



ROCKY MOUNTAIN DIVISION
Professional Ski Instructors of America
American Association of Snowboard Instructors

ALPINE LEVEL 1 CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Updated October 2020

PSIA Alpine Level 1 Assessment Prerequisites:

- Registered member of PSIA-Rocky Mountain (PSIA-RM)
- Completion of the Level 1 online e-learning component

Alpine Level 1 Assessment Prep:

- This course is required for those members who have not completed new-hire training at their ski school. The course is recommended for those who have been through training but have limited teaching experience or want to spend more time preparing for the exam

PSIA Alpine Level 1 Modules:

PSIA Level 1 certification as administered by the Rocky Mountain Division (RM) is comprised of 4 modules.

On-Line Module (must be done first)

1. A pre-requisite **E-Learning Module**

On-Snow Modules

1. Technical/MA Assessment
2. Skiing Assessment
3. Teaching Assessment

Full or Partial Pass:

- **You must attend all three on-snow modules of the exam continuously.**
- If a candidate is unsuccessful in any module (Skiing, MA/Tech, Teaching), they may re-take the module(s). Contact the office directly to schedule a retake
- Passed modules do not expire as long as candidate remains a current PSIA-RM member

Professionalism at the Exam:

Level One candidates will be given a pass or fail professionalism score based on their behavior at the exam. Examples of unacceptable behavior are – but not limited to: drug and/or alcohol use, consistent lateness, violation of the Responsibility Code, disregarding directions from examiner, any physical or verbal abuse. Examiners will model professional behavior expected of a PSIA certified instructor during the exam. All scores are reviewed by the exam manager or RM office staff.

NEW for the 2020/21 season:

- Check in and meeting groups may be outside
- Results will be distributed electronically by 5:00pm each day to retakes, and by 5:00pm at the end of the assessment to all first-time candidates
- Examining Staff will be available for one on one feedback after results have been electronically distributed to all candidates
- Indoor seating will be limited. Expect to bring your own (BYO) lunch and snacks

PSIA Level 1 Considerations

- Candidates are evaluated by a pool of specially trained and qualified Level 1, 2 and 3 Examiners
- Feedback is consistent with PSIA-AASI and Rocky Mountain support materials
- Feedback will be provided within each module. Feedback is specific to each candidate and is based on descriptors in the PSIA Alpine National Standards and the Instructor Development Pathway (IDP)

Integrating the “BIG PICTURE” and the “DETAILS”:

Unlike the level 2 and 3 exams, most level 1 candidates are new to the profession and need help understanding how the big picture of teaching skiing is enhanced by improving the details (Skiing Demonstrations, Movement Analysis and Teaching Skills). Throughout the exam, Examiners help candidates succeed at the “details” of the exam and understand how each section relates to the big picture of teaching better ski lessons for level 1 – 4 guests.

Assessment Criteria and Scoring:

- Exam criteria are described in the Skiing, Teaching and MA Instructor Development Pathway (IDP)
- Scored elements for Teaching and MA can be found on the PSIA RM scorecards.
- Assessment forms and IDP’s can be found at: www.psia-rm.org/education/all-reference-materials-list
- PSIA Alpine Certification Standards can be found at: www.thesnowpros.org/BeaSkiorSnowboardInstructor/PSIA-AASINationalStandards.aspx

Technical/Movement Analysis Module:

Candidates choose to observe and discuss ski to ski pressure control, rotational control or edge control skills. Candidates may have more opportunities throughout the entire three-day assessment as time allows. No more than 3 total attempts will be available.

Candidates performance of MA on fore aft skills while watching video of themselves or another candidate is not scored. This is an opportunity to coach and enhance the candidate’s performance for the afternoon assessment.

Skiing Module:

Activities & Terrain Selection:

The three sections of the skiing exam are designed to evaluate a candidate’s ability to accurately demonstrate highlighted skills or skill blends in the beginner zone. Candidates need to show proficient skiing on intermediate, groomed and ungroomed terrain.

Trail difficulty may vary due to snow conditions improving or deteriorating throughout the day. The exam manager will determine if the local trail designations (I.E. green, blue, black) and conditions adequately reflect the stated national standard concerning terrain. If necessary, trails or sections of trails will be selected to keep exams consistent across the division and the country.

(PSIA Level 1 Considerations Continued) ...

