

**American Association of Snowboard  
Instructors  
Eastern Region**



***AASI Level I Assessment Guide***

**Updated August 2023**

# ***The Level I Experience***

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## ***Purpose of This Study Guide***

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This study and preparation guide is intended to provide you with ideas for the process of certification, create a picture of the assessment event, and show steps to consider along the way. AASI Eastern provides this guide to help you navigate the Level I Assessment and to inspire thought. Throughout this document and in your training process you will hear “teaching” and “clinic”. Often, we look at “teaching” lessons as experiences we have with students and “clinic” as experiences we have training and learning with our peers. Your experience with both will be valuable in preparing for the assessment.

## ***What does it mean to be a Certified Instructor?***

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If you are looking for a way to turn your love of skiing and snowboarding into a career or to become a better teacher, pursuing PSIA-AASI certification is for you. Certifications symbolize your credibility and expertise. PSIA-AASI’s certification standards mean that no matter where you come from, you will teach to the same standards as thousands of PSIA-AASI members across the country.

Attaining an AASI Certification means you have demonstrated the necessary riding, teaching, professional, industry knowledge and people skills to prove you meet the National Standard to which you are being assessed. As a professional organization, AASI certification offers you additional professional development and connections with others in the industry. Being a certified member of PSIA-AASI also puts you into a pool of networking and knowledge that can help you find employment, lower the expense of equipment, and have direct contact with some of the industry’s most progressive leaders.

AASI Eastern Region has an active group of professionals who regularly share their passions and help advance the sport through the use of forums like AASI-EAST Facebook Group, writing articles for the SnowPro, and attending off-season meet-ups.

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## ***AASI Snowboard National Standards***

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The AASI Snowboard Certification Standards describe the fundamentals of people, teaching, and technical skills on which you will be assessed at each level of certification. Each level of certification represents stages of ownership. Candidates will be held to the knowledge and performance standards of the level at which they are being assessed.

<https://thesnowpros.org/certification/national-certification-standards/>

Under Certification Standards

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## ***Assessment Form and Assessment Scale***

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**Snowboard Level 1 Assessment Form** [HERE](#) (under Assessment Forms)

During the event you will be assessed in three categories, People Skills, Teaching Skills and Technical Skills, each of which have subcategories that have an associated Learning Outcome. Learning Outcomes represent what is to be achieved upon completion of each level of certification. Each Assessment Criteria is measured on a 6-point scale. The score represents an instructor's ability to demonstrate the essential elements. Instructors in an assessment must score (on average) the "essential elements appear regularly and at a satisfactory level" across **all Assessment Criteria** to achieve the Learning Outcome.

### **Assessment Scale**

1. Essential elements are 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 the required level.
6. Essential elements appear continuously, at a superior level.

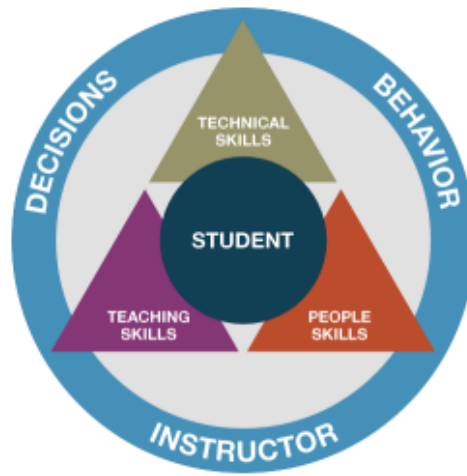
**Terminology you may hear or read coming into the Level 1** \*There is a breakout tab on the [www.thesnowpros.org](http://www.thesnowpros.org) site under the "certification" tab titled, [Terminology Used in Certification Standards](#) that defines these items\*

- Learning Experiences
- Learning Outcomes = LO
- Assessment Activities =AA
- Assessment Criteria = AC
- Integrated Fundamentals
- Individual Fundamentals
- Learning Connection Model = LCM

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## ***PSIA-AASI Learning Connection Model and Fundamentals***

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Learning Connection Model [HERE](#) (Fundamentals tab)

### **PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE FUNDAMENTALS**

- Convey and apply accurate technical information.
- Observe, evaluate, and prescribe (through movement analysis).

