

ALPINE CERTIFICATION

August, 2003

- *Registered*
- *Certified Level I*
- *Certified Level II*
- *Certified Level III*

The following are the current (2003) PSIA Education/Certification Standards. Referenced to 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.

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

REGISTERED (Educational outline for use by home school or for divisional training)

Registered instructor is PSIA's entry level of membership, designed to provide an educational introduction to ski teaching. The Registered level event is conducted according to divisional criteria, and is not a level of certification recognized nationally by PSIA. Therefore, the criteria for Registered level instructors within the National Standards 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.

Category A: PSIA-AASI Education

General PSIA-AASI education provides teachers with an overview of snowsports instruction, a brief history of PSIA-AASI, and an introduction to the professional aspect of teaching snowsports. Registered members will be expected to recall and comprehend basic information about the aspects of ski teaching and the ski industry listed below.

The instructor will be able to ...

1. Introduction to PSIA-AASI

- a. Recall the history, purpose, and organization of PSIA-AASI
- b. Identify the vision/mission statement of PSIA-AASI

2. Ski Industry

- a. Discuss the role of ski instruction within the snowsports industry
- b. Describe the organization of one's home resort
- c. Discuss the teamwork aspect of home resort area operations

3. Professionalism

- a. Discuss the basic principles and philosophies of professionalism
- b. Discuss specific behaviors of ski instructor professionalism
- c. Demonstrate professionalism at home resort

Category B: Skiing

Registered level teachers must demonstrate the ability to safely ski terrain common to the Beginner/Novice zone, and to consistently demonstrate fundamental elements of stance and balance in a form that will create understanding and encourage further development. No specific parameters are set for the performance of any maneuvers until Level I certification.

(The term “balance” in the following descriptions references appropriate flex in the joints to keep hips over feet; proper hand and arm position; forward vision; appropriate stance width; and basic movements which facilitate fore-aft and lateral balance)

The instructor will be able to...

1. Demonstrate a balanced athletic stance
2. Demonstrate balance in a straight run
3. Demonstrate balance in a traverse
4. Demonstrate balance in a sideslip
5. Ski wedge turns
6. Ski slow, open parallel turns representative of new skiers on accelerated learning equipment

Category C: Core Concept Education

Core Concept education for Registered teachers explores the personal motivation for teaching, and promotes a teaching style/learning environment guided by emotional involvement. Registered level teachers must demonstrate a clear understanding of risk management and safe class handling with Beginner/Novice zone students. Registered instructors have an awareness of basic physical, mental, and social characteristics of students, especially as related to teaching children.

The instructor will be able to...

1. Core ideals
 - a. Describe their personal motivation for becoming a snowsports teacher
 - b. Describe their own strengths and weaknesses relative to the communication and people skills required to effectively teach snowsports
2. Understanding students
 - a. Demonstrate an awareness of physical, cognitive, and affective development in a variety of student populations
 - b. Demonstrate an awareness of physical, cognitive, and affective development in children of all ages
3. Class Handling and Organization
 - a. Recognize the impact and importance of developing trust in the learning environment
 - b. Manage risks present in the mountain environment in a responsible manner
 - c. Demonstrate an ability to provide individual attention to students in a class
 - d. Provide a Beginner/Novice zone lesson format based on the guidelines of the American Teaching System (ATS) and one’s home resort
4. Risk Management
 - a. Recite *Your Responsibility Code*
 - b. Teach *Your Responsibility Code* to students at one’s home resort
 - c. Practice class handling that demonstrates appropriate decision-making based upon risk management principles
5. Customer Service
 - a. Identify key elements of a student-centered and experience-oriented approach to teaching
 - b. Relate various customer services at one’s home resort to ski school students
 - c. Demonstrate customer-oriented behaviors that create relationships with guests and students

Category D: Alpine Technical Education

The level of proficiency required of Registered level teachers is defined by a general awareness of basic alpine technical issues, and an ability to demonstrate typical movements and tasks of Beginner/Novice zone skiing.

