 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](http://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.

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# Exam Preparation

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## 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. 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 be 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 been a PSIA member for the required number of continuous years. 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 the Snowsports School.
- The candidate demonstrates professionalism and an understanding of what it means to be a professional ski teacher.
- 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.
- 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.
- It is recommended that the candidate be engaged in some type of physical training regime (weight lifting, 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.

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## Membership Level: Certified Level I

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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 teacher. The following prerequisites must be met in order to become a Certified Level I member:

- Be 16 years of age or older at time of application.
- 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.
- Pass the PSIA-E Certified Level I exam criteria as stated in the National Level I Standards, and evaluated by the association.

Certified Level I members must maintain their membership by obtaining a total of 12 Continuing Education Units (CEU) every two seasons (unsuccessful exam attempts do not count as continuing education) and by paying dues to the Association on an annual basis.

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## PSIA National Level I Standards

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Level I certified members will demonstrate a solid foundation of information and experience necessary to be an effective ski teacher. The Certified Level I instructor possesses an understanding of basic skiing skills, teaching skills, and professional knowledge. It is not expected that Level I candidates will have in-depth knowledge and experience in each of the areas of competence listed in these Standards. 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.

### **Category A: Skiing**

Level I-certified teachers must be able to ski all green and groomed blue terrain demonstrating consistent balance and control of speed through turn shape. Demonstrations must display an “understandable picture” of the technical elements of Beginner/Novice zone skiing. The turn dynamics are limited by the speeds and terrain appropriate for Beginner/Novice zone skiing and tasks.

#### **General Characteristics**

The candidate will be able to:

- Consistently link turns with sustained rhythm
- Maintain consistent speed by controlling the shape of a turn
- Maintain a balanced stance throughout a series of turns
- Demonstrate an appropriate blend of skills (with consideration for the snow conditions, equipment, terrain, etc.)
- Ski a variety of turn sizes within a series of turns while maintaining speed control

#### **Balance**

The candidate will be able to:

- Maintain lateral and fore-aft balance through common tasks and demonstrations

### **Rotary Movements**

The candidate will be able to:

- Demonstrate a gradual steering of the skis to assist turn shaping

### **Edge Control Movements**

The candidate will be able to:

- Demonstrate a gradual increasing and decreasing of edge angle throughout a series of turns
- Demonstrate use of ski design in Beginner/Novice zone level skiing tasks

### **Pressure Control Movements**

The candidate will be able to:

- Maintain ski-snow contact with both skis
- Demonstrate a shift of pressure to the outside ski throughout a series of turns.

## **Category B: Teaching**

Level I-certified teachers demonstrate a solid foundation of information, and experience necessary to be an effective teacher of Beginner/Novice zone skiers. A basic understanding of how to manage the learning environment for different age and gender situations is required.

### **Awareness, Understanding and Knowledge**

The candidate will be able to:

- Understand the coach/student relationship and how to develop trust between him- or herself and the student
- Recall the components of the learning environment and discuss how to incorporate them into lessons that will create memorable experiences
- Identify the components of good teaching
- Categorize teaching, skiing, and guest service principles of ATS, relative to Beginner/Novice zone students
- Understand student needs of specific groups (i.e., adults, children, women, seniors, beginners, etc.)
- List considerations for managing the learning environment for children at different stages of development

### **Application**

The candidate will be able to:

- Teach the public through the Beginner/Novice zone
- Demonstrate an ability to develop a relationship of trust between teacher and students
- Identify learning styles and preferences and cite examples of how to use them in a lesson
- Recognize the stepping stones concept and identify a pathway to learning based on the needs of students specific to the instructors home area
- Handle a class based on group energy level, conditions, safety, and lesson content
- Predict and meet the needs of specific groups (i.e., children, seniors, men)

## **Category C: Professional Knowledge**

Professional knowledge requirements for Level I-certified teachers reflect a practical awareness of general terms and concepts, and an ability to use these concepts in basic lesson situations for Beginner/Novice zone students. Decision-making and lesson content will most likely follow preplanned options, with consideration for varied skill development emphasis

### **Terminology**

The candidate will be able to:

- Define and explain basic skiing terminology as described in the Alpine Technical Manual
- Define and explain basic terminology as described in the Core Concepts Manual

### **Equipment**

The candidate will be able to:

- Identify equipment needs for skiers through the Beginner/Novice zone
- Categorize the basic options and benefits of modern ski designs
- Identify common equipment safety issues

### **Skills Concept**

The candidate will be able to:

- Discuss the role of balance relative to the other skill categories and movements
- Identify effective movements and skill development through the Beginner/Novice zone
- Understand the concept of skill blending, and identify how different skill blends create different outcomes regarding ski performance for a Beginner/Novice zone skier
- Teach a traditional skill blend for Beginner/Novice zone skiers (wedge stepping stones)
- Develop Beginner/Novice zone skiers along a track to parallel skiing that is not based on the foundation of a wedge (parallel stepping stones)
- Create an activity list for each skill category

### **Movement Analysis**

The candidate will be able to:

- Recognize general movement patterns relative to skill categories in Beginner/Novice zone skiers
- Identify desired skill and movement outcomes in various types of Beginner/Novice zone skiing including beginner parallel and wedge turn progressions
- List exercises and tasks that address a student's needs, the equipment being used, terrain options, etc.

### **Personal Mastery**

The candidate will be able to:

- Identify and develop a vision for personal growth as a snowsports teacher
- Understand the pathways for personal and professional growth by identifying the resources available both inside and outside of PSIA-AASI
- Plan short- and long-range schedules for training and certification goals.

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## The Level I Exam Process

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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 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 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 briefly and lead the group.
- A variety of skiing activities will take place on Green and Blue Terrain.
- 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.

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# The Level I Assessment - What To Expect

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## **Skiing**

Skiing activities should be performed as if the candidate were leading a student down a slope and enjoying the terrain. You should practice and master the following activities before coming to the Level I event. The activities will be evaluated on the basis of modern mechanics and movements that demonstrate appropriate skill blending. Candidates should be prepared to ski any of the activities listed below. 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 I National Standard.

## **Possible Selected Skiing Tasks**

- Spontaneous Christies
- Wedge Turns
- Vertical Sideslip
- Pole Use
- Stepping/Skating maneuvers on the flats
- Basic Parallel Turns - short/medium/long radius
- Balanced athletic stance and consistent speed control in all skiing tasks

These exam tasks as well as differing lines, speeds, terrain, turn sizes, and the possibility of gates and half pipe make up the Level I Skiing Exam. Terrain and Mountain conditions may or may not be suitable for some of these tasks.

