



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

## ALPINE LEVEL 1 CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Updated August 2019

### **PSIA Alpine Level 1 Exam Prerequisites:**

- Registered member of PSIA-RM.
- Completion of the Level 1 online e-learning component.

### **Alpine Level 1 Exam 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 is comprised of 4 modules.

#### **On-Line Module (must be done first)**

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

#### **On-Snow Modules**

1. Movement Analysis / Technical 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 portion of the exam (Skiing, MA/Tech, Teaching), they can re-take those individual modules. 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.

## **PSIA Level 1 Exam Considerations**

- Candidates are evaluated by a pool of specially trained & 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, an Examiner will help the candidate succeed at the “details” of the exam and how each section relates to the big picture of teaching better ski lessons for level 1 – 4 guests.

### **Exam 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.
- Scorecards and IDP’s can be found at: [www.psia-rm.org/education/all-reference-materials-list](http://www.psia-rm.org/education/all-reference-materials-list).
- PSIA Alpine Certification Standards can be found at: [www.thesnowpros.org/BeaSkiorSnowboardInstructor/PSIA-AASINationalStandards.aspx](http://www.thesnowpros.org/BeaSkiorSnowboardInstructor/PSIA-AASINationalStandards.aspx).

### **Movement Analysis Exam:**

- Candidates are given 1 score for the MA day. This score is based on their performance in the afternoon where they choose to observe ski to ski pressure control, rotational control or edge control skills.
- Candidates performance of MA on Fore aft skills 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 Exam:**

#### **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 will also need to show proficient skiing on intermediate, groomed and ungroomed terrain.

(PSIA Level 1 Exam Considerations Continued)...

- **Highlighted Skills**

Candidates must attain an average score of 4 for tasks that highlight these 4 skills.

<b>Highlighted Skill</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Terrain</b>
Fore/Aft Pressure	Straight Run in the Fall Line	(Groomed Green Terrain)
Ski/Ski Pressure	<i>(Chosen From IDP)</i>	(Groomed Green Terrain)
Rotary	<i>(Chosen From IDP)</i>	(Groomed Green Terrain)
Edging	<i>(Chosen From IDP)</i>	(Groomed Green Terrain)

- **Basic Blended Turn**

Candidates must attain a score of a 4 in this section.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Terrain</b>
Wedge Turns	(Groomed Green Terrain)

- **Intermediate Turns**

Candidates must attain an average score of 4 for these two tasks:

<b>Task</b>	<b>Terrain</b>
Parallel Skiing on groomed terrain	(Groomed Blue Terrain)
Skiing variable terrain	(Ungroomed Green/ Blue Terrain)

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.

Descriptions of activities, with the recommended terrain and conditions, can be found in the Skiing IDP, located on the PSIA website. Videos of activities are also available and can be found on the The Matrix, a data base of videos on PSIA-AASI's website - [www.thesnowpros.com](http://www.thesnowpros.com).

The exam manager reserves the right to change designated runs based on daily snow and weather conditions.

**Teaching Exam:**

The two presentations of the teaching exam are 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;

- Presentations are conducted in a safe manner with reference to the Responsibility Code.
- Presentations are fun and appropriate for age and student profile.
- Instructor 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.

## Daily Outline

### Movement Analysis / Technical Exam- Day One

#### **7:30 Examiner Meeting**

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

#### **8:00 - 8:30 AM – Check in Candidates**

#### **8:30 AM – Meet Candidates**

- Outline format of day for group
- Results will be available for retakes at  $\approx$  4:30 (designate place)

### **Goals**

The Examiner coaches and scores the entire Movement Analysis section of the exam while helping candidates understand how Movement Analysis is integral to the structure of a ski lesson and coaching their skiing.

### **Suggested Activities**

#### **8:45 – 12:00**

- Examiner will coach candidates on their skiing using a 4-step, fundamental-based progressions from day 3 (specifically the fore/aft and ski-to-ski pressure control skills) to help them highlight specific analysis skills and to help familiarize them with presentations of the 4-step skill progressions. Examiner will use a variety of skiing tasks from beginner zone skiing (straight run, gliding wedge, wedge turns) and intermediate zone skiing (basic parallel) to highlight MA and skiing fundamentals with candidates.
- Examiner will introduce D.I.R.T and phases of turns to help candidates understand and verbalize changes in movements in both body and skis.
- Examiner will vary the body performance to help candidates experience a range of functionality and effectiveness – both for kinesthetic experiences and also to recognize efficient /effective and inefficient/ineffective movement patterns in others.
- Examiner will video each candidate doing a straight run on easy green terrain. Candidates will observe their video or the video of another candidate and describe body and ski performance.
- Candidates will start to explain how their analysis of 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**

- Examiner will coach candidates on their skiing using some a few of the 4-step, fundamental-based progressions for Day 3 (specifically the rotational and edge control skills) to help them highlight specific analysis skills and to help familiarize them with presentations of the 4-step skill progressions.
- Examiner will vary the body performance to help candidates experience a range of functionality and effectiveness – both for kinesthetic experiences but also to recognize efficient /effective and inefficient/ineffective movement patterns in others.