The instructor will be able to...

1. Skills Concept
 - a. Identify and define the four categories of skills
2. Phases of the turn
 - a. Identify the three phases of a turn
 - b. Identify dominant movements and skill areas during a turn typical of a student in the Beginner/Novice zone
3. Equipment
 - a. Characterize the type of rental equipment most often seen at the home resort
 - b. Describe proper fit of boots, ways to check the fit of students' boots, and methods of adjustment in fit
 - c. Describe proper ski lengths for Beginner/Novice zone students
 - d. List required clothing and safety items
4. Movement Analysis
 - a. Recognize basic aspects of proper stance and sliding balance
 - b. List activities which highlight specific movements relative to chosen categories of the skills concept
5. Stepping Stones
 - a. Identify the basic principle of the *stepping stones*
 - b. Describe the teaching progression favored at one's home resort for teaching first-time skiers

CERTIFIED LEVEL I

Certified Level I members 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.

The instructor is able to...

1. General Characteristics

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

2. Balance (Level I Beginner/Novice zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)

- a. Maintain lateral and fore-aft balance through common tasks and demonstrations
- b. Demonstrate the *visual cues to effective skiing* relative to balance in demonstrations and tasks common to Beginner/Novice zone skiers

3. Rotary Movements (Level I Beginner/Novice zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)

- a. Demonstrate a gradual steering of the skis to assist turn shaping
- b. Demonstrate the *visual cues to effective skiing* relative to terrain, speed and dynamics

4. Edge Control Movements (Level I Beginner/Novice zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)

- a. Demonstrate a gradual increasing and decreasing of edge angle throughout a series of turns
- b. Demonstrate use of ski design in Beginner/Novice zone level skiing tasks
- c. Demonstrate the *visual cues to effective skiing* relative to edge control movements in demonstrations and tasks common to Beginner/Novice zone skiers

5. Pressure Control Movements (Level I Beginner/Novice zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)

- a. Maintain ski snow contact with both skis
- b. Demonstrate a shift of pressure to the outside ski throughout a series of turns
- c. Demonstrate the *visual cues to effective skiing* relative to pressure control movements in demonstrations and tasks common to Beginner/Novice zone skiers

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.

The instructor is able to

1. Awareness, Understanding and Knowledge

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

2. Application

- a. Teach the public through the Beginner/Novice zone
- b. Demonstrate an ability to develop a relationship of trust between teacher and students
- c. Identify learning styles and preferences and cite examples of how to use them in a lesson
- d. Recognize the *stepping stones* concept and identify a pathway to learning based on the needs of students specific to the instructors home area
- e. Handle a class based on group energy level, conditions, safety, and lesson content
- f. 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 different skill development emphasis.

The instructor is able to...

1. Terminology

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

2. Equipment

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

3. Skills Concept

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

4. Movement Analysis

- a. Recognize general movement patterns relative to skill categories in Beginner/Novice zone skiers

- b. Identify desired skill and movement outcomes in various types of Beginner/Novice zone skiing including beginner parallel and wedge turn progressions
 - c. List exercises and tasks which address a student's needs, the equipment being used, terrain options, etc.
- 5. Personal Mastery**
- a. Identify and develop a vision for personal growth as a snowsports teacher
 - b. Understand the pathways for personal and professional growth by identifying the resources available both inside and outside of PSIA-AASI
 - c. Plan short- and long-range schedules for training and certification goals

CERTIFIED LEVEL II

The Level II certified member is one who has demonstrated 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 ski 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 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 Intermediate zone skiers.