## **Teaching**

A trend of beginning guests at ski resorts is that students are arriving on a variety of equipment, with scores of different motivations for being there and with diverse backgrounds of related activities and experiences. Ski equipment is changing all the time. Ski companies are constantly altering the shapes and sizes of their skis to offer the public excitement and ease on the snow. The ski industry has figured out that varying side cut, length camber and width makes skiing easier in variable conditions and terrain. Beginning skiers can make more advanced moves at slower speeds because the skis provide some of their own turning forces. Beginner progressions have moved away from always using a wedge to teach a person how to ski. The linear progressions of the past are not as easy to apply across the board. Skiing a basic open parallel is frequently an achievable goal for a first time skier with the right mix of available terrain, equipment, athletic background and coaching guidance. Assessing and then understanding a student's profile is critical to the success of guests, particularly at the beginning level. As such, the options for developing a teaching plan for beginning skiers is quite broad and is dependant upon appropriate selection of activities (Stepping Stones) that will lead to the development of a functional skill blend of movements. In real life, you must prepare for any student and be ready to offer coaching and solutions specific to the guest's profile, skills, background, and the student's desired outcome. At the exam, you will be asked to address a student profile of your choice and to provide a series of activities to lead that student toward development of skilled movement. In front of the group, you must demonstrate awareness of a basic teaching process (i.e. introduce an activity, develop that activity, offer feedback, and summarize). You must be able to do this for students in the Beginner/Novice zone.

Here are examples of different student profiles. What path through the Stepping Stones will lead each student to develop the skills necessary to ski basic parallel turns? 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 a pair of skiboards from a friend for this lesson.
- A 62-year-old man who is taking up skiing after a career as a tennis player. He has not been very active recently as his wife has been sick and he has been caring for her. What is the path you might take to get him to parallel? He is on a pair of short shaped skis for his 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 the 160cm shaped skis that she has brought for her lesson.

### **Professional Knowledge**

- Identify how your lesson activities relate to the development of the four skills (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.

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## Membership Level: Certified Level II

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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 passing PSIA National Level II Standard exam, and are considered qualified to provide valuable instruction to a majority of snowsports school patrons. The Level II member is required to meet the following criterion:

- Be a Certified Level I member of PSIA-E, and be in at least the second season of membership at the time of application for the Level II, Part 1 Exam.
- Candidates must be in at least their third season of membership at the time of application for the Level II, Part 2 Exam.
- 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.
- Attend a PSIA-E Level II exam prerequisite.
- Successfully score 70% or greater on the professional knowledge online exam consisting of fifty randomly selected multiple choice test questions.
- Pass the PSIA-E Certified Level II exam criteria as stated in the National Level II Standards, and evaluated by the Association.

Certified Level II members must maintain their membership by obtaining a total of 12 Continuing Education Units (CEU) every two seasons (unsuccessful exam attempts do not count as continuing education) and by paying dues to the Association on an annual basis.

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## PSIA National Level II Standards

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Level II-certified instructors will demonstrate commitment and dedication to the ski teaching profession and to his/her own personal development. Level II members are considered qualified to provide valuable instruction to a majority of snowsports school guests. A Level II-certified instructor demonstrates the ability to relate movements and skill areas to movement outcomes and to apply that knowledge to teaching situations common to Novice and Intermediate zone skiers. Level II-certified instructors have a global understanding of the ski industry and are able to classify their responsibilities as a part of the resort team.

### **Category A: Skiing**

Level II-certified teachers have the skills to make short-, medium-, and long-radius turns on blue and groomed black terrain with minimal skidding. Skis make two separate, relatively defined arcs in the snow from before the fall line to completion. Skill application and accuracy may vary with terrain and snow conditions. Demonstrations should illustrate accurate movement patterns and reflect turn dynamics relative to the speeds and forces common to Novice and Intermediate zone skiers.

### **General Characteristics**

The candidate will be able to:

- Use ski design and skill blending to shape parallel turns
- Link turns of consistent rhythm and size, such as a series of short or long turns
- Control speed by adjusting turn shape
- Maintain a balanced stance throughout a series of turns
- Demonstrate a variety of turns
- Apply appropriate tactics and vary skill applications in a variety of conditions, including ungroomed snow or powder
- Demonstrate different types of skill blends in exercises, tasks, and turns, upon request

### **Balance**

The candidate will be able to:

- Maintain lateral and fore-aft balance through turn transitions
- Demonstrate the ability to regain balance in minor situations in which balance is compromised
- Demonstrate an ability to consistently maintain a balanced relationship between the hips and feet during the shaping phase of the turn on blue and groomed black terrain

### **Rotary Movements**

The candidate will be able to:

- Use an appropriate amount of rotational guiding as a component of turn shape and speed control relative to conditions and task
- Demonstrate consistent guiding of both feet into and out of the fall line, creating a consistent width track of the skis in the snow

### **Edge Control Movements**

The candidate will be able to:

- Demonstrate progressive increase and decrease of edge angle throughout the phases of the turn on a variety of groomed and ungroomed blue terrain
- Begin tipping of the skis from the uphill edges to the downhill edges before turning the skis toward the fall line (minimal pivoting to edge) on blue groomed terrain
- Utilize the sidecut of the skis as a component of turn shape and speed control

### **Pressure Control Movements**

The candidate will be able to:

- Maintain ski-snow contact with both skis
- Demonstrate a gradual increase in pressure to the outside ski throughout a series of round turns
- Demonstrate an ability to adjust to minor terrain variations with minimal interruption

## **Category B: Teaching**

Level II certified teachers demonstrate an understanding of basic learning theory, communication and people skills, and human development. Practical knowledge of these concepts is required for students and teaching situations through Intermediate zone lessons. Level II certified teachers demonstrate the ability to adapt lesson environment to meet a variety of options for specific audiences (i.e. age, gender).