One Examiner will assess the Highlighted section. Two Examiners, working together as a scoring pair, will assess the Basic Blended Turn and Intermediate Turns sections. All three sections must be passed to successfully complete the skiing module.

Teaching Module:

This module is designed to evaluate a candidate's ability to utilize and move through the Teaching/Learning cycle while focusing on one skill.

Key elements of this are:

- Two presentations conducted in a safe manner with reference to the Responsibility Code.
- Presentations are fun and appropriate for age and student profile.
- Candidate uses appropriate terrain, tactics and pacing for level of students.

Feedback and Coaching at the Exam:

Extensive teaching, coaching and guiding are the hallmarks of the Level 1 exam. Examiners will work throughout the event to provide clear, accessible and relevant feedback. The feedback is performance specific to a candidate and based on the describers in the IDP's.

Technical/Movement Analysis Module

7:30 Examiner Meeting

- Discuss terrain and conditions of the day
- Discuss likely times and locations to find suitable skiers for the candidates to observe
- Discuss priorities for the day

8:30 AM – Candidates check in. The RM Office will email outside meeting location and time 48 hours in advance

8:45 AM – Meet Candidates

- Outline format of day for group
- Results will be emailed to Retakes by 5:00PM
- Set location for Retakes' results review – it may be outside

Goals

The Examiner coaches and scores the entire Technical/Movement Analysis section of the assessment and helps candidates understand how Movement Analysis is integral to the structure of a ski lesson and skiing.

Learning Experiences 9:00 – 12:00

- Examiners use and model a 4-step, fundamental-based progression selected from the Day 3 outline (specifically fore/aft and ski-to-ski pressure control) to improve candidates' skiing; highlight specific analysis skills in the presentation; use tasks from beginner zone skiing (straight run, gliding wedge, wedge turns) and intermediate zone skiing (basic parallel) to highlight MA and skiing fundamentals
- Examiners use D.I.R.T and phases of turns to organize candidates' understanding of ski to body relationships
- Examiners vary demonstrations to help candidates see a range of functionality and effectiveness. Highlight efficient/effective vs. inefficient/ineffective movement patterns as they appear
- Examiner videos each candidate's straight run on easy green terrain. Candidates observe their video and/or the video of another candidate and describe the body and ski performance
- Candidates explain how their analysis of a skier can be used to plan goals and activities and guide practice (progressions and feedback). This can be done in a group format to allow interaction with whole group or if needed one on one with candidate

12:00 – 12:30 Lunch

12:30 – 3:30

- Examiners coach candidates' skiing using the 4-step, fundamental-based progressions for Day 3 (specifically the rotational and edge control skills); highlights specific analysis skills and previews presentations of 4-step skill progressions
- Candidates vary their own body performances to experience a range of functionality and effectiveness – both for kinesthetic experiences but also to recognize efficient /effective and inefficient/ineffective movement patterns in others

Assessment Activity/Scored Movement Analysis Performance

- Candidates will observe advanced beginner skiers (Level 3 or 4) or another candidate/Examiner. Before observing a skier, the candidate will decide to highlight ski to ski pressure, rotational or edge control skills in their analysis.
- **Note:** After observing skier the candidate can change chosen skill if appropriate

3:45 Return to meeting room and complete assessment forms

5:00 Results emailed to those retaking the exam. Examiners will be available to give one on one feedback to candidates until 5:30 PM.

Skiing Module

7:30 AM – Examiner Meeting

- Discuss terrain and conditions
- Determine pairings and meeting time and place
- Discuss and confirm all assessed tasks
- **At the end of the day, give out skill focus, progressions and student profile for teaching day**

8:30AM - Check in Candidates

8:45 AM – Meet Candidates

- Outline format of day for group
- Results for retakes will be emailed at **5:00PM** (designate place for review, this may be outside)

Goals

Examiners coach and assess the candidates' skiing throughout the skiing module and provide feedback. Examiners will help candidates understand how accurate skiing is integral to a lesson

Learning Experiences/Assessment Activities (Actual exam may vary due to conditions)