The instructor is able to:

1. **General Characteristics**
 - a. Use ski design and skill blending to shape parallel turns
 - b. Link turns of consistent rhythm and size, such as a series of short or long turns
 - c. Control speed by adjusting turn shape
 - d. Maintain a balanced stance throughout a series of turns
 - e. Demonstrate a variety of turns
 - f. Apply appropriate tactics and vary skill applications in a variety of conditions, including ungroomed snow or powder
 - g. Demonstrate different types of skill blends in exercises, tasks, and turns, upon request
2. **Balance** (Level II Intermediate zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)
 - a. Maintain lateral and fore-aft balance through turn transitions
 - b. Demonstrate the ability to regain balance in minor situations in which balance is compromised
 - c. 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
 - d. Demonstrate the *visual cues to effective skiing* relative to balance in demonstrations and tasks common to Intermediate zone skiers
3. **Rotary Movements** (Level II Intermediate zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)
 - a. Use an appropriate amount of rotational guiding as a component of turn shape and speed control relative to conditions and task
 - b. Demonstrate consistent guiding of both feet into and out of the fall line, creating a consistent width track of the skis in the snow
 - c. Demonstrate the *visual cues of effective skiing* relative to rotary movements in demonstrations and tasks common to Intermediate zone skiers
4. **Edge Control Movements** (Level II Intermediate zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)
 - a. 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
 - b. Demonstrate progressive increase and decrease of edge angle throughout the phases of the turn on a variety of groomed and ungroomed blue terrain
 - c. Utilize the sidecut of the skis as a component of turn shape and speed control
 - d. Demonstrate the *visual cues of effective skiing* relative to edge control movements in demonstrations and tasks common to Intermediate zone skiers

5. **Pressure Control Movements** (Level II Intermediate zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)
 - d. Maintain ski-snow contact with both skis
 - e. Demonstrate a gradual increase in pressure to the outside ski throughout a series of round turns
 - f. Demonstrate an ability to adjust to minor terrain variations with minimal interruption
 - g. Demonstrate the *visual cues of effective skiing* relative to pressure control movements in demonstrations and tasks common to Intermediate zone skiers

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 the lesson environment to meet a variety of options for specific audiences (i.e., age, gender).

The instructor is able to...

1. Awareness, Understanding, and Knowledge

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

2. Application

- a. Teach the skiing public through the Intermediate zone
- b. Identify the personality traits and learning preferences of students, and make broad adjustments in lesson plans and delivery to accommodate those traits/preferences
- c. 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
- d. 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
- e. Demonstrate an effective balance between the amount of information and the amount of practice time; display an effective use of teaching activities
- f. 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.

The instructor is able to...

1. Terminology

- a. Define and understand terminology as described in the *Alpine Technical Manual*
 - b. Relate skiing terminology to students in simple language; communicating *what*, *why*, and *how* the terms and concepts apply to individual students
- 2. Equipment**
- a. Describe changing equipment needs as students move through the Beginner/Novice zone and Intermediate ability zones
 - b. Understand the options, solutions, and benefits modern designs provide; provide general equipment selection guidance
 - c. Understand the intended benefits of equipment design
- 3. Skills Concept**
- a. Understand the connections between movements and skills, and how changes in movements effects the blending of skills
 - b. Understand the application of the *skills concept* to ski performance and of movement patterns to ski-snow interaction
 - c. Understand how various skill blends are applied to specific Intermediate zone skiing situations relative to terrain, conditions, and desired student outcome
 - d. Utilize specific activities to target specific skill development
- 4. Movement Analysis**
- a. Describe the forces acting on a skier in a turn; relate how a skier uses muscular effort and movements to manage these forces
 - b. Understand the *visual cues of effective and ineffective skiing* relative to Intermediate zone applications
 - c. Understand cause-and-effect relationships between movements and resultant ski performance in Intermediate zone skiing situations
 - d. Consider non-performance factors such as age, past experience, conditioning etc., when analyzing the ability of students
 - e. Communicate movement analysis information to students in simple, positive language
- 5. Personal Mastery**
- a. Include resort-wide interests in all lesson situations, addressing student needs beyond learning to ski
 - b. Demonstrate an ability to handle internal and external conflict resolution
 - c. Demonstrate an ability to interact in resort areas outside of the lesson environment

CERTIFIED LEVEL III

The Certified Level III member is one whose high levels of skill and knowledge 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.