### **Awareness, Understanding, and Knowledge**

The candidate will be able to:

- Consider and address safety concerns as students move beyond the Beginner/Novice zone learning environment
- Understand and identify the components of the learning process, and relate these concepts to individual learning styles and preferences
- Understand the importance of options in lesson plans based upon the mental, emotional, and physical needs (development) of individual students
- Illustrate the components of effective feedback in the learning environment
- Accurately distinguish “What is happening?” with regard to movement analysis
- Formulate lesson plan options for a variety of student needs

### **Application**

The candidate will be able to:

- Teach the skiing public through the Intermediate zone
- Identify the personality traits and learning preferences of students, and make broad adjustments in lesson plans and delivery to accommodate those traits/preferences
- Work with ranges of student performance and personalities within a group; maintain group cohesiveness and a personal, emotional attachment with students and the learning environment
- Make technical lesson content decisions based upon both movement analysis observations and student desires and needs, applying the stepping stones concept beyond the Beginner/Novice zone
- Demonstrate an effective balance between the amount of information and the amount of practice time, display an effective use of teaching activities
- Develop accurate lesson plan options that tailor lesson situations to individual needs and goals

## **Category C: Professional Knowledge**

Professional Knowledge for Level II-certified teachers reflects a basic understanding of general terms and concepts applicable through the Intermediate zone. Application of teaching concepts in actual lesson situations should reveal an ability to correctly interpret student behavior and performance, and to deliver technical content through relevant activities and simple language.

### **Terminology**

The candidate will be able to:

- Define and understand terminology as described in the Alpine Technical Manual
- Relate skiing terminology to students in simple language, communicating “what”, “why”, and “how” the terms and concepts apply to individual students

## **Equipment**

The candidate will be able to:

- Describe changes in equipment needs as students progress through the Beginner/Novice zone and Intermediate ability zones
- Understand the options, solutions, and benefits that current equipment design provide; provide general equipment selection guidance
- Understand the intended benefits of equipment design

## **Skills Concept**

The candidate will be able to:

- Understand the connections between movements and skills, and how changes in movements effects the blending of skills
- Understand the application of the skills concept to ski performance and of movement patterns to ski-snow interaction
- Understand how various skill blends are applied to specific Intermediate zone skiing situations relative to terrain, conditions, and desired student outcome
- Utilize specific activities to target specific skill development

## **Movement Analysis**

The candidate will be able to:

- Describe the forces acting on a skier in a turn; relate how a skier uses muscular effort and movements to manage these forces
- Understand cause-and-effect relationships between movements and resultant ski performance in Intermediate zone skiing situations
- Consider non-performance factors such as age, past experience, conditioning, etc., when analyzing the ability of students
- Communicate movement analysis information to students in simple, positive language

## **Personal Mastery**

The candidate will be able to:

- Refer to resort-wide interests in all lesson situations, addressing student needs beyond learning to ski
- Demonstrate an ability to handle internal and external conflict resolution
- Demonstrate an ability to interact in resort areas outside of the lesson environment.

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## The Level II Exam Process

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Level II Certification has four components as follows:

1. Candidates will attend required two-day educational pre-requisite for Part 1 Skiing or Part 2 Teaching.
2. Successfully score 70% or greater on the professional knowledge online exam consisting of fifty randomly selected multiple choice test questions.
3. Successfully pass the two-day on snow Level II Part 1 Skiing evaluation.
4. Upon successful completion of the online professional knowledge exam and two-day on snow Part 1 evaluation, candidates are eligible to register for the two-day on snow Teaching and Professional Knowledge evaluation (Part 2).

### **Level II Prerequisites**

Level II Exam candidates are required to take ONE exam prerequisite course only. They are not required to take a prerequisite course for each part of the exam. It is advisable for candidates to prepare 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.

#### ➤ **Level II Exam – Part 1 Skiing Prerequisites:**

The candidate may choose one of the following two-day educational events to meet the requirements of the Level II Exam prerequisite. It is highly recommended if a candidate chooses one of these courses to use as a prerequisite, the course be taken PRIOR to the Level II - Part 1 Exam.

- Development Series Skiing
- Mogul Series
- Level II Practice Exam
- Snow Pro Jam
- Spring Academy

#### ➤ **Level II Exam – Part 2 Teaching Prerequisites:**

The candidate may choose one of the following two-day educational events to meet the requirements of the Level II Exam prerequisite. The purpose of the prerequisite is to give 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.

These prerequisite courses are NOT skiing improvement clinics and participants should not sign up expecting personal skiing feedback. These events are good for the season in which it is taken and the following season.

- Level II Teaching Seminar
- Movement Analysis
- Foundations of Teaching
- Snow Pro Jam
- Spring Academy
- Children's Specialist 1

**Please Note:**

For the 2012-2013 season, Alpine Level II requirements will include the successful completion of Children's Specialist 1 and obtaining either the Nastar Silver medal or USSA Level 100. Complete details and requirements will be posted on the Eastern Website when available.

**Level II Online Professional Knowledge Exam**

The online exam consists of 50 randomly selected multiple-choice questions. A candidate will be well prepared for the written exam if they are familiar with the information in this manual and the required reading listed in this manual as well as the material in the Alpine Study Guide. The exam score is independent of the Part 1 Skiing and Part 2 Teaching portion of the exam. A candidate must receive a score of 70% or higher on the exam to be successful. Candidates will have two attempts per season to successfully pass the online exam. **If the exam candidate fails the online exam twice in one season, they will not be eligible to attempt the exam until the following season.** A passed online exam will be valid for 5 years from the date it is passed. All exam requirements must be attained prior to registering for the part 2 (on snow teaching exam).

Your Snowsports School Director's signature is **not** required to register for the Professional Knowledge online exam (your Snowsports Director's Signature is required to process all other exam registrations). You will have access to the online exam 24/7 between August 15 and April 15 of each year. Once your application is processed, you will receive a separate email within 24 hours with a link to take the online exam. The 50 minute time limit begins after you accept the terms and conditions online.

Should a member require special arrangements for taking the exam, or does not have access to take the exam online, arrangements can be made through the Albany Office by contacting the Education and Programs Department at 518-452-6095. The Professional Knowledge online exam is a prerequisite to registering for the Part 2 – Teaching evaluation.

**Level II Part 1- Skiing Evaluation**

**Day 1 – Registration for the Part 1 begins at 8:00 A.M. Please be punctual.**

Groups will consist of up to eight candidates. The candidates ski with two evaluators, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. During Day 1, candidates are evaluated on their skiing; a clear concise explanation will be given for all tasks and activities. Evaluators will refrain from feedback in order to maintain equality in the evaluation environment. There will be no group coaching except for the possible re-explanation of the skiing task desired. Candidates will be asked to perform a variety of tasks, activities, and free runs with a focus or focuses.

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

On Day 2 of the Skiing Evaluation, candidates ski with one evaluator, for half a day. The evaluator will only assess skiing; there will be no coaching. Most of the focused tasks, activities, and free runs that were performed on Day 1 will be evaluated on Day 2.