8:30 – 2:00 On-snow with groups with ½ hour lunch

- Examiners give an intermediate ski lesson that provides an opportunity to coach the candidates on groomed & ungroomed terrain
- Examiner will model the Teaching/Learning Cycle during the lesson. At the conclusion of the segment Examiner will lead a group discussion with candidates to highlight different parts of the Teaching/Learning Cycle.
- Examiner will use a straight run to 'break-down' skiing to the pressure control fundamentals and demonstrate a simple to complex pattern to 're-build' skiing back into basic parallel (intermediate skiing on groomed terrain). Examiners are encouraged to video candidates performing a straight run to enhance feedback for F/A pressure control and reference previous day's video of straight run.
- Examiner will use the other designated tasks to "break down" skiing into the rotational and edging fundamentals and demonstrate a simple to complex pattern to 're-build' skiing back into wedge turns
- By 2:15pm, the Examiner will coach and assess each of the highlighted tasks, basic blended (wedge turns), and intermediate skiing on groomed and ungroomed terrain.

2:15 – 3:30 Paired Scoring of basic blended and intermediate turns sections.

- Examiners pair up to score the basic blended and intermediate turns. Candidates will have a minimum of two and no more than three attempts for basic blended and each of the applied tasks.
- Examiners share scores and have discussion for candidate feedback for ski improvement.

3:30 – 4:00 Examiners distribute teaching progressions and student profiles and brief candidates for Day 3 expectations.

4:00  **Return to meeting room and complete assessment forms**

5:00 Results emailed to those retaking the exam. Examiners will be available to give one on one feedback to candidates until 5:30 PM.

Teaching Module

7:30 Examiner Meeting

- Discuss terrain and conditions of the day.
- Discuss priorities for the day.
- Discuss any re-scoring opportunities for the day (teaching, MA, skiing)
- Discuss needs for further skiing evaluation, including meeting time and place.
- Results by 5:00PM

8:30 AM – Check in Candidates

8:45 AM – Meet Candidates

- Outline format of day for group
- Results will be available at \approx **5:00PM** (designate place, this may be outside)

Goal

The Examiners coach and assess the entire Teaching module and help candidates understand how skiing demonstrations and movement analysis skills enhance the lesson.

Assessment Activities (Actual exam may vary due to conditions)

9:00 – 11:30 On snow Short Teaching Segment focused on:

1. Welcome and Introduction

- Establish trust and rapport
- Provide a big picture overview of desired outcomes

2. Goal Statement

- Describe current ski and body performance
- Describe final ski and body performance
- Describe student's motivations and desired outcomes

- **Candidate chooses the age of their student.**
- Candidates will pair up (one "Instructor" and one "Student").
- Examiner should assist "Student" with student profile and skiing ability to establish current ski performance. **The lowest skiing ability is gliding in a straight run wedge (Level 1-2)**
- Each "Instructor" has up to 10 minutes to assess his/her "Student" and demonstrate their ability to use the "Welcome and Introduction", "Assess Students" and "Determine Goals and Plan Experiences" parts of the Teaching/learning Cycle.
- Candidates are encouraged to ask questions, lead their "student" through an activity, analyze movement, make observations, and/or ask follow-up questions.
- The other pairs of candidates will be assigned one of the parts of the Welcome and Introduction and Goal Statement being assessed. A representative from each pair will share their observations with the group.
- The Examiner will take five minutes to debrief the presentations and comments from the group.
- Each presentation and debrief will last up to 15 minutes. Total time should be about 2 hours 15 minutes.

11:30 – 3:30 On Snow Short Teaching Segments with ½ hour lunch

1. Lesson Presentation

- Manage information, activities, terrain selection and pacing.
- Promote play, experimentation and exploration.
- Facilitate learners' abilities to reflect on experiences and sensations.
- Manage physical and emotional risk.
- Review, preview, and invite students to return.

2. Safety- Responsibility code

Progression and student profile will be assigned at the end of the skiing day. (Retakes will be assigned the morning of the teaching day.)

- Each candidate will use the student profile they "discovered" from the previous teaching presentation and a progression focused on one fundamental as the premise of their presentation.
- Candidates will teach to their "student" in front of the entire group.
- Each Instructor will have up to 15 minutes to demonstrate their ability to us "Create Experiences for Learning", "Guide Practice and "Review and Preview" parts of the Teaching/Learning Cycle.
- The other pairs of candidates will be assigned one of the 5 parts of "Lesson Presentation" or "Safety". A representative from each pair will share their observations to the group.
- Other candidates will be asked to perform the tasks in the presentation. Examiner may examine these performances if necessary.
- Each presentation should be approximately 15 minutes and debrief by the Examiner should last up to 5 minutes. (Total time up to 3 hours)

3:45 Return to meeting room and complete assessment forms

5:00 – Results emailed. Examiners will be available to give one on one feedback to candidates until 5:45 PM.