### **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.

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- Candidates will 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.
- If a candidate is unsuccessful at this attempt of the scored movement analysis another attempt can be done during the MA day or any of the following days when time allows. No more than 3 total attempts should be given for the MA assessment.

#### **4:30 Results for Retakes**

## Daily Outline

### Skiing Exam – Day Two

#### **7:30 AM – Examiner Meeting**

- Discuss terrain and conditions of the day
- Examiner pairings including meeting time and place
- Discuss priorities for the day.
- **At the end of the day, give out skill focus and progressions for teaching day**

#### **8:00 AM – 8:30AM - Check in Candidates**

#### **8:30 AM – Meet Candidates**

- Outline format of day for group
- Results will be available for retakes at  $\approx$  4:30 (designate place)

### **Goals**

The Examiner coaches and scores the entire skiing section of the exam and continue to reference candidate's performance utilizing movement analysis model. Examiners will help candidates understand how accurate skiing is integral to the structure of a ski lesson.

#### **Suggested Activities** (Actual exam may vary due to conditions)

#### **8:30 – 2:00 On-snow with groups**

- Examiner will give a ski lesson that will allow him/her to coach the candidates on their groomed & ungroomed Intermediate Turns.
- Each candidate will be assigned one part of the Teaching/Learning Cycle from the scorecard. Each candidate will explain to the group how the Examiner used their assigned section of the Teaching/Learning Cycle. (Cards can be switched as the lesson progresses so that candidates can focus on different parts of the Teaching Cycle during the lesson.)
- Examiner will 'break-down' skiing into the pressure control skill (using straight run in the fall line) 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 days video of straight run.
- Examiner will "break down" skiing into the other two highlighted skills (using the other two chosen tasks) – once for each of the next two highlighted fundamentals.
- Examiner will 'break-down' skiing into the other highlighted skill (using the chosen task), and demonstrating a simple to complex pattern to 're-build' skiing back into wedge turns
- By 2:15pm, the Examiner has had opportunity to coach and score 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 2 and no more than 3 attempts for Basic blended and each of the applied tasks.

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

#### **4:30 Results for Retakes**

## Daily Outline

### Teaching Exam - Day Three

#### **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 possible Examiner pairing needs for skiing evaluation, including meeting time and place.
- Results by 4:30.

#### **8:00 - 8:30 AM – Check in Candidates**

#### **8:30 AM – Meet Candidates**

- Outline format of day for group
- Results will be available for retakes at  $\approx$  4:00 – 4:30 (designate place)

### **Goals**

The Examiner coaches and scores the entire Teaching section of the exam while helping the candidates understand how skiing demonstrations and movement analysis skills enhance teaching.

**Suggested Activities** (Actual exam may vary due to conditions)

#### **8:45 – 11:00**

**Short Teaching Segment focused on the first 3 parts of the Teaching/Learning cycle.**

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Assess Students
3. Determine Goals and Plan Experiences

- Each candidate (“Student”) will receive a student profile. **Candidate chooses the age of their student.**
- Candidates will pair up (1 “Instructor” & 1 “Student”).
- Each “Instructor” will have up to 10 minutes to discover his/her “Student” and demonstrate their ability to use the first 3 parts of the Teaching 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 3 parts of the Teaching/Learning Cycle being assessed. A representative from each pair will share their observations to the group.
- The Examiner will take 5 minutes to debrief the presentations and comments from the group.
- After all the presentations are complete, each candidate will have been examined on the first 3 parts of the Teaching/Learning Cycle and have spent some time training their knowledge of the Teaching/Learning Cycle through observations.
- Each presentation and debrief will last about 15 minutes. Total time should be about 2 hours 15 minutes.

#### **11:00 – 12:00**

**Short Teaching Segments focused on the last 3 sections of the Teaching/Learning Cycle and safety**

1. Create Experiences for Learning.
2. Guide Practice.
3. Review and Preview
4. Safety- Responsibility code

**Skill Focus and progression will be assigned at the end of the skiing day.**

**(Re-takes 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 skill as the premise of their presentation.
- Candidates will present to the entire 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)

**12:00 – 12:30 Lunch**

**12:30 – 2:30**

**Continue short teaching segments**

**2:30 – 3:30**

**Additional Time to focus on re-assessing Movement Analysis, Skiing and/or Teaching.**

**4:30 – Results**



**Student Profiles for 1<sup>st</sup> 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. Happy to be with friends, introvert
5. Hockey player, aggressive, wants to go fast
6. Shy, excited to ski, likes music
7. Athletic, figure skater, can only handle 1 direction at a time
8. Distracted, not sure s/he wants to be here, loves snow and outdoors
9. Timid, afraid of getting hurt, extrovert
10. Out of shape, skied once many years ago, excited
11. Soccer player, does not like cold weather, likes science
12. Competitive with sibling/s, wants to ski hard runs
13. Skied once last season, wants to have control, likes reading science fiction books
14. Likes video games, doesn't like competition, introvert