A candidate is required to pass Part 1 as well as the online Professional Knowledge exam before attempting Part 2. Once Part 1 is passed, Part 2 may be taken anytime during either the same ski season in which Part 1 was passed, or during the next two seasons. A member must be in their third year of membership to take the Level II, Part 2 exam. If Part 2 is not successfully completed by the end of this time frame, a candidate must start the exam process over again. After two unsuccessful attempts at Part 1 or Part 2, a candidate must take two educational days in the areas of skill/knowledge where (s)he was unsuccessful before taking the exam a third time.

### **Results for Level II, Part 1**

Scoring is done by three evaluators, two on the first day and one on the second day. Each evaluator gives one mark (in skiing) for each candidate. At least two evaluators must determine that the required standards have been met, based on the skiing category of the National Level II Skiing Standards, for a candidate to successfully complete the Skiing Evaluation. By mid-afternoon of Day 2, results from Part 1 Skiing exam will be posted. Candidates will receive three examiner scorecards. Results will be recorded in the Eastern Office.

### **Level II Part 2 - Teaching Evaluation**

#### **Day 1 - Registration for Part 2 begins at 8:00 A.M. Please be punctual**

Candidates will be divided into groups of six or less, groups will meet evaluators for the modules at 8:30 am. Two modules will take place on Day 1; Teaching Children and Youth, and Creative Teaching.

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

Modules groups will form by 8:30am. One module will take place on Day 2; Movement Assessment & Teaching, with the on snow evaluation concluding by 2:30 pm on Day 2.

An unsuccessful exam will not be valid for continuing education credit. After two unsuccessful attempts at Part 1 or Part 2, a candidate must take two education days in the areas of skill/knowledge where (s)he was unsuccessful before taking the exam a third time.

Each candidate will have the opportunity each day, in each module, to demonstrate his/her teaching knowledge and experience:

- Through *developmental* teaching, candidates will be asked to share and/or demonstrate their ideas relative to the development of skiers through the Intermediate zone
- Through participation/discussion with the group and relative to other people's teaching
- By offering additional input relative to their own teaching
- Through "snapshots" i.e. offering ideas relative to situations presented by the Examiner
- By sharing "challenges" they encounter at their home areas

Everything upon which the candidate is evaluated will be consistent with the information in the National Level II Standards which serve as a guide for training for the Level II Exam. Candidates are expected to show a high level of competency in every area of skill or knowledge listed in the National Level II Standards.

## **Results for Level II, Part 2**

The Teaching Evaluation consists of three on snow teaching modules as follows: Teaching Children and Youth, Creative Teaching, and Movement Assessment & Teaching (refer to page 31 for complete description and scoring considerations for each module). Candidates will be scored by one examiner for each module resulting in three scores. At least two evaluators must determine that the National Level II Standards have been met. Results of the exam will be posted on Day 2, as soon as possible after the last exam group is off the hill. An awards ceremony is held immediately following the posting of results. All candidates will receive three examiner scorecards and one master scorecard. The master card has the composite scores of all examiners and the overall result. Feedback will be provided in the form of written comments by each examiner.

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# **The Level II Assessment - What To Expect**

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## **Skiing**

Candidates will be asked to perform a variety of tasks, activities, and free runs on moderate terrain. They 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 activities listed below. 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.

## **Possible Selected Skiing Tasks**

- Short radius turns in fall line – maintain constant speed and radius
- Medium radius turns – maintain constant speed and radius
- Free runs
- Lane change – five short turns, change on the 5th turn (width of a grooming lane)
- Medium/Short/Medium (ski an hourglass)
- Short/Medium/Short
- Medium radius turns – moderate speed to VERY slow speed, back to moderate
- Short radius turns accelerating OR decelerating
- Traverse – weight basically even; uphill knee and hip slightly forward
  1. traverse from point A to point B – maintain a straight line
  2. ride the natural sidecut of the ski

## **Reference Maneuvers**

- Skating/stepping/tracking maneuvers
- Wedge Turns
- Spontaneous Christies – vary the turn radius, speed, terrain
- Open Parallel – vary the turn radius

## **Bumps**

Candidates must be able to ski any intermediate bumps. The focus will be on accuracy and speed control, so as to be able to lead students down the terrain.

### **Versatility**

- Falling leaf – alternating diagonal sideslipping
- Ski only on the inside ski – make only slight direction changes on easy terrain; maintain functional alignment of body parts
- Skate down the fall line (on easy terrain)
- Stem christies
- Open parallel turns – NO poles

These exam tasks as well as differing lines, speeds, terrain, turn sizes, and the possibility of gates and half pipe make up the Level II Part 1 - Skiing Exam. Terrain and Mountain conditions may or may not be suitable for some of these tasks.

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## **Membership Level: Certified Level III**

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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.

Certified Level III members have proven their competency by passing PSIA National Level III Standard exam. The Level III member is required to meet the following criterion:

- Be a Certified Level II member of PSIA-E and be in at least the fourth season of membership at the time of application for the Level III, Part 1 Skiing Exam.
- Candidates must be in at least their fourth season of membership at the time of application for the Level III, Part 2 Teaching Exam.
- 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 Director.
- It is recommended, but not required, that candidates attend an exam clinic prior to attempting the exam.
- Successfully score 70% or greater on the professional knowledge online exam consisting of fifty randomly selected multiple choice test questions.
- Pass the PSIA-E Certified Level III exam criteria as stated in the National Level III Standards, and evaluated by the Association.

Certified Level III members must maintain their membership by obtaining a total of 12 Continuing Education Units (CEU) every two seasons (unsuccessful exam attempts do not count as continuing education) and by paying dues to the Association on an annual basis.

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## **PSIA National Level III Standards**

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Level III-certified instructors possess high levels of skill and knowledge that allow him or her to make an uncompromised contribution to the customer, the association, and the ski industry. A Level III-certified member has the ability to assess all variables with regard to student personality traits, goals, abilities, needs, the learning environment, conditions of the day, available terrain, equipment, etc., and to synthesize these parts into a viable lesson plan. A Level III instructor can make adjustments to lesson goals and is able to appropriately adjust or modify lesson content as required by any situation.

