

# **The Professional Ski Instructors of America**

## **Eastern Division**



## **Adaptive Alpine Assessment Guide**

**October 2024**

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# PSIA-E ALPINE ASSESSMENT GUIDE

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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The following list of educational material is recommended reading for working ski instructors and candidates applying for an Adaptive Alpine Specialist or Certification assessment.

Available through PSIA National Office:

PSIA-AASI Teaching Snowsports Manual (2018)  
PSIA-AASI Alpine Technical Manual (2014) and Alpine Skiing Fundamentals appendix (2018)  
PSIA National Alpine Certification Standards (2021)  
PSIA-AASI Children's Instruction Manual (2008)  
PSIA-AASI Teaching Children Snowsports (2021)  
PSIA-AASI Core Concepts for Snowsports Instructors Manual  
32 Degrees – The Journal of Professional Snowsports Instruction  
PSIA PSIA-AASI – E-Learning <https://lms.thesnowpros.org>

Available through PSIA Eastern Region:

PSIA-E Alpine Assessment Guide (2022)  
PSIA-E Adaptive Alpine Assessment Guide (2023)  
PSIA-E Snow Pro (Newsletter)

### **Additional Reading**

Available through PSIA National Office:

PSIA-AASI Freestyle Technical Manual (2016)  
PSIA-AASI Children's Alpine Teaching Handbook (2010)  
PSIA-AASI Children's Ski and Snowboard Movement Guide (2005)  
PSIA-AASI Children's Instruction Handbook (2000)  
PSIA-AASI Matrix Videos: <https://matrix.thesnowpros.org/>  
PSIA Alpine Visual Cues to Effective and Ineffective Skiing  
PSIA Alpine Cues to Effective and Ineffective Teaching  
Tactics for All-Mountain Skiing (2006)  
Vail-Beaver Creek Alpine Handbook

Having the skills and knowledge to be a competent, well-rounded skier and Snowsports teacher requires a diverse, broad base of education. Using the reading and video resources listed above should provide substantial help in developing that foundation of knowledge. Members must maintain their membership status by paying dues to the association on an annual basis and by obtaining a total of 6 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) every season or 12 CEUs every other season.

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## INTRODUCTION

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This manual contains information about the Adaptive Alpine Specialist and/or Certification Program of the Professional Ski Instructors of America - Eastern Region. It outlines the assessment procedures, content, and standards.

The basic purpose of the PSIA-E Adaptive Alpine Certification Program is to evaluate a candidate's knowledge and skills relative to the National Standards of professional ski teaching and other related information. PSIA-E, like other regions, certifies ski teachers in the American Teaching System (ATS) curriculum, our national model. Candidates are expected to demonstrate a comprehensive, working knowledge of ATS throughout the assessment process.

As a desirable credential, certification becomes an expressed goal for many ski teachers, thus raising the overall standards of professional ski teaching in the United States. Ongoing educational requirements for retaining certification assist in assuring that high standards of performance are maintained. Most professionals view certification as a foundation, rather than an end, and continue to grow far beyond the minimum standards.

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

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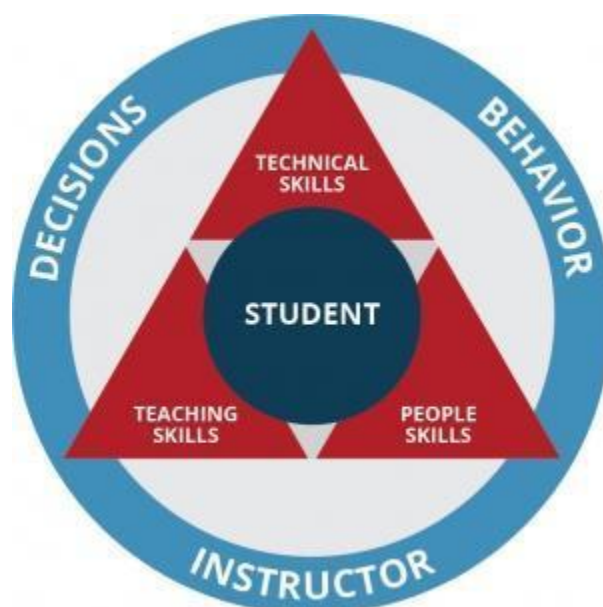
## WHAT ARE THE NATIONAL STANDARDS?

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

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

The current PSIA National Standards are referenced in PSIA-AASI's Core Concepts Manual, Alpine Technical Manual and Teaching Snowsports Manual; terminology consistent with these manuals is used throughout this document. These standards provide a training focus and represent a minimum competency for each level of certification. The [PSIA National Standards](#) should be reviewed and referenced in its entirety as you progress through the certification levels.



The premise of the certification standards is based upon the concept of “levels of understanding.” As certification is a measure of understanding, levels of certification represent stages of understanding. Candidates will be held to the knowledge and skiing performance standards of the level at which they are testing as well as the criteria for all preceding levels.

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

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

While specific trail difficulty designations are stated in the National Standards, it is important to note that trail difficulty is often designated relative to the other trails at a given area. Skiing activities during certification assessments will be performed on terrain that is deemed appropriate for the task being evaluated. Candidates with disabilities, see “A.D.A. Considerations” elsewhere in this manual.

Within the scope of adaptive alpine skiing, the objective of PSIA Adaptive Alpine Certification Pathways & Specialist Standards is to define and apply principles and practices that have evolved over many years to nurture great skiing, effective teaching, and connecting with students of all ages and abilities; and to define the assessment criteria for PSIA-AASI's process for conferring certification and specialist credentials. PSIA-AASI's pathways for professional development for adaptive instructors include three levels of certification (Level I, II, and III) in combination with specialist credentials offered in five adaptive disciplines:

1. Cognitive
2. Visual Impairment
3. Stand-Up Physical Diagnoses
4. Bi-Ski
5. Mono-Ski

Instructors must be at least PSIA Alpine Level I certified to pursue an Adaptive Alpine Specialist and/or certification credential.

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## ASSESSMENT PREPARATION

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### Getting Started

You begin the path to certification and/or specialist by defining your vision or goal. It is essential to evaluate the current reality - your strengths and weaknesses relative to the vision and the Learning Connection Model. Then, develop a plan for getting to the goal. Having an ability to enjoy the journey despite challenges and disappointments will help you stay on your certification pathway. In charting your path, be realistic about where you are now and what is required to achieve your objective. Be patient and prepared for occasional setbacks or detours. Learn to use both successes and failures as a catalyst to guide you along, not only the certification path but your development as a ski instructor as well.