The instructor is able to...

1. General Characteristics

- a. Ski dynamic-parallel turns on any terrain on most mountains
- b. Reduce, generate, or maintain speed without interrupting overall flow or rhythm
- c. Ski a variety of turn sizes and shapes and apply them to different mountain situations
- d. Demonstrate different types of skill blends and movement patterns in exercises, tasks, and turns upon request, and as applied in different mountain situations
- e. Maintain control over turn shape and speed while skiing most conditions on any terrain on most mountains

2. Balance (Level III Advanced zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)

- a. Maintain lateral and fore-aft balance through turn transitions, as balance shifts from foot to foot through terrain and conditional variations
- b. Demonstrate an ability to consistently maintain the balanced relationship of the hips and the feet through all phases of the turn
- c. 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
- d. Demonstrate the *visual cues to effective skiing* relative to balance in skiing and tasks common to Advanced zone skiers

3. Rotary Movements (Level III Advanced zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)

- a. Use an appropriate amount of rotational guiding to assist edge engagement and direction change when dictated by conditions, terrain, or task
- b. Demonstrate consistent guiding of both feet into and out of the fall line, creating two well defined arcs in the snow (minimal tail displacement)
- c. Utilize strong, accurate rotational movements in conditions, terrain, and tasks which require quick direction change with minimal side cut engagement
- d. Demonstrate the *visual cues to effective skiing* relative to rotary movements on demonstrations and tasks common to Advanced zone skiers

4. Edge Control Movements (Level III Advanced zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)

- a. 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
- b. Demonstrate progressive, dynamic increase and decrease of edge angle throughout the phases of the turn
- c. Utilize sidecut/ski design as the primary component controlling turn shape in most conditions in most situations

- d. Demonstrate the *visual cues to effective skiing* relative to edge control movements on demonstrations and tasks common to Advanced zone skiers
- 5. **Pressure Control Movements** (Level III Advanced zone terrain, speed, and dynamics)
 - a. Maintain ski-snow contact when appropriate to condition, task, or demonstration
 - b. Adjust movements to maintain, increase, or decrease pressure and turn forces as conditions, tasks, or demonstrations require, while maintaining turn shape and accuracy
 - c. 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.
 - d. Adapt to terrain variables with minimal interference with ski performance
 - e. Demonstrate the *visual cues to effective skiing* relative to pressure control on demonstrations and tasks common to Advanced zone skiers

Category B: Teaching

Level III certified teachers must demonstrate an in depth understanding of basic learning theory, communication and people skills, and human development issues. 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.

The instructor is able to...

1. Awareness, Understanding, and Knowledge

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

2. Application

- a. Teach the skiing public through the Advanced zone
- b. Account for the mental, emotional, social, and physical cues encountered with students in most lesson situations
- c. Creatively utilize the conditions of the day to ensure safety and create unique experiences for students
- d. Make technical lesson content decisions based upon specific movement analysis observations, as well as non-movement factors (mental, emotional, physical)
- e. Demonstrate an ability to encourage students to become responsible for their own learning
- f. 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. Related industry sources, ski coaching, and familiarity with various peripheral resources promote well-rounded teaching with the capacity to create exceptional experiences for most students, in most conditions on any terrain at most mountains.

The teacher is able to...

1. Terminology

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

2. Equipment

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

3. Skills Concept

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

4. Movement Analysis

- a. 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
- b. Understand the *visual cues of effective and ineffective skiing* relative to Advanced zone skiing applications
- c. Understand cause-and-effect relationships and resultant ski performance in Advanced zone skiing situations
- d. 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
- e. Evaluate the effectiveness and performance of practice activities, and continuously adjust lesson plans accordingly

5. Personal Mastery

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