### **Category A: Skiing**

Level III-certified teachers should have the skills to make short-, medium-, and long-radius turns with little or no skidding. The skis describe two well-defined arcs from before the fall line to turn completion. Terrain and snow conditions should have a minimal effect on skill application, movement accuracy, and turn outcome. Turn dynamics should represent the terrain, speed, and snow conditions common to Advanced zone skiing. A Level III-certified teacher has the ability to maintain dynamics and movement accuracy through most conditions, on any terrain on most mountains.

### **General Characteristics**

The candidate will be able to:

- Ski dynamic-parallel turns on any terrain on most mountains
- Reduce, generate, or maintain speed without interrupting overall flow or rhythm
- Ski a variety of turn sizes and shapes and apply them to different mountain situations

- Demonstrate different types of skill blends and movement patterns in exercises, tasks, and turns upon request, and as applied in different mountain situations
- Maintain control over turn shape and speed while skiing most conditions on any terrain on most mountains

### **Balance**

The candidate will be able to:

- Maintain lateral and fore-aft balance through turn transitions, as balance shifts from foot to foot through terrain and conditional variations
- Demonstrate an ability to consistently maintain the balanced relationship of the hips and the feet through all phases of the turn
- Utilize proactive movements which anticipate ski reaction and create balance adjustments, minimizing the interruption of rhythm and flow in most situations common to all mountain skiing

### **Rotary Movements**

The candidate will be able to:

- Use an appropriate amount of rotational guiding to assist edge engagement and direction change when dictated by conditions, terrain, or task
- Demonstrate consistent guiding of both feet into and out of the fall line, creating two well defined arcs in the snow (minimal tail displacement)
- Utilize strong, accurate rotational movements in conditions, terrain, and tasks which require quick direction change with minimal side cut engagement

### **Edge Control Movements**

The candidate will be able to:

- Begin tipping of the skis from uphill edges to the downhill edges before turning the skis toward the fall line (minimal pivoting to an edge) in most conditions on any terrain on most mountains
- Demonstrate progressive, dynamic increase and decrease of edge angle throughout the phases of the turn
- Utilize sidecut/ski design as the primary component controlling turn shape in most conditions in most situations

### **Pressure Control Movements**

The candidate will be able to:

- Maintain ski-snow contact when appropriate to condition, task, or demonstration
- Adjust movements to maintain, increase, or decrease pressure and turn forces as conditions, tasks, or demonstrations require, while maintaining turn shape and accuracy
- Demonstrate a gradual increase in pressure to the outside ski throughout round turns in most conditions in most conditions on any terrain on most mountains.
- Adapt to terrain variables with minimal interference with ski performance

## **Category B: Teaching**

Level III-certified teachers will need to demonstrate an in depth understanding of basic learning theory, communication and people skills, and human development issues. These instructors will also need to display a mastery of human development issues for all skiing populations (i.e., age, gender). Application of these concepts must produce a clear and concise delivery of information, and an uncomplicated learning environment through Advanced zone lessons.

### **Awareness, Understanding, and Knowledge**

The candidate will be able to:

- Consider safety concerns as students move beyond the Intermediate zone learning environment
- Make specific lesson-plan decisions based on accurate interpretation of student behavior and performance
- Adjust the depth and pacing of information and feedback to address the needs, motivation, and interest level of the students
- Address a variety of learning styles and utilize various feedback systems to facilitate an experiential learning environment
- Identify the elements of multiple intelligence theory and relate these concepts to sensory preferences in communication and information exchange
- Describe, in depth, the skier services and activities available at one's home area as well as within the ski industry
- Display a strong ability to answer a "How-do-I-get-there?" question regarding queries involving movement analysis
- Display an in-depth understanding of cause-and-effect relationships relative to skill references and specific movement issues
- Create unique lesson plans by way of strong understanding of people and ski technique

### **Application**

The candidate will be able to:

- Teach the skiing public through the Advanced zone
- Account for the mental, emotional, social, and physical cues encountered with students in most lesson situations
- Creatively utilize the conditions of the day to ensure safety and create unique experiences for students
- Make technical lesson content decisions based upon specific movement analysis observations, as well as non-movement factors (mental, emotional, physical)
- Demonstrate an ability to encourage students to become responsible for their own learning
- Lessons are characterized by a continuously developing lesson plan based on observations and the development and adjustment of guest goals; rather than a preconceived lesson plan based upon initial perceptions

### **Category C: Professional Knowledge**

Professional Knowledge for Level III-certified teachers reflects a strong accurate understanding of skiing terminology and concepts beyond the scope of ski teaching manuals. Using related industry sources, ski coaching, and drawing on familiarity with various peripheral resources promotes well-rounded teaching with the capacity to create exceptional experiences for most students, in most conditions on any terrain at most mountains.

### **Terminology**

The candidate will be able to

- Demonstrate a strong understanding industry-wide terminology
- Display an ability to compare and contrast various types of information regarding skiing and ski teaching from a variety of resources
- Demonstrate the ability to translate most skiing terminology into layman's terms

### **Equipment**

The candidate will be able to

- Describe changing equipment needs as skiers move through the Intermediate and Advanced ability zones
- Tailor lesson plans to fit student equipment capabilities
- Serve as an industry ambassador, shop liaison, and general authority for equipment questions and advice

### **Skills Concept**

The candidate will be able to

- Understand appropriate application of the skills concept (as a tool to communicate, organize and assist the teaching of movements )
- Understand and utilize the controlling elements of skiing movements (duration, intensity, rate, and timing) relative to skill blending
- Apply skill blending to tactical choices in a variety of conditions

### **Movement Analysis**

The candidate will be able to

- Incorporate all aspects of student-teacher communication as a part of movement analysis, utilizing personality traits such as motivation and emotion in addition to actual skiing performance
- Understand cause-and-effect relationships and resultant ski performance in Advanced zone skiing situations
- Utilize informal movement analysis (in addition to formal situations) to constantly monitor all aspect of movement and movement patterns as an ongoing process throughout a lesson
- Evaluate the effectiveness and performance of practice activities, and continuously adjust lesson plans accordingly

### **Personal Mastery**

The candidate will be able to

- Seek outside education options to promote a broad understanding of the sport
- Seek involvement in helping less experienced teachers

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## **The Level III Exam Process**

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Although a Level III exam clinic is not a prerequisite for Level III exam, it is highly recommended that some type of exam prep course be taken before attempting the exam. If the candidate is looking for information in a specific area of the evaluation, (s)he should take a Level III Exam Clinic or should select an appropriate Master Teacher or premier special event.

**Please Note:**

For the 2013-2014 season, Alpine Level III requirements will include the successful completion of Children's Specialist 2 and obtaining either the Nastar Gold medal or USSA Level 200. Complete details and requirements will be posted on the Eastern Website when available.