Student Profiles for the First Teaching Presentation (Candidate will pick student age)

1. Energetic, uncoordinated, loves math problems
2. Likes drawing and visual art, shy
3. Wants to ski with family, outgoing
4. Hockey player, aggressive, wants to go fast
5. Shy, excited to ski, likes music
6. Athletic, figure skater, can only handle 1 direction at a time
7. Distracted, not sure s/he wants to be here, loves snow and outdoors
8. Timid, afraid of getting hurt, extrovert
9. Out of shape, skied once many years ago, excited
10. Soccer player, does not like cold weather, likes science
11. Competitive with sibling/s, wants to ski hard runs
12. Skied once last season, wants to have control, likes reading science fiction books
13. Likes video games, doesn't like competition, introvert

Progressions for Second Teaching Presentation

Assign at end of Ski Module (morning of Teaching Module for re-takes)

1. Fore/Aft Pressure Control (Level 1-2)

- a) With skis off: move forward, aft and center by flexing/extending ankles, knees, hips
- b) With skis on: while standing still, move forward, aft and center by flexing/extending ankles, knees, hips
- c) In a straight run: move forward, aft and center flexing/extending ankles, knees, hips
- d) Gliding in a wedge: focus on staying centered flexing/extending ankles, knees, hips

2. Fore/Aft Pressure Control (Level 2-3)

- a) With skis on: while standing still move forward, aft and return to center by flexing/extending ankles only
- b) In a straight run move forward, aft and center by flexing/extending ankles only
- c) In a guided uphill arc: keep all joints appropriately flexed to stay centered
- d) Link wedge turns and focus on the newly found centered stance

3. Fore/Aft Pressure Control (Level 3-4)

- a) With skis on: flex/extend ankles, knees and hips to move forward, back and jump from snow.
- b) In a straight run (parallel or small wedge): jump and land maintaining a centered stance
- c) Link turns: remain centered and jump in the shaping phase of the turn
- d) Link turns: vary turn size and use terrain appropriately remaining centered on skis

4. Ski/Ski Pressure Control (Level 2-3)

- a) With skis off: pick up one foot and balance on the other foot. Repeat on the other side
- b) With skis on: pick up one ski and balance with other foot. Repeat on the other side
- c) In a straight run: pick up one ski and then the other, shifting balance from foot to foot
- d) Gliding in a wedge: pick up tail of one inside ski, and then the other, shifting balance from foot to foot

5. Ski/Ski Pressure Control (Level 2-3)

- a) Stand in a wedge: tip the torso and move COM from one ski to the other. Use ankles, knees and hips to maintain balance. Focus on the pressure change from foot to foot.
- b) Make a J-turn in a wedge: tip the torso toward outside ski. Focus on the pressure change from foot to foot.
- c) Link J-turns in a wedge: shift pressure to and balance on outside ski. Repeat on the other outside ski
- d) Link wedge turns: shift pressure to and balance on outside ski. Repeat on the other outside ski

6. Ski/Ski Pressure Control (Level 3-4)

- a) With skis on: stand across the fall line, shift pressure to and balance on the downhill ski. Tap uphill ski on the snow
- b) In a J-turn: shift pressure to and balance on the outside ski, tap inside ski on the snow through the end of the turn
- c) In linked wedge turns, shift pressure to and balance on the outside ski. Tap inside ski on the snow through the end of the turn
- d) Link wedge turns without tapping. Direct pressure to and balance on outside ski before middle of the turn

7. Rotational Control (Level 1 -2)

- a) With skis off: turn feet and legs to make a wedge then turn feet and legs so skis are parallel
- b) With skis on: start with skis parallel. Turn feet and legs to create wedge with skis
- c) In a straight run: turn feet and legs to form wedge, turn feet and legs so skis are parallel. Repeat
- d) Make a series of gentle wedge turns using feet and legs to create wedge and turn skis each direction

8. Rotational Control (Level 3-4)

- a) On flat area with skis on: step and turn one direction, turning a full circle. Do the same in the other direction
- b) On gentle slope, 45 degrees to fall line: glide and step-turn uphill to a stop. Start the turn with the uphill (inside) ski. Change directions across the fall line and repeat
- c) On gentle slope: step-turn into the fall line and continue step-turning to a stop. Start the turn with the downhill (inside) ski. Step turn both directions
- d) Link turns with focus of turning legs under stable upper body. Focus on the inside ski