### What Should Take Place Before You Attend an Assessment?

Prior to attending a Level I, II, or III assessment the following general criteria should be met:

- The candidate has gained the practical experience necessary to understand and apply the American Teaching System to a variety of disabilities and the required levels of skiing and teaching.
- The candidate has progressed in his/her personal and professional development through educational programs conducted by PSIA-E and their Snowsports School or Adaptive Programs.
- The candidate demonstrates professionalism and an understanding of what it means to be a professional ski instructor.
- The candidate prepared specifically for the assessment through conscientious training focusing on the required National Standards for certification/specialist.
- The candidate has selected equipment suitable for a wide range of tasks, activities, conditions, and terrain. Candidates should select the ski equipment they perform best on and feel most comfortable using and must have devices to prevent runaway skis and have bindings that are properly set for release. Additionally, all candidates are expected to use ski poles to perform some assessment activities at the national standard.
- We are teachers of an athletic activity for which physical fitness is a crucial element in reaching personal potential. Candidates should be aware that the PSIA National Standards are the standards that the Snow Sports Industry recognizes as the top of the profession. PSIA certified professionals are expected to be able to perform at the PSIA standards at any ski area in the United States. Variable snow conditions, bumps, and altitude are commonly encountered at many areas. To ski dynamically and safely in these conditions requires physical fitness. As such, we reserve the right to ask candidates who pose a risk to themselves or others to leave an assessment. (Refer to the [PSIA-AASI Eastern Event Participant Safety Policy](#) on the eastern website).
- It is recommended that the candidate be engaged in some type of physical training regime (weightlifting, cycling, running) for an extended period of time prior to the assessment so that the candidate can perform up to the level of the national standard.

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## TRAIL DESIGNATIONS

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As each ski resort determines its own terrain difficulty, there is no standard for every trail rating. The levels of all alpine trails are relative to each other. For example, a beginner level trail (green circle) at a steep ski mountain may be markedly more difficult than an intermediate level trail (blue square) at another resort. The assessment administrator will select the appropriate trails based on the national standard and not the trail designations by the resort. Below are very generic trail designations and may vary greatly between resorts.

- Green Circle: The easiest trails on a mountain, usually groomed, wide and flat, and not a place for experienced skiers as traffic must remain slow.
- Blue Square: Intermediate trail usually groomed and often the most popular runs.
- Black Diamond: Expert trail may or may not be groomed and can vary from the merely tricky to insanely difficult.
- Double Black Diamond: trails are particularly challenging. Its slopes are exceptionally steep, coupled with other hazards such as strong exposure to winds, narrow terrain, and other difficult conditions. Typically, double black diamond is rated as more than the 40 percent steep grade of the average black diamond trail slope, the ski level before it. This makes the double black diamond slope very steep and difficult to tackle.
- Orange Oval: Designates terrain parks that feature jumps, half-pipes, and other specialty obstacles

**Note:** Due to variations in trail difficulty designations from one resort to the next, i.e., a Blue Square run at one resort may be designated as a Black Diamond at another resort, it is possible, and probable at some resorts, that the use of ungroomed Blue Square runs may be included in the Level I Assessment. The assessment administrator will determine if the local trail designations adequately reflect the stated national standard concerning terrain. If necessary, trails or sections of trails will be selected to keep assessments consistent across the Region and the country.



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## SCORING CRITERIA

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Throughout this process, Educational Staff will use various assessment activities to evaluate instructor competency of the [PSIA Adaptive Alpine National Standards](#). These Standards describe how the fundamentals of people skills, teaching skills, and technical skills are assessed at the National standard.

### Scoring Criteria Skiing and Teaching

All candidates will be scored according to their proficiency on a scale of 1 – 6 whether seeking certification or a specialist designation. The scoring system is based upon the candidates' ability to display the essential elements of the Adaptive Alpine National Standards for each certification level. Scoring will be recorded on the [National Unified Assessment Form](#). To be successful, candidates must show that essential elements appear regularly, at a satisfactory level (4) in all Assessment Criteria areas.

<u>The element(s) of the National Standards</u>
1. Essential elements were not observed or not present.
2. Essential elements are beginning to appear.
3. Essential elements appear, but not with consistency.
4. Essential elements appear regularly, at a satisfactory level.
5. Essential elements appear frequently, above required level.
6. Essential elements appear continuously, at a superior level.



### Professionalism and Self-Management

Professionalism and self-management are key instructor attributes that apply to every facet of the Learning Connection's people skills, teaching skills, and technical skills. The decisions and behavior that guide the individual's professional conduct are the result of self-management. PSIA-AASI evaluates self-management in all assessments to ensure that the foundation of professionalism is promoted and verified. Professionalism and self-management standards for Alpine Level I, II, and III instructors are outlined in the PSIA Alpine Certification Standards. Throughout the assessment process – and at all levels – candidates must be professional, respectful, and aware of how their decisions and behaviors affect other individuals and the group as a whole. These skills are continually scored throughout the assessment.

### People Skills

People skills are about communicating in effective ways to develop trust and achieve favorable relationships. Building rapport with students depends on instructors' self-awareness and their abilities to identify and adapt to the guests' needs, motivations, and emotions. For students to feel confident taking risks and being open to new learning, instructors must first establish trust among the group.

### Fundamentals

- Develop relationships based on trust.
- Engage in meaningful two-way communication.
- Identify, understand, and manage your emotions and actions.
- Recognize and influence the behaviors, motivations, and emotions of others.

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## MEMBERSHIP LEVEL: ADAPTIVE ALPINE 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 instructor in the beginner and novice zones. The following prerequisites must be met to become a Certified Level I member:

- Be Alpine Level I Certified
- Successfully complete the online [Adaptive Alpine Level I Professional Knowledge Exam](#) in the discipline of the assessment.
- It is recommended that candidates complete the [Teaching Adaptive Snowsports](#) online eLearning course in the discipline of the assessment.
- Candidates should have training and actual on-hill experience teaching people in the beginner and novice zones.
- Successfully complete the PSIA-E Certified Level I assessment criteria as stated in the National Level I Standards.

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

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## SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

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There are unique requirements for certain specialty categories assessments.

### **Mono-Ski – Bi-Ski**

- Sit Down (Mono/Bi) Assessment - Candidates are expected to tether a bi-ski with fixed outriggers on groomed green terrain. Candidates are not expected to ski proficiently in a mono-ski or bi-ski.
- Candidates are required to submit a video of themselves skiing in a mono-ski or bi-ski at the beginner level. The video should include three unassisted linked turns to a controlled stop on green terrain. This video is solely to demonstrate familiarity with the equipment. The video should clearly identify the candidate and does not require any editing. Please upload your video to <https://fs9.formsite.com/PSIA-AASI-E/monobiski/index> at least one week prior to your on snow assessment.
- Refer to the [Adaptive Alpine Bi-Ski and Mono-Ski Performance Guide](#) for complete details.