Level III Certification has three components as follows:

1. Successfully score 70% or greater on the professional knowledge online exam consisting of fifty randomly selected multiple choice test questions.
2. Successfully pass the two-day on snow Level III Part 1 Skiing evaluation.
3. Upon successful completion of the online professional knowledge exam and two-day on snow Part 1 evaluation, candidates are eligible to register for the two-day on snow Teaching and Professional Knowledge evaluation (Part 2).

### **Level III Online Professional Knowledge Exam**

The online exam consists of 50 randomly selected multiple-choice questions. A candidate will be well prepared for the written exam if they are familiar with the information in this manual and the required reading listed in this manual as well as the material in the Alpine Study Guide. The exam score is independent of the Part 1 Skiing and Part 2 Teaching portion of the exam. A candidate must receive a score of 70% or higher on the exam to be successful. Candidates will have two attempts per season to successfully pass the online exam. **If the exam candidate fails the online exam twice in one season, they will not be eligible to attempt the exam until the following season.** A passed online exam will be valid for 5 years from the date it is passed. All exam requirements must be attained prior to registering for the part 2 (on snow teaching exam).

Your Snowsports School Director's signature is **not** required to register for the Professional Knowledge Online Exam (your Snowsports Director's Signature is required to process all other exam registrations). You will have access to the online exam 24/7 between August 15 and April 15 of each year. Once your application is processed, you will receive a separate email within 24 hours with a link to take the online exam. The 50 minute time limit begins after you accept the terms and conditions online.

Should a member require special arrangements for taking the exam, or does not have access to take the exam online, arrangements can be made through the Albany Office by contacting the Education and Programs Department at 518-452-6095. The professional knowledge exam online exam is a prerequisite to registering for the Part 2 – Teaching evaluation.

### **Level III Part 1 - Skiing Evaluation**

**Day 1 - Registration for the Part 1 begins at 8:00 A.M. Please be punctual.**

Groups will consist of up to eight candidates. The candidates ski with two evaluators, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. During Day 1, candidates are evaluated on their skiing; a clear concise explanation will be given for all tasks and activities. Evaluators will refrain from feedback in order to maintain equality in the evaluation environment. There will be no group

coaching except for the possible re-explanation of the skiing task desired. Candidates will be asked to perform a variety of tasks, activities, and free runs with a focus(es).

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

On Day 2 of the Skiing Evaluation, candidates ski with one evaluator, for half a day. The evaluator will only assess skiing; there will be no coaching. Most of the focused tasks, activities, and free runs that were performed on Day 1 will be evaluated on Day 2.

A candidate is required to pass Part 1 as well as the online Professional Knowledge exam before attempting Part 2. Once Part 1 is passed, Part 2 may be taken anytime during either the same ski season in which Part 1 was passed, or during the next two seasons. A member must be in their fourth year of membership to take the Level III, Part 2 exam. If Part 2 is not successfully completed by the end of this time frame, a candidate must start the exam process over again. After two unsuccessful attempts at either part, a candidate must take two educational days in the areas of skill/knowledge where (s)he was unsuccessful before taking the exam a third time.

**Results for Level III, Part 1**

Scoring is done by three evaluators, two on the first day and one on the second day. Each evaluator gives one mark (in skiing) for each candidate. At least two evaluators must determine that the required standards have been met, based on the skiing category of the National Level III Skiing Standards, for a candidate to successfully complete the Skiing Evaluation. By mid-afternoon of Day 2, results from Part 1 Skiing exam will be posted. Candidates will receive three examiner scorecards. Results will be recorded in the Eastern Office.

**Level III Part 2 - Teaching Evaluation**

**Day 1 - Registration for Part 2 begins at 8:00 A.M. Please be punctual**

Candidates will be divided into groups of six or less, groups will meet evaluators for the modules at 8:30am. Two modules will take place on Day 1; Teaching Children and Youth, and Creative Teaching.

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

Modules groups will form by 8:30am. One module will take place on Day 2; Movement Assessment & Teaching, with the on snow evaluation concluding by 2:30 PM on Day 2.

An unsuccessful exam will not be valid for continuing education credit. After two unsuccessful attempts at Part 1 or Part 2, a candidate must take two education days in the areas of skill/knowledge where (s)he was unsuccessful before taking the exam a third time.

Each candidate will have the opportunity each day, in each module, to demonstrate his/her teaching knowledge and experience:

- Through *developmental* teaching – Candidates will be asked to share and/or demonstrate their ideas relative to the development of skiers through the Advanced zone)
- Through participation/discussion with the group and relative to other people’s teaching
- By offering additional input relative to their own teaching
- Through “snapshots” i.e. offering ideas relative to situations presented by the Examiner

- By sharing “challenges” they encounter at their home areas

Everything upon which the candidate is evaluated will be consistent with the information in the National Level III Standards which serve as a guide for training for the Level III Exam.

Candidates are expected to show a high level of competency in every area of skill or knowledge listed in the National Level III Standards.

### **Results for Level III Part 2**

The Teaching Evaluation consists of three on snow teaching modules as follows: Teaching Children and Youth, Creative Teaching, and Movement Assessment & Teaching (refer to page 31 for complete description and scoring considerations for each module). Candidates will be scored by one examiner for each module resulting in three scores. At least two evaluators must determine that the National Level III Standards have been met. Results of the exam will be posted on Day 2 as soon as possible after the last exam group is off the hill. An awards ceremony is held immediately following the postings of results. All candidates will receive three examiner scorecards and one master scorecard. The master card has the composite scores of all examiners and the overall result. Feedback will be provided in the form of written comments by each examiner.

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## **The Level III Assessment - What To Expect**

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### **Possible Selected Skiing Tasks**

The following Level III exam tasks require refined skiing skills and represent a wide range of movement patterns. Each task serves as a lens for the examiner to view the candidates skiing. 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 III National Standard. Each task is accompanied by a phrase to help describe or define key aspects of the task and a “**What to Look For**” (WTLF) **description** to help clarify the appropriate movements.

The skills in skiing are “interdependent” with each other but can be practiced separately. Most of these tasks highlight and develop one skill to a greater degree than the others.

- Rotary –Turning Skills
- Edging Skills
- Pressure control/management skills A Level III candidate should be able to flex and extend the legs at will (independently of where he or she is in the turn) and have the ability to absorb variable terrain (bumps, knolls, turn dynamics, etc) retracting the legs if necessary.
- Balancing – Coordination – Timing Skills

**Pivot-slips:** Skis are turned from right to left and left to right with leg rotation primarily from the hip socket – Skier stays in fall line.