## **Skill Focused Progressions for 2<sup>nd</sup> Teaching Presentation**

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

**These have all changed, 3 for each skill, the approx. level for each teach added**

1. Fore/Aft Pressure Control (Level 1-2)
  - a. With skis off, move forward, aft and center by flexing/extending ankles, knee and hips
  - b. With skis on, move forward, aft and center standing still via ankles, knees hips
  - c. In a straight run, move forward, aft and center flexing/extending ankles, knees and hips
  - d. Glide and use terrain in a wedge focused on staying centered using ankles, knees and hips
2. Fore/Aft Pressure Control (Level 3-4)
  - a. With skis on, use ankle, knee and hip to move forward, jump, do the same for aft and centered
  - b. In a straight run (parallel or small wedge) jump and land maintaining a centered stance
  - c. Make linked turns and jump in the shaping phase of the turn while remaining centered
  - d. Link turns and use terrain appropriately remaining centered on skis
3. Fore/Aft Pressure Control (Level 2-3)
  - a. With skis on, move forward, aft and center by flexing/extending ankles only
  - b. In a straight run move forward, aft and center by flexing/extending ankles only
  - c. Using a guided uphill arc keep ankles flexed to stay centered
  - d. Ski linking wedge turns with focus of staying in the newly found centered stance
4. Ski/Ski Pressure Control (Level 1-2)
  - a. With skis off, pick up one foot then the other
  - b. With skis on, pick up one ski and then the other
  - c. With skis on, pick up one ski and then the other in a straight run
  - d. Glide and use terrain in a wedge, pick up tail of inside ski when turned across the hill
5. Ski/Ski Pressure Control (Level 2-3)
  - a. Standing in a wedge, use ankle, knee and hip to move COM from one ski to the other
  - b. Using a wedge J-turn, shift weight to the outside ski using ankle, knee and hip
  - c. In linked J-turns, shift weight from outside ski to outside ski
  - d. Link wedge turns shifting weight from outside ski to outside ski
6. Ski/Ski Pressure Control (Level 3-4)
  - a. Standing across the hill, tap uphill ski on the snow
  - b. In a J-turn, tap uphill ski on the snow through the end of the turn
  - c. In linked wedge turns, tap uphill ski on snow through the end of the turn
  - d. Link wedge turns without tapping but direct pressure to outside ski before middle of turn
7. Rotary Control (Level 1 -2)
  - a. With skis off, turn feet and legs to make a wedge position and back to parallel
  - b. With skis on start with feet parallel. Turn feet and legs to create wedge with skis
  - c. Straight run, turn feet and legs to wedge and turn feet and legs back to parallel, repeat
  - d. Make a series of gentle wedge turns using feet and legs to create wedge and turn skis

8. Rotary Control (Level 3-4)
  - a. On flat area with skis on use leg to step inside ski, do the same with outside ski, repeat other direction
  - b. On gentle slope 45 degrees to fall line, step uphill ski first and continue to step both skis to stop with legs
  - c. Step into the fall line and continue to turn skis with feet and legs to stop
  - d. Link turns with focus of turning legs under stable upper body
  
9. Rotary Control (Level 2-3)
  - a. With skis off turn both feet and legs at same time, keeping pelvis and upper body still
  - b. With skis on at 45 degrees to fall line turn both skis with feet and legs to stop with pelvis and upper body facing where you started
  - c. From fall line do a guided uphill arc using feet and legs to turn skis
  - d. Link turns with feet and legs turning skis first with quiet upper body and pelvis
  
10. Edging Control (Level 1-2)
  - a. With skis on standing still tip skis on & off edge with feet and legs
  - b. From a traverse, with skis in a wedge, tip skis from flat to inside edges with feet and legs
  - c. Link traverses with a wedge turn, tipping skis on and off edges during traverse
  - d. Link turns with focus of tipping skis on and off edges with feet and legs
  
11. Edging Control (Level 3-4)
  - a. Standing on flat area in a slight wedge, increase edge angle of one ski while flattening the other ski using feet and lower legs. Repeat both sides
  - b. From traverse, flatten uphill ski and increase edge angle of downhill ski using feet & legs
  - c. Linking wedge turns, tip inside ski flat at end of turn with foot and leg
  - d. Link different size turns, tipping inside ski flat at different turn phases, appropriate to terrain, turn size and speed
  
12. Edging Control (Level 2-3)
  - a. Standing on flat area, tip skis on and off edge using feet and lower legs
  - b. On moderate pitch stand across hill, flatten skis with feet and legs to side slip, tip feet and legs back towards hill to reengage ski to stop
  - c. From 45 degrees to fall line start moving and tip skis on edge using feet and legs in an uphill arc to stop (Guided or carved uphill arc)
  - d. Link turns with focus of tipping skis on edge using feet and lower legs

## **Teaching Observations – 1<sup>st</sup> 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 – 2nd 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.**