### **Stand-Up Physical Diagnoses**

- Stand-Up Physical Diagnoses Assessment – Candidates should bring their own outriggers to the assessment. Candidates are expected to ski both three-track and four-track. Candidates are also expected to tether a Snow Slider and/or assist a Four Track skier using reins attached to the student's ski tips.
- Refer to the [Adaptive Alpine Stand-Up Physical Diagnoses Performance Guide](#) for complete details.

### **Visual Impairment – Cognitive Diagnoses**

- Visual Impairment/Cognitive Diagnoses – Candidates are expected to tether a stand-up skier using a combination of ski tip or hip/body tether methods. The candidates will be tested on guiding a completely blind student, or student pretending to be completely blind. Candidates will be required to demonstrate the use of equipment and practices that address safety aspects of which to be aware while stationary or moving.
- Refer to the [Adaptive Alpine Cognitive & Visually Impaired Performance Guide](#) for complete details.

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

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## ADAPTIVE LEVEL I ASSESSMENT PROCESS

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The Adaptive Level I Assessment is a one-day evaluation. Candidates should be prepared to lead the group through some basic ski instruction scenarios. The assessor(s) will coach and assess each candidate's teaching skills and professional knowledge encompassing technical, mechanical, disability understanding including causes and effects and use of adaptive equipment. Candidates will be tested on medication knowledge; knowledge of guest services, safety, and risk management; and various guest populations such as children, seniors, and adults.

### **MEET YOUR GROUP AT THE TIME DESIGNATED - PLEASE BE PUNCTUAL.**

- Participants can expect to share information with the entire group and the assessor related to teaching and skiing experiences and their professional knowledge.
- Each candidate should be prepared to teach and briefly lead the group.
- The day is spent assessing the Technical, Teaching and People Skills compared to the National Standards.
- The assessment atmosphere will be light, constructive, and kept to the level being evaluated.
- Candidates will be evaluated on their knowledge of adaptive students, medications, and equipment.
- Candidates will receive marks and comments that will indicate if the Level I standard has been attained.
- An awards ceremony will be held upon completion. Assessor(s) will hand out the Level I pin and certificates to successful participants at this time

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## THE LEVEL I ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

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### Overview of Skills at Adaptive Level I/Specialist 1 Proficiency

Adaptive Alpine Level I instructors ski competently in beginner through intermediate terrain and adjust their skiing to demonstrate technique and tactics to beginner/novice-zone students. They exhibit a basic understanding of adaptive equipment types and use, diagnoses and medication classifications, and communication strategies with respect to the adaptive discipline. Level I instructors use PSIA alpine and adaptive resources to develop an understanding of body movements and ski performance in order to help students achieve more effective performance.

### Technical Skills

Technical skills bring teaching concepts to life with practical applications adapted to the student's ability level or desired outcome. These skills relate to the instructor's understanding of fundamental skiing mechanics and applying that understanding in lessons. Technical skills represent the ability to perform, understand, and explain the sport. In sharing technical skills, the instructor communicates certain discipline-specific aspects of movement and gives accurate demonstrations.

Candidates will participate in demonstrations, descriptions, and conversations with fellow candidates and assessor(s). Content will include, but is not limited to, assessments, including diagnoses and medications, selecting and fitting equipment, determining goals, planning experiences, and safely navigating throughout the mountain environment. Demonstrations and discussions will include, but are not limited to, personal performance, personal performance using adaptive equipment, teaching and tactics to direct student performance, pieces of applicable adaptive equipment along with other assistive devices, maneuvers, and strategies.

See the [Performance Guide](#) for your specific assessment for minimum performance expectations along with the list of additional tasks that may be covered in the assessment.

### Technical (Skiing) Fundamentals

- Control the relationship of the center of mass to the base of support to direct pressure along the length of the skis.
- Control pressure from ski to ski and direct pressure toward the outside ski.
- Control edge angles through a combination of inclination and angulation.
- Control the skis' rotation with leg rotation, separate from the upper body.
- Regulate the magnitude of pressure created through ski/snow interaction.

### Assessment Criteria

The candidate consistently demonstrates ability to work with students by:

- Observing and describing the application of one or more alpine skiing fundamentals in all turn phases.
- Evaluating and describing the cause and effect relationships of one or more alpine skiing fundamental relative to the desired outcome.
- Prescribing a specific change, related to one alpine skiing fundamental, to achieve the desired outcome.
- Observing and describing how equipment choices, techniques, and tactics affect performance

and safety

- Demonstrates a basic understanding of technical tactics and communication strategies for working with and guiding beginner/novice-zone students in the mountain environment.
- Define and explain basic terminology commonly associated with adaptive ski teaching (including medical terminology regarding physical variations related to adaptive abilities) in the selected disciplines.
- Name common medications and the side effects that may affect students in the selected discipline areas

### **Equipment**

The candidate must be able to:

- Identify equipment needs of skiers through the Beginner/Novice Zone in the chosen classifications
- Describe the distinct types of adaptive equipment and explain how each piece functions within the chosen specialties
- Identify common equipment safety issues
- Explain the basic options and benefits of modern ski designs

### **ATS Application to Adaptive Ski Teaching**

The candidate must be able to:

- Identify effective movements and skill development through the Beginner/Novice zone in the chosen disability classifications.
- Understand the concept of skill blending and identify effective and ineffective movement blends for skiers with differing disabilities in two of the five defined disability categories learning in the Beginner/Novice zone.

### **People Skills**

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

#### **Fundamentals**

- Develop relationships based on trust.
- Engage in meaningful two-way communication.
- Identify, understand, and manage your emotions and actions.
- Recognize and influence the behaviors, motivations, and emotions of others.

### **Assessment Criteria**

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

## **Fundamentals**

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

## **Assessment Criteria**

### Assess and Plan

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

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

### Implement

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

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

### Reflect/Review

Consistently demonstrates their ability to:

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

## **Movement Analysis**

The movement analysis portion of the adaptive assessment is designed for you to showcase your skills observing adaptive students' current movement patterns, describing more ideal movement patterns, prescribing learning experiences to move toward the more ideal patterns, and how equipment, techniques, and tactics affect students' current and/or more ideal patterns.

Candidates will watch at least one movement analysis video containing an interview with the student and footage of him/her sliding. You will receive a nationalized movement analysis worksheet. This worksheet is for you to use as a guide and may be used to take notes throughout the video. You are not required to complete the movement analysis worksheet or take notes. Regardless, it will be collected by your assessor(s) and used to assist in assessing the depth of your understanding.

You will have a one-on-one with the assessor(s) to follow up before the end of the assessment period (e.g., the end of day). This will be an opportunity to talk through your observations, descriptions, prescription, and other technical knowledge applicable to the adaptive discipline(s).

Per the Adaptive Standards, using the applicable Fundamentals, PSIA's Alpine Skiing or AASI's Snowboarding Fundamentals, you will be expected to:

- Observe and describe the current ski/board performance and body performance of the respective level's number of Alpine Skiing or Snowboarding Fundamentals in all phases of the turn.
- Evaluate and describe a more ideal ski/board performance and body performance of the same Technical Fundamental(s) in all phases of the turn.
- Describe a prescription for a specific change, related to the same Technical Fundamental(s).
- Observe and describe current and, if necessary, more ideal equipment choices, techniques, and tactics.

The minimum number of Technical Fundamentals you need to address is dependent upon the level assessment you are attending.

	Fundamentals	Phases	Zone
Level 1	1 or more	All phases	Beginner/Novice
Level 2	2 or more	All phases	Intermediate
Level 3	Multiple	All phases from turn to turn	All

### **Sample Activities for Level I People, Teaching and Technical Skill Assessment**

The following activities represent how an assessment of a candidate's People, Teaching and Technical Understanding Skills would take place in an assessment format. Candidates should bring activities that they use at their home mountain when teaching students in this zone and be able to share and lead the group through them. Candidates should be observing their peers, describing the observed ski and body performance and prescribing changes where appropriate.

- Address a student profile, developing a teaching plan for a Novice Zone skier with a specific guest profile, background and student's desired outcome.
- Provide activities to lead the student toward development of Fundamental Movements.
- In front of a group, demonstrate awareness of a basic teaching process (i.e. introduce an activity, develop that activity, offer feedback and summarize).
- Display a connection with members of the group that fosters trust.
- Identify how your lesson activities relate to the development of the Alpine Technical Fundamentals (in a very **basic** sense).
- Demonstrate an awareness of good safety practices relative to all lesson activities.

### **Teaching**

The biggest priorities for any instructor are to create trust with their students and to foster learning towards their goals. The teaching portion of the adaptive assessment is designed for you to showcase your skills assessing and planning experiences relevant to your adaptive students, implementing learning experiences, and reflecting/reviewing with students. You will apply what you know about the



“student’s” background, motivations, performance, and understanding to create learning outcomes and experiences for your teaching segment.

The guests being served by those attaining Adaptive Alpine and Adaptive Snowboard Specialist Certificates and Certifications are inherently a more diverse population. As assessment groups are not necessarily composed of candidates who have diagnoses within the discipline(s) being assessed, a peer-to-peer teaching segment is not possible without role playing. ***Role playing is not an acceptable practice.*** While the candidate teaching will use communication and teaching tactics appropriate to the profile, peers will not assume physical, cognitive, behavioral, etc. characteristics of the scenario. However, it is acceptable to have peers use adaptive equipment when applicable. For example, in a Level 3 Mono-Ski assessment, if a fellow candidate can ski in a mono-ski this is acceptable. Another would be to ask peers to use handheld outriggers during the Level 2 Stand-Up Physical Diagnoses assessments for Alpine and Snowboard.

You will be given a scenario and will use the information to take one or more peers through a teaching segment. Use background information from the student profile you received along with your experience and knowledge to determine learning outcomes and create a learning environment that will improve your student’s performance and/or understanding. Use Technical, Teaching, and People Skills to deliver a valid and relevant learning experience to help achieve the desired outcomes.

- An assessor will explain terrain and lift options. You will teach and ski or ride within the ability zone you are being certified in.
- The first candidate selects his/her teaching scenario at the bottom of the lift.
- The candidate will have a lift ride and/or 10 minutes to gather thoughts and the teaching time will begin at the top.
- Candidates will share their intended learning outcome with the assessor(s) prior to the teaching segment. The learning outcome will provide a bridge between the guest’s current performance and his/her desired goals. Candidates can modify or revise their learning outcome to adapt to changing needs.
- Each candidate will have 20 minutes of teaching time.
- Each candidate will have no more than 10 minutes for assessor(s) to follow up immediately following the teaching session.
- If necessary to do multiple candidates’ teaching segments without a lift ride between each candidate, the next candidate will be able to gather thoughts while the previous candidate is having his/her follow up with the assessor(s).

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## ADAPTIVE SPECIALIST VERSUS ADAPTIVE CERTIFICATION

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The Adaptive Specialist path allows an Adaptive Alpine Level I Certified instructor to receive recognition for advanced knowledge and skill in **any one or more** adaptive discipline classification (i.e., visual impairment, cognitive, Stand-Up Physical Diagnoses, bi-ski, or mono-ski.). Instructors can receive discipline specific Specialist certificates in any one or more adaptive disciplines at Levels 2 and 3.

For Adaptive Alpine Level II **Certification**, the candidate must pass **all five** of the adaptive discipline specialty certificates plus the Alpine Level II certification to achieve the Adaptive Alpine Level II certification and pin. Instructors may choose to focus and/or specialize in one or more disability classification areas at Level 3 without taking all five adaptive disciplines at Level 2, but must have an Alpine Level II certification before they attempt any of the adaptive discipline Level 3 Specialist certificates. They will achieve the discipline recognition but will not be an Adaptive Alpine Specialist 2 or Adaptive Alpine Level II Certification without completing all five adaptive discipline specialties at Level 2.

Because an instructor's adaptive certification level is tied to their discipline-specific certification (e.g., Alpine Level I, Alpine Level II, or Alpine Level III), the assessment criteria for certification aligns with the Professionalism and Self-Management, People Skills, Teaching Skills, and Technical Skills outlined in the PSIA Alpine Certification Standards. This PSIA Adaptive Alpine Certification Pathways & Specialist Standards document offers brief overviews of those topics and related fundamentals, but primarily provides the assessment criteria for the five skill categories necessary for an instructor to successfully complete a specific adaptive specialty. The five adaptive skill categories are:

1. Equipment and Tactics
2. Diagnoses and Medications
3. Technical Tactics and Communication
4. Movement Analysis
5. Adaptations of Teaching Skills

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## ADAPTIVE SPECIALIST

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Each disability classification is a one-day assessment. Candidates will have two assessors for each module. The five modules are:

1. Visual Impairment (Blind)
2. Cognitive
3. Stand-Up Physical Diagnoses
4. Mono-Ski
5. Bi-Ski

The assessors score each candidate based upon the level of expertise the person exhibits during the assessment. Group activities will include demonstrations, tasks, teaching, individual and group discussions, exploration, and an exchange of ideas as they all relate to adaptive alpine education. Candidates are encouraged to communicate and actively participate during this process because often testing is an experiential environment that might appear to be more of a clinic than an evaluation.

Candidates will be scored by two assessors for each module. Results will be posted or announced as soon as possible. Feedback will be provided in written comments by each assessor for each module. Everything upon which the candidate is evaluated will be consistent with the information in the National Standards for each task in the performance area. The candidate must have an average of 4 or better to be successful for each module.

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## MEMBERSHIP LEVEL: LEVEL II SPECIALIST

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The Adaptive Level II Specialist member is one who has demonstrated commitment and dedication to the ski teaching profession and to his/her own personal development. Adaptive Level II Specialist members have proven their competency by successfully completing the PSIA National Level II Specialist Standard and are considered qualified to provide valuable instruction to students in the intermediate zone in any one or more specific discipline. A candidate for Adaptive Level II Specialist is required to meet the following criterion:

- Be a minimum active Certified Adaptive and Alpine Level I member of PSIA
- It is recommended to be a current employee or volunteer of a recognized snowsports school, agency, or adaptive program.
- Should have training and actual on-the-hill experience teaching people in the intermediate zone.
- Successfully score 80% or greater on the online [Level II Professional Knowledge Exam](#) for the Adaptive classification in which you are being evaluated.
- Please note: While a school director's signature is not required, we strongly encourage you to notify your director so that he or she is both aware of and can help ensure that you are prepared for a successful assessment experience.
- Successfully complete the PSIA Certified Level II Specialist criteria as stated in the Adaptive Alpine Certification Pathways & Specialist Standards

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

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## ADAPTIVE SPECIALIST LEVEL II ASSESSMENT PROCESS

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The Adaptive Specialist assessment is a one-day assessment, open to Adaptive Alpine Level I certified members. Candidates should be prepared to lead the group in beginner through some advanced terrain and adjust their skiing to demonstrate technique and tactics to intermediate-zone students. Instructors relate the Alpine Skiing Fundamentals to ski performance through observation, evaluation, and prescription to help students achieve desired performance objectives. The assessors will coach and evaluate each candidate's teaching skills, and professional knowledge encompassing technical, mechanical, disability understanding including causes and effects and use of adaptive equipment. Candidates will be tested on medication knowledge; knowledge of guest services, safety, and risk management; and various guest populations such as children, seniors, and adults.

### **MEET YOUR GROUP AT THE TIME DESIGNATED - PLEASE BE PUNCTUAL.**

- Participants can expect to share information with the entire group and the assessors related to teaching and skiing experiences and their professional knowledge.
- The day is spent assessing the Technical, Teaching and People Skills compared to the National Standards.
- Candidates will be evaluated on their knowledge of adaptive students, medications, and side effects.
- Candidates will receive marks and comments that will indicate if the standard has been attained.
- An awards ceremony will be held at the end of the day. Assessors will distribute certificates to successful participants.

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## ADAPTIVE SPECIALIST ASSESSMENT - WHAT TO EXPECT

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The candidate must be able to demonstrate the application and analysis of the American Teaching System technical terms, concepts and models listed in the Level II Specialist National Standards. The term application refers to applying classroom learning in novel situations within the setting of the adaptive lesson. Adaptive analysis involves the ability to separate the material or concepts into component parts so that the student can assimilate the lesson's organizational structure. The candidate must also demonstrate a working understanding and working application of disability, medical, and equipment knowledge within the disability classifications they are being evaluated. Also, the candidate must demonstrate the ability to recognize movement patterns in skiers within the disability classifications learning and skiing through the Intermediate Zone.

### **Candidates will be scored in the following areas for Level II Specialist:**

#### **1. Professionalism and Self-Management:**

Contributes to a professional environment by managing their behaviors and emotions in response to others.

## **2. Movement Analysis:**

Articulates accurate cause-and-effect relationships of at least two Alpine Skiing Fundamentals through all phases of the turn, resulting in an effective prescription for change for students, relative to students' adaptive discipline, through the intermediate zone. Consistently demonstrates their ability to work with students by:

- ◆ Describing ski and body performance, relative to two or more Alpine Skiing Fundamentals in all turn phases, and from turn to turn.
- ◆ Linking ski and body performance when describing cause-and-effect relationships in at least two Alpine Skiing Fundamentals in all phases of the turn, and from turn to turn.
- ◆ Evaluating the described performances and comparing them to more ideal performance.
- ◆ Prescribing a specific change in one Alpine Skiing Fundamental using duration, intensity, rate, and timing (DIRT) to create a change in agreed-upon outcomes.
- ◆ Relating how equipment choices, techniques, and tactics affect outcomes through the intermediate zone.

## **3. Equipment and Tactics:**

Demonstrates a refined understanding of appropriate equipment and tactics for students, relative to students' adaptive discipline, based on the cognitive, affective, and physical assessment. Within the lesson components, explains their decision-making process – while demonstrating cause-and effect relationships crucial to improving performance and skill development of students with cognitive diagnoses through the intermediate zone:

- ◆ Appropriate student assessments.
- ◆ Assistive equipment choices. If appropriate
- ◆ Assistive equipment set-up.
- ◆ Assistive technique and tactical choices.

## **4. Diagnoses and Medications:**

Demonstrates a refined understanding of common diagnoses and a basic understanding of common accompanying diagnoses - as well as applicable medication classifications and their potential side effects in relation to the adaptive discipline, skiing performance, and teaching considerations for students in the intermediate zone. Facilitates learning for students with cognitive diagnoses, by explaining, analyzing, and applying a refined knowledge of:

- ◆ Single and multiple diagnoses.
- ◆ Medication classifications and potential side effects.
- ◆ Strategies to prevent, reduce, and safely respond to corollary effects of students' diagnoses and medications.

## **5. Adaptations of Teaching Skills:**

Demonstrates their ability to adapt the Teaching-Skill learning outcomes relative to students' adaptive discipline and adapts the learning experiences as necessary, moving toward the agreed-upon outcomes while engaging them in the process. Consistently demonstrates their ability to work with students by:

- ◆ Periodically reassess student motivations, current performance, and understanding.
- ◆ Collaborating with students to establish and adapt a lesson plan with clear direction and focus.

- ◆ Planning lessons that provide time for play and/or exploration through productive use of movement, practice time, terrain, and applicable behavior management strategies.
- ◆ Pacing learning activities to allow students to move toward agreed-upon outcomes while accommodating for any corollary effects of students' diagnoses and medications.
- ◆ Managing the learning environment and adapting teaching strategies to align with the individual needs of students, both one-on-one and within a group.
- ◆ Providing clear and relevant information (descriptions, demonstrations, and feedback) that encourages learning and engagement.
- ◆ Managing physical and emotional risk to promote engagement in the learning environment.
- ◆ Helping students recognize and understand changes in performance relative to outcomes.
- ◆ Helping students apply improved skills to skiing situations.

## **6. Tech Tactics & Communication:**

Demonstrates a refined understanding of technical tactics and communication strategies for working with and guiding intermediate-zone students' adaptive discipline through the mountain environment. Consistently demonstrates their ability to work with students through the intermediate zone by:

- ◆ Accurately demonstrating procedures for safely navigating the mountain environment.
- ◆ Adjusting personal performance, teaching, and tactics to direct student performance –using duration, intensity, rate, and timing (DIRT) – and accounting for the diagnoses as well as changing snow conditions.
- ◆ Applying and adapting verbal and nonverbal two-way communication to facilitate a change in student performance.

## **Candidates would benefit from having the following experience/background:**

- ◆ Ability to communicate with and guide individuals and small groups in a variety of snow conditions on intermediate terrain (as applicable to the equipment) – observing others, practicing with others, and receiving feedback.
- ◆ Use a variety of equipment options with different populations and recognize the pros and cons of each.
- ◆ Explore distinct types, sizes, adjustments, and purposes of gear in multiple types of terrain and snow conditions.
- ◆ Shadow/observe other instructors to see how they adapt their teaching skills for people with a variety of single and/or concomitant diagnoses, followed by a review and debrief.
- ◆ Identify diagnoses and medication-classification characteristics, informed by a broad range of reliable sources.
- ◆ Analyze efficient and inefficient skiing to better understand best practices relevant to the diagnoses and equipment choices and how those choices positively or adversely affect students' performance of the Alpine Skiing Fundamentals.
- ◆ Plan learning outcomes, implementing learning experiences, and identifying and communicating performance changes in the intermediate zone (as applicable to the equipment).
- ◆ Attending local, regional, and national alpine and adaptive education events.

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## MEMBERSHIP LEVEL: LEVEL III SPECIALIST

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The Adaptive Level III Specialist member is one who has demonstrated commitment and dedication to the ski teaching profession and to his/her own personal development. Adaptive Level III Specialist members have proven their competency by successfully completing the PSIA National Level III Specialist Standard and are considered qualified to provide valuable instruction to students in the advanced zone in any one or more specific discipline. A candidate for Adaptive Level III Specialist is required to meet the following criterion:

- Be a minimum active Certified Adaptive and Alpine Level II member of PSIA
- It is recommended to be a current employee or volunteer of a recognized snowsports school, agency, or adaptive program.
- Should have training and actual on-the-hill experience teaching people in the advanced zone.
- Successfully score 80% or greater on the online [Level III Professional Knowledge Exam](#) for the Adaptive classification in which you are being evaluated.
- Please note: While a school director's signature is not required, we strongly encourage you to notify your director so that he or she is both aware of and can help ensure that you are prepared for a successful assessment experience.
- Successfully complete the PSIA Certified Level III Specialist criteria as stated in the Adaptive Alpine Certification Pathways & Specialist Standards

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

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## ADAPTIVE SPECIALIST LEVEL III ASSESSMENT PROCESS

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The Level III Certified Adaptive Alpine instructor must have the ability to create learning segments for his or her students with the synthesis and evaluation of the PSIA alpine and adaptive technical terms from the American Teaching System, concepts, and models listed in the Level III standards. Synthesis is defined as putting parts together to form a whole, with an emphasis on creating a new meaning or structure. Evaluation refers to the ability to make judgments about the value of ideas or materials. The Level III instructor must also demonstrate a detailed understanding and application of disability, medical, and equipment knowledge in all five disability classifications. The adaptive Level III specialist also must possess the ability to teach and coach students' learning and skiing through the Advanced Zone on all available terrain and in all conditions.

### **MEET YOUR GROUP AT THE TIME DESIGNATED - PLEASE BE PUNCTUAL.**

- Participants can expect to share information with the entire group and the assessors related to teaching and skiing experiences and their professional knowledge.
- The day is spent assessing the Technical, Teaching and People Skills compared to the National Standards.
- Candidates will be evaluated on their knowledge of adaptive students, medications, and side effects.

- Candidates will receive marks and comments that will indicate if the Level III standard has been attained.
- An awards ceremony will be held at the end of the day. Assessors will deliver certificates to successful participants.

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## ADAPTIVE SPECIALIST ASSESSMENT - WHAT TO EXPECT

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The candidate must be able to demonstrate the application and analysis of the American Teaching System technical terms, concepts and models listed in the Level III Specialist National Standards. The term application refers to applying classroom learning in novel situations within the setting of the adaptive lesson. Adaptive analysis involves the ability to separate the material or concepts into component parts so that the student can assimilate the lesson's organizational structure. The candidate must also demonstrate a working understanding and working application of disability, medical, and equipment knowledge within the disability classifications they are being evaluated. Also, the candidate must demonstrate the ability to recognize movement patterns in skiers within the disability classifications learning and skiing through the Advanced Zone.

### **Candidates will be scored in the following areas for Level III Specialist:**

#### **1. Professionalism and Self-Management:**

Contributes to a professional environment by managing their behaviors and emotions in response to others..

#### **2. Movement Analysis:**

Describes cause-and-effect relationships of all Alpine Skiing Fundamentals through all turn phases, resulting in an effective prescription for change for students through all zones. Consistently demonstrates their ability to work with students by:

- ◆ Describing detailed ski and body performance relative to all the Alpine Skiing Fundamentals in blended relationships, in multiple turn phases, and from turn to turn.
- ◆ Linking ski and body performance to describe blended cause-and-effect relationships.
- ◆ Evaluating the described performances and comparing them to more ideal performance.
- ◆ Prescribing a specific change to effect blending of the Alpine Skiing Fundamentals, using duration, intensity, rate, and timing (DIRT) to create a change in desired outcomes.
- ◆ Evaluating equipment-based cause-and-effect relationships relative to the student and their objectives in all zones.

#### **3. Equipment and Tactics:**

Leverages knowledge of equipment and tactics for students, based on the cognitive, affective, and physical assessment. Within the lesson components, leverages their knowledge of cause-and effect relationships to meet goals and improve performance and skill development of advanced-zone students:

- ◆ Appropriate student assessments.



- ◆ Assistive equipment choices.
- ◆ Assistive equipment set-up.
- ◆ Assistive technique and tactical choices.

#### **4. Diagnoses and Medications:**

Leverages knowledge of common diagnoses – as well as applicable medication classifications and their potential side effects – in relation to the adaptive discipline, skiing performance, and teaching considerations for students in all zones. Implements appropriate solutions to improve student performance. Maximizes the performance of students through a process of analysis, prioritization, and integration of advanced knowledge of:

- ◆ Single and multiple diagnoses, including accompanying diagnoses.
- ◆ Medication classifications and potential side effects.
- ◆ Strategies to prevent, reduce, and safely respond to corollary effects of students' diagnoses and medications

#### **5. Adaptations of Teaching Skills:**

Demonstrates their ability to adapt Teaching-Skill learning outcomes relative to students, plan learning outcomes, and create individualized experiences – moving students toward agreed-upon outcomes while optimizing engagement in the process. Consistently demonstrates their ability to work with students by:

- ◆ Continually assess student motivations, performance, and understanding.
- ◆ Collaborating with students to establish and adapt a lesson plan with a common theme, clear direction, and individualized focus throughout the lesson.
- ◆ Planning creative, playful, and exploratory learning experiences in which movement, practice time, and terrain are optimized.
- ◆ Pacing customized learning activities to allow students to explore and/or play toward desired outcomes.
- ◆ Tailoring the learning environment, while adapting teaching strategies, to align with the needs of individuals.
- ◆ Providing clear and relevant information (descriptions, demonstrations, and feedback) that encourage individualized learning.
- ◆ Proactively managing physical and emotional risk to optimize engagement in the learning environment for individuals.
- ◆ Encouraging students to communicate changes in performance and/or understanding.
- ◆ Collaborating with students to apply gained skills to skiing situations.

#### **6. Tech Tactics & Communication:**

Leverages knowledge of technical tactics and communication strategies for working with and guiding all students through the mountain environment. Consistently demonstrates their ability to work with students by:

- ◆ Accurately demonstrating procedures for safely navigating the mountain environment.
- ◆ Anticipating and adjusting personal performance, teaching, and tactics to positively impact and refine accuracy of student performance – using duration, intensity rate, timing, and more – and accounting for changes in terrain and conditions through all aspects of the mountain

environment.

- ♦ Evaluating and influencing students' performance through creative use of verbal and nonverbal two-way communication.

**Candidates would benefit from having the following experience/background:**

- ♦ Ability to communicate with and guide individuals and small groups in a variety of snow conditions on intermediate terrain (as applicable to the equipment) – observing others, practicing with others, and receiving feedback.
- ♦ Use a variety of equipment options with different populations and recognize the pros and cons of each.
- ♦ Explore distinct types, sizes, adjustments, and purposes of gear in multiple types of terrain and snow conditions.
- ♦ Shadow/observe other instructors to see how they adapt their teaching skills for people with a variety of single and/or concomitant diagnoses, followed by a review and debrief.
- ♦ Identify diagnoses and medication-classification characteristics, informed by a broad range of reliable sources.
- ♦ Analyze efficient and inefficient skiing to better understand best practices relevant to the diagnoses and equipment choices and how those choices positively or adversely affect students' performance of the Alpine Skiing Fundamentals.
- ♦ Plan learning outcomes, implementing learning experiences, and identifying and communicating performance changes in the intermediate zone (as applicable to the equipment).
- ♦ Attending local, regional, and national alpine and adaptive education events.

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

The A.D.A. requires testing entities such as PSIA-E to make “reasonable accommodations/modifications” in testing procedures for candidates with disabilities who need such modifications to take the test. Only certain types of modifications are “reasonable.” Under the A.D.A., PSIA-E is not required to make any change to testing procedures that would “fundamentally alter” the test; that is, to change what is being tested. It is imperative that members with disabilities, who are considering applying for a certification assessment, contact the PSIA-E office to discuss their situation.

What is being tested 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.”

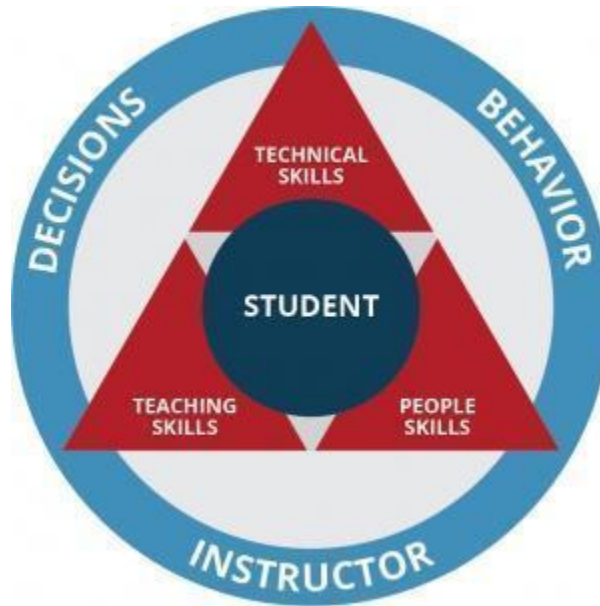
These test requirements cannot be modified without changing what is being tested. All candidates will, therefore, be tested on their ability to perform these and other stated standards. PSIA-E recognizes that these specific standards, and others like them, require candidates to ski upright, on two skis, and that this is not possible for some skiers with disabilities. While PSIA-E cannot fundamentally alter what is being tested by removing or modifying these standards, it does offer two alternatives to candidates who are unable to meet these standards due to disability.

First, candidates may consider PSIA-E Adaptive certification. While there are still physical standards to meet, and the required level of professional knowledge is high, the Adaptive process and the Adaptive examining staff are geared to accommodate most disabilities.

Second, candidates unable to meet the skiing skill requirements of the assessment due to disability, may take the non-skiing skill portions of the PSIA-E certification assessments along with other candidates, and be tested on their teaching ability and professional knowledge. If successful in these two categories, they will receive a Certificate of Successful Completion.

The Teaching and Professional Knowledge portions of PSIA-E certification assessments test candidates on their ability to observe students skiing and advise them accordingly. PSIA-E recognizes that such observation may not be possible for visually impaired candidates. PSIA-E is not required to change what is being tested by removing or modifying this requirement.

Candidates who are deaf, or otherwise hearing or speaking impaired, such that they are not able to hear and/or speak independently to students, are not necessarily precluded from taking an assessment, and may meet the communication requirements using an interpreter. Of course, all candidates, including those with hearing or speaking disabilities will be held to the same standard of substantive knowledge, and their ability to “get the point across” with appropriate accuracy and clarity. See the “PSIA-E Adaptive Education Workbook and Assessment Guide” for further information about Adaptive Certification standards and format.



NOTE: This material is from the *Teaching Snowsports Manual*, 2018, PSIA.