**WTLF:** The skier releases the edges in one movement. There is some space between the feet so the inside ski can be steered. The skier uses leg rotation to turn the skis smoothly and continuously versus the abruptness of counter rotation. The legs turn before the hips start to turn. 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.

**Skate to shape to short turns:** Forward oriented diverging skating blends over distance to short turns

**WTLF:** The tips of the skis should be farther apart than the tails when skating. The skis should show divergence. The lifted ski should be level with the surface or slightly tip down. 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. The skier should show skating, blending to shaping, and then to short turns using about one third of the run for each identifiable segment of the task.

**Lane Changes:** A series of short or medium turns interspersed with a lateral shaped sweeping turn across a predetermined portion of the width of the trail. Skiers should strive to enter and leave these lateral sweeps without losing momentum and ski performance.

**WTLF:** The last turn in the lane is crisp and energetic enough to carry the skier across the hill. The first turn in the lane has grip and shape above the fall line. The short turns in each lane are smoothly executed and of consistent shape and radius

**Performance Short Radius Turns:** - Round short turns with a coordinated effort of the legs to stretch out and back while the torso remains stable and disciplined. The skier's body moves down a corridor versus a straight line. The stretching of the legs and the forward movement of the center of mass enables the skier to maintain pressure on the turning edges. This allows the skis to be steered back under the body after the apex of the turn

**WTLF:** 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. The skis are tipped 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 flex/extend of all joints. Both legs rotate in hip socket at same rate and time. Tipping movements come from a combination of inclination and angulation. Active flexion/extension movements absorb/manage pressure and support release.

**Simultaneous parallel hop turns:** Short airborne-guided fall line oriented turns. The pivot point of the turning skis is under the feet vs. the tip or tail.

**WTLF:** The skis leave and land on the snow at the same time. The pivot point is the center of the skis; you should see equal turning of the tips and tails vs. the tails moving farther or quicker. The skis are generally level with the snow surface. The skis leave the surface because of leg extension rather than retracting the legs. The skier can land on and jump off the snow with continuous motion rather than stalling or double pumping. The motion shows the appropriate amount of elasticity and resistance in the joints. The skis are pivoted across the fall line enough to maintain speed control. The steeper the pitch, the more they need to be turned.

**RR Tracks:** Equidistant parallel arced tracks through a series of turns.

**WTLF:** At Level III the skier should be able to bend the skis, not just ride the side cut. There are visible clean equidistant arcs left in the snow. The skier's body moves to the inside of the turn then out of the turn and into the next, while maintaining balance and correct alignment of the body segments.

**Skiing on one ski;** either through a series of turns or through a portion of a turn, one ski is lifted off the snow.

**WTLF:** 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. The lifted ski should be level or slightly tip down, and the turn shape should be round. These are indicators of accurate fore-aft and lateral balancing skills. The skier should have a positive selective effect on any skill on either ski at any point in a turn.

**1000 steps:** Diverging forward oriented stepping off an edged and holding outside ski during turns.

**WTLF:** The skier maintains proper alignment of body segments without tipping in or over rotating. The skis move primarily forward rather than sideways. The skier maintains speed control by using diverging steps to get to, through, and out of the fall line.

**Leapers:** Forward oriented leg extension originating from the ankles smoothly lifts off and lands the skis. (Medium to long radius task)

**WTLF:** When the skis are in the air they are generally level with the surface or slightly tip down. Both skis leave and land on the snow at the same time. The skis travel a similar path in the air as they would on the snow (this is an airborne initiation of a medium and long radius turn).

**Tuck turns:** Short or medium turns done from a medium or high tuck. The legs should significantly lengthen and shorten as the “hooked up” skis run away from and back under the skier.

**WTLF:** The skier is able to stretch and bend the legs in tuck turns without vertical movement of the torso. The skis run out from underneath the body and then run back crossing under the torso during edge change.

**Pain in the S:** Short turns on a long turn path. Work to keep the same level of ski design involvement no matter where the turns are in relation to the fall line.

**WTLF:** The top of the turns should be round and gradually brought to the fall line, rather than hopped or shoved; 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

**Sequential converging hop turns:** The skier hops from outside ski to outside ski. These are speed controlling, fall line oriented, short turns.

**WTLF:** The skier should maintain timing, coordination and balance through a series of turns. The skier can display a controlled landing that’s in balance and on the inside edge of the outside ski. The skier can land on and jump off the outside ski in continuous motion rather than stalling or double pumping. The skis are turned across the fall line enough to maintain speed control. Pole use and timing supports continuous motion and balance.

These exam tasks as well as differing lines, speeds, terrain, turn sizes, and the possibility of gates and half pipe make up the Level III Part 1 Skiing Exam. Terrain and Mountain conditions may or may not be suitable for some of these tasks.

## Description of Part 2 Teaching Modules

### Creative Teaching Module

The purpose of the Creative Teaching Module is to assess if a candidate can use similes, analogies, metaphors, on-snow simulation activities, and past life experiences or any combination thereof, to teach skiing in a creative non-technical manner. In the Creative Teaching Module, the candidates are asked to coach the group for 15-20 minutes, addressing a student profile and a student's skill development. Candidates will be asked to draw from 2 stacks of cards. One stack of cards has student profiles describing mind set, goals, fitness, gender, and age. The other stack of cards has a technical description of the student's present skill development. The combination of the 2 cards drawn will provide the student profile the candidate is to address. Candidates should be prepared to choose words and activities that are relevant to the hypothetical student(s) and of interest to the exam group. The candidate must use a physical life experience, an image, analogy, on-snow simulation activity, or any combination thereof that can transfer a student's prior knowledge/experiences to the skiing experience. It is likely that at the end of the module, candidates may be asked to briefly state how they might modify their presentation to fit a different skier demographic. (older, younger, male, female, fitness level). The Creative Teaching Module is examined in an on-snow format allowing about one run or about 15-20 minutes per candidate.

The candidates will pick scenario cards presented by the examiners. Examples of student profile and skill level cards for Level II:

- Student Profile – 18-year-old male, weight 200lbs, height 5' 10", has trouble with sore shins and speed control
- Skill development description– The student skis a mixture of stem Christie and parallel, with traverses between turns.