9. Rotational Control (Level 2-3)

- a) With skis off: turn both feet and legs the same direction at same time. Keep the pelvis and upper body still
- b) With skis on at 45 degrees to fall line: use feet and legs beneath a stable pelvis to steer both skis uphill to a stop. Finish with pelvis and upper body facing initial direction
- c) From the fall line: make a guided uphill arc using feet and legs to steer skis beneath a stable pelvis and upper body
- d) Link turns: steer skis with feet and legs beneath a quiet upper body

10. Edging Control (Level 1-2)

- a) With skis on: stand still and tip skis on and off edge with feet and legs
- b) In a wedge traverse: tip skis from flat to uphill edges with feet and legs
- c) Link traverses with a wedge turn: tip skis on and off uphill edges during traverse
- d) Link wedge turns: focus on tipping skis on and off both edges with feet and legs

11. Edging Control (Level 3-4)

- a) On a flat area in a slight wedge: use feet and legs to tip skis side to side. Focus on the moment each ski flattens
- b) In a wedge traverse, tip skis to flatten uphill ski and increase edge angle of downhill ski
- c) Link wedge turns: tip the inside ski and flatten it at end of turn with corresponding foot and leg
- d) Link turns: tip the inside ski and flatten in different turn phases appropriate to terrain, turn size and speed

12. Edging Control (Level 2-3)

- a) On a flat area: use feet and legs to tip skis side to side. Focus on the moment each ski flattens
- b) On moderate pitch: stand across fall line, use feet and legs to flatten skis. Side slip and use feet and legs to tip skis uphill to a stop
- c) From 45 degrees to fall line: glide and use feet and legs to tip flat skis onto edges into an uphill arc to stop (create a guided or carved uphill arc)
- d) Link wedge turns and focus on tipping skis to uphill edges using feet and lower legs

Teaching Observations – First Presentation Assigned to each observing pair

Welcome and Introduction

- Be professional and proactively engage each guest.
- Introduce yourself and have your students meet each other.
- Begin to develop trust and rapport.
- Encourage a fun, open, and supportive learning environment.
- Provide a big-picture overview of the lesson.

Assess Students

- Notice clothing and equipment.
- Identify past experiences and personal interests.
- Identify experience with skiing, riding, and other sports.
- Recognize and respond to emotional and social behaviors.
- Explore motivations and desired outcomes for learning.
- Begin to identify learning style preferences.
- Evaluate level of fitness and capabilities.
- Observe body movements and ski/snowboard action to determine ability level.
- Discover current understanding of the sport.

Determine Goals and Plan Experiences

- Identify big-picture goals.
- Suggest an initial focus for the group.
- Work together to establish specific objectives,
- Partner with students to plan purposeful experiences
- Check for understanding of goals and objectives.

Teaching Observations – Second Presentation Assigned to each pair

Create Experiences for Learning

- Organize students and the lesson environment.
- Choose appropriate terrain and snow conditions.
- Use experiences to target change in performance and understanding.
- Engage students in a process of reflection.
- Introduce new experiences and information based on student readiness.
- Provide descriptive instruction that is easy to understand.
- Provide group engagement, interaction, and support.

Guide Practice

- Select appropriate terrain and conditions.
- Select appropriate activities, games, drills, and exercises.
- Continually check for understanding and modify practice as needed.
- Encourage reflective practice and self-coaching.
- Provide specific, timely feedback.
- Focus on tactics and technique.

Review and Preview

- Review progress and establish a plan for independent practice.
- Preview future learning outcomes and invite students to return.

Safety: Your Responsibility Code

1. Always stay in control. Be able to stop or avoid other people or objects.
2. People ahead of you have the right of way. It is your responsibility to avoid them.
3. You must not stop where you obstruct a trail or are not visible from above.
4. Whenever starting downhill or merging into a trail, look uphill and yield to others.
5. Always use devices to help prevent runaway equipment.
6. Observe all posted signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails and out of closed areas.
7. Prior to using any lift, you must have the knowledge and ability to load, ride and unload safely.

**KNOW THE CODE: IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.
THIS IS A PARTIAL LIST. BE SAFETY CONSCIOUS.**