The **Learning Connection<sup>SM</sup>** serves as a framework for the snowsports instructor's development. It breaks effective snowsports instruction into three separate domains: **people skills, teaching skills, and technical skills**. Great instructors adjust and balance their focus between these skills that foster learning and meaningful bonds with their students to create connections.

## PEOPLE SKILLS

A domain of the Learning Connection<sup>SM</sup>, people skills are the personal attributes that enable effective communication and interaction with other people.

People skills are about relating with others in a productive way and showing a genuine desire to establish an environment where positive outcomes can be achieved. The instructor can relate to the student and create an environment where trust can be built between the instructor and student. The instructor has some refined communication with active listening and various tactics that include verbal and nonverbal methods.

### People Skills Fundamentals

- Develop relationships based on trust.
- Engage in meaningful two-way communication.
- Identify, understand, and manage your emotions and actions.
- Recognize and influence the behaviors, motivations, and emotions of others.

## TEACHING SKILLS

Teaching Skills relate to how people learn and determine the roles and responsibilities of the teacher and learner. Teaching Skills also provide practical processes, methods, and best practices to help people learn.

Teaching skills involve understanding relevant learning theories and concepts. Learning is the acquisition of skill and knowledge. Instructors need to develop their teaching skills which takes time,

commitment, and dedication, to effectively help people learn. Helping others to learn is physically, emotionally, and mentally demanding work.

The second part of teaching skills is knowing how to teach an effective lesson by using the learning theories and concepts. Education concepts guide an instructor's behavior and supports the decisions made during a lesson.

### **Teaching Skills Fundamentals**

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

## **TECHNICAL SKILLS**

People and teaching skills give an instructor a foundation for *how* to teach, technical skills give an instructor the tools to determine *what* to teach.

Technical skills are about the purpose, communication, and presentation of technical information within the learning environment. The Five Fundamentals of Alpine Skiing are the specifics of the techniques and mechanics of alpine skiing. Refer to the *Alpine Technical Manual* and *Adaptive Alpine Technical Manual* for the technical skills needed to teach adaptive alpine students.

- **Purpose** – Nation-wide consistency. Having underlying technical understanding of students' current technical abilities and what the student needs to improve to help instructor navigate the lesson. Albert Einstein – “If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough.”
- **Communication** – Common technical language allows instructors to share information and communicate effectively with each other. But do not share too much technical knowledge (don't talk 'em to death). When an instructor links skiing- and riding-specific language to student performance, the instructor makes connection with the student.
- **Presentation** – Teaching.

“Technique” refers to the way skiers move, or the methods they use to apply the mechanics of skiing.

The instructor is able to evaluate students' movements, identify cause and effect relationships and adapt their own skiing/riding to illustrate content being delivered.

### **Technical Skills Fundamentals in all phases of turn.**

- Describe skier performance, relative to skiing fundamentals in all phases of turn.
- Describe how moving certain body parts affect ski performance.
- Prescribe a specific change in one or more skiing fundamentals to create a change toward desired outcome.
- Relate how equipment choice affects skiing outcomes.

The American Teaching System is built on the principle of a student-centered learning partnership that adheres to a guiding set of skiing mechanics. There are five fundamental mechanics of skiing that relate to every desired outcome for all students, including those using adaptive equipment.

The five fundamental mechanics of skiing are:

1. Control the relationship of the center of the body mass to the base of support to direct pressure along the length of the skis.
2. Control pressure from ski to ski and direct pressure to the outside ski.
3. Control edge angles through a combination of inclination and angulation.
4. Control the skis' rotation with leg rotation, separate from the upper body.
5. Regulate the magnitude of pressure created through ski/snow interaction.

## **THE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP**

The Learning Partnership is the relationship between the instructor and the student in terms of the personal characteristics, motivations, knowledge, and experiences that both the instructor and the student bring to the learning environment. It is a collaborative relation that involves a shared commitment to learning, active participation, mutual respect, and trust.

The Learning Partnership includes the Student Profile and the Instructor Profile.

### **Student Profile**

- Backgrounds and personal characteristics
- Past experiences
- Identity, Values, and beliefs
- Attitudes and emotional states
- Goals and motivations
- Physical health and conditioning
- Learning styles and preferences
- Expectations
- Social factors

### **Instructor Profile**

- Sport-specific knowledge and performance
- Teaching experience and understanding of learning theory
- Resort and snowsports school knowledge
- Preferred social style

## **THE TEACHING/LEARNING CYCLE**

NOTE: This material is from the *Teaching Snowsports Manual*, 2018, PSIA.

The Teaching/Learning Cycle identifies phases in which the instructor and students interact to create the learning experience. In other words, the Teaching/Learning Cycle describes the essential interactions between instructors and students.

Each stage of the Teaching/Learning Cycle is the objective to help guide an instructor in *how* to incorporate tactics into their lessons.

### **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.

### **Assess Student**

- 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 student/group.
- Work together to establish specific objectives.
- Partner with students to plan purposeful experiences.
- Check for understanding of goals and objectives.

### **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 which is easy to understand.

### **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.

## **ADAPTIVE STUDENT EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT**

The assessment of an adaptive student is more intricate due to the physical, affective, and cognitive strengths and challenges. The *Adaptive Alpine Technical Manual* and the *Adaptive Instruction Supplement* provide excellent guidance in how to assess an adaptive student and identify any adaptive equipment the student may need to enhance their chance for success. Each adaptive program has a student intake form that provides information on the student's primary and secondary (if any) diagnosis, health history, and additional information the program deems important.

This is a brief outline of some of the factors to consider while assessing the student.

### **I. MEDICAL INFORMATION**

- General physical condition
- Fitness level
- Medications and probable side effects
- Extent and effect(s) of disability
- Mental/Emotional/Learning preference

### **II. BODY FUNCTION**

- Balance: fore/aft, lateral, and horizontal
- Ranges of motion
- Upper body strength: laterally, fore, aft, and arms.
- Lower body strength: laterally, fore, aft and legs.

### **III. EQUIPMENT NEEDS**

- Mono-Ski, Bi-Ski, two skis, one ski, Slider, etc.
- Ski/Board selection (alpine, freestyle, racing/carving, length, width)
- Outriggers
- Ski Bra/Tip stability device, reins/tethers
- Board clamps and reins/tethers
- Poles
- Ski/Snowboard Boot(s)
- Boot modifications (cants, wedges, etc.)
- Adaptation needed for orthotic or prosthetic devices.

### **IV. EQUIPMENT FAMILIARIZATION**

- Description of parts and inspection
- Safety features
- Use of adaptive equipment and stationery (indoor as appropriate) balance practice.
- Proper clothing
- Special considerations for disability while in a skiing environment.