Examples of student profile and skill level cards for Level III:

- Student Profile – 48-year-old female, athletic, raced in high school, too busy to ski much, but now the kids are in college and she can ski more often. She likes hard groomed snow and has trouble with other conditions.
- Skill development description– The student skis parallel, with a narrow stance and sometimes lifts the tail of the inside ski.

### **Scoring Considerations for Creative Teaching Module**

#### **1. Power of the Transfer – Teaching Styles – Learning Modes (VAK)**

This pertains to how well the selected images/activities/experiences address the chosen student profile while matching the needs of the group. The coaching should create a bridge from the experience/activity to the skiing movements to be learned.

#### **2. Technical Validity of the Teaching Concept**

This pertains to the candidate's understanding of ATS and the mechanics of skiing. The candidate's coaching should enhance skills and promote fundamental movements.

### **3. Group Handling Skills – (able to make age specific modifications)**

This pertains to the way a candidate acts and reacts to given circumstances. This would include considerations such as:

- Presents information in an interesting, creative way at the right time.
- The ability to be student centered.
- Demonstrates awareness and understanding of safety considerations (The Responsibility Code).
- Modifies concepts to meet the needs of children as well as seniors.
- Addresses performance frustrations, fear, and anxiety.
- Leads group effectively in the alpine environment; includes making appropriate terrain choices.

### **4. Communication Skills – Group Involvement – Personal Attention**

This pertains to how a candidate shares ideas and information with others. This would include considerations such as...

- Provides consistent, positively stated information at the right time and to the right person.
- Provides information that is appropriately descriptive and prescriptive.
- Gives clear, concise directives.
- Demonstrates effective verbal and nonverbal communication.
- Conducts discussions that involve everyone and create enthusiasm, excitement, and synergy.

### **Teaching Children and Youth Module**

This module's purpose is to assess the candidate's ability to teach children and youth in a fun, safe and moving environment. It will also assess the candidate's understanding of ages and stages of children's development (CAP Model). Candidates will be expected to show they have experience working with issues that may arise between parents, coaches and students. Candidates should have knowledge of industry concerns affecting the teacher / learner (child and parent) partnership specific to their home resort.

The exam process involves a 15-20 minute idea sharing and peer coaching segment lead by the candidate. Scenario cards presented by the examiner with children's ages, skill level, and goals will be picked by the candidate. The candidate will be expected to create an appropriate environment using the chosen scenarios and lead the group in a creative, fun and moving program on appropriate terrain. Stages of development that are appropriate to the children's age should be accounted for in the program.

The candidates will pick scenario cards presented by the examiners. Two examples of scenario cards for Level II are:

- An 8-year-old female, skis anywhere in a power wedge no matter what the terrain. She is happy skiing in her power wedge, but holds up the rest of the class. She has the ability to ski parallel; at least this is what a former instructor told her. Her parents are adamant that she stays in this "all mountain" group. Can we get her out of the power wedge?
- A group of advanced intermediate skiers; boys and girls, ages 6 and 7. They are itching to get in the bumps, as they are bored of skiing the groomers. How would you approach coaching beginning bumps to these kids?

Two examples of scenario cards for Level III are:

- Seasonal program – 10-year-old boy making open track parallel turns on Blue and lower level Black terrain. Cold windy Saturday with firm conditions and he reverts to a power wedge at the top of the mountain.
- 12-year-old girl wants to learn tricks in the park. She has never been in the park before and you are only able to do 360's and slide on a wide box. What can you coach to prepare her to enter the park for the first time?

The following are questions candidates may ask themselves to prepare for this exam module.

- Are the ideas and activities presented effective for the described scenario?
- Is the terrain choice effective and safe for the described scenario and population?
- How is the teaching segment related to kids?
- How is play, imagery, game used?
- Is the pace of the presentation effective?
- Do you understand why specific games/exercises are being used?
- What aspect of child development is being addressed in the teaching segment?

### **Scoring Considerations for Children and Youth Module**

#### **1. Class Management**

This pertains to the candidate's ability to use the terrain safely, keep the group moving, and to involve all participants. The candidate is scored on the ability to create a team atmosphere that takes into consideration the individual needs of the group members.

#### **2. Understanding of children's "ages and stages"**

This pertains to knowledge of the stages of development; cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Scoring consideration in this area is based on the relevance of an activity to the child's age and stage. Understanding of ATS must be accurate as it relates to children.

#### **3. Use of Activities and Games**

This pertains to the effectiveness of an activity for a specific skill-based goal. The candidate will also be evaluated on the overall creativity and fun of the activity.

#### **4. Student/Parent/Instructor Partnership**

This is based on the candidate's ability to effectively work with issues that may arise between parents and coaches, parents and kids, kids and kids, or kids and coaches. Specific issues that apply to this area are skill level, student/ parent/ instructor goals and child behavior. This scoring consideration is based on an interview or questions with the candidate regarding an experience where the components of working with these issues had to be utilized.

### **Movement Assessment & Teaching Module**

This module is evaluated on snow in an active group participation and interactive format.

Throughout this module candidates and their Examiner will interact in directed activities and discussions. The activities and discussions will be based on Knowledge of the Skiing Skills and the Visual Cues to Effective and Ineffective Skiing. Active individual participation is required throughout this module.

Candidates will be expected to:

- Share how they teach skills and movements for scenarios 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.

### **Scoring Considerations for the Movement Assessment & Teaching Module**

#### **1. Identifying Cause and Effect**

This pertains to a candidate's understanding of what body movements cause effective and ineffective skiing. Conclusions should be based on a working understanding of the skills and the Visual Cues of Effective Skiing.

#### **2. Communication Skills / Terminology / Skiing Skills-Demos**

This pertains to how the mechanics of skiing are conveyed. Is the message easily understood and accurate? Is the terminology used accurate, well communicated and understood by the candidate? Are the word choices used a help or hindrance to learning? Do the skiing skills and demonstrations convey the idea(s) being taught and are they representative of this certification level.

#### **3. Effective Feedback**

This pertains to a candidate's ability to share meaningful performance results and effective performance suggestions in an accurate, concise and tactful way.

#### **4. Teaching Movements and Skills**

This scoring area pertains to understanding teaching outcomes. Awareness of how activities and directives affect individuals and/or the group is important. A working knowledge of the ATS is important. Both the leader and the group (or group member) should be aware of the need for change and attempt appropriate change when called upon. Note: In the limited time of the exam format it is not expected that a candidate would dramatically alter a group member's skiing.

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

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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 Albany 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.

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