### **SNOWBOARDING TECHNICAL FUNDAMENTALS**

- Control the relationship of the center of mass to the base of support to direct pressure along the length of the board.
- Control the relationship of the center of mass to the base of support to direct pressure across the width of the board.
- Regulate the magnitude of pressure created through the board/surface interaction.
- Control the board's tilt through a combination of inclination and angulation.
- Control the board's pivot through flexion/extension and rotation of the body.
- Control the twist (torsional flex) of the board through flexion/extension and rotation.

### **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 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.

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## *Getting Started*

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Please use this guide to help you with Level I training. Below are a few things that will be helpful as you make a plan for your upcoming assessment:

- Preparing for the assessment is **your** responsibility but there are a lot of resources available to help you.
  - o The Eastern and National Websites
    - [easternsnowpros.org](http://easternsnowpros.org)
    - [thesnowpros.org](http://thesnowpros.org)
  - o Your peers at your home resort
  - o Trainers, supervisors, managers, etc. at your home resort
  - o The [AASI East Facebook](#) Group
- AASI is a teaching organization, and the Level 1 assessment is a **teaching focused** assessment.
  - o You will be assessed based on the following criteria:
    - [Link to the Level 1 Assessment Form](#)
      - Instructor Decisions and Behavior
      - People Skills
      - Teaching Skills
      - Movement Analysis
      - Technical Understanding
      - Riding Performance
  - o Each of the criteria carries equal weight and being strong in one area will not offset a need to improve in other areas.
  - o The Level 1 assessment is based on your ability to teach snowboarding in the beginner / novice zone. You should be prepared to teach and have experience teaching students who have never snowboarded before as well as students who are getting comfortable in their ability to turn on green (beginner / novice zone) terrain.
- Training comes in many forms:
  - o Reading educational materials
  - o Participating in discussions
  - o On snow clinics at your home resort
  - o Teaching students
  - o Video analysis

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## ***Application Process***

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### **Choosing a Level 1 Course**

- The event calendar can be found at [easternsnowpros.org](http://easternsnowpros.org) or check with your Ski/Ride School to see where the nearest assessment events are; there might be a Level 1 Assessment event at or near your home resort.
- Pick an assessment that makes financial sense. The further from home you are, the more costs you will incur (food, travel, and accommodation etc.).
- Pick an assessment that will provide you with the experience you seek. An assessment at your home resort may be filled with people you know whereas an assessment at a new resort is a place where you are likely to make new friends and experience teaching and riding at a new location.

### **Course deadline**

- You must be at least 14 years old, a member of PSIA-AASI ([How to Join](#)) and pass the [Snowboard Level I E-Learning](#) course before you can register for a Level I Assessment.
- Register for the event before the course deadline, typically 1 week before the event start date.
- For the best price, register for the event three weeks or more before the event start date.
- You can register at [aasi-e.org](http://aasi-e.org) or over the phone.
- Make sure you register while there are still spots available. If all spots are taken, you can add your name to the waitlist if you have a credit card on file.

### **Members who are not currently/actively connected with a Ski/Ride School and Actively Teaching:**

- It is highly recommended that you are currently employed as an instructor in a snowsports school where you receive on-snow training to teach in the beginner/novice zone. However, if you are **not** currently working in a snowsports school, you **must complete** a PSIA-AASI on-snow Level I Prep event BEFORE you register for the level I on-snow assessment. Or you can register for the 5-Day Level I College which includes both the prep course and the assessment.

### **Office Info**

- Address- 5 Columbia Circle, Albany, NY, 12203
- Phone- (518) 452-6095

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## ***Training in preparation for the Assessment***

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When it comes to training for the assessment here are a few things to consider:

- Training should have equal focus on Teaching, Riding, Movement Analysis and People Skills.

- Meet regularly with your mentor (once every 2 weeks minimum) to keep adjusting goals and ensure training is productive.
- Regularly attend training and apply the concepts you've learned.
- Keep a focus on your riding in your personal time, so that your development continues to occur outside of the clinic environment.
- Meet with peers who have similar goals for the season. This can be done in riding groups on the hill in your spare time or during the evening watching snowboard films or in study groups.
- Practice presenting information in front of your peers.

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## ***Reflection Points for Training***

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As you teach your students and work on your own riding, keep the following Learning Outcomes\* in mind. (\*Learning outcomes clearly explain what you'll be able to do and show after you successfully complete your certification assessment.) Striving to excel in these areas will not only lead to success during your assessment but will also ensure that you deliver a stellar experience to your guests.

Upon successful completion of the assessment, a Level I instructor...

***Instructor Decisions and Behavior—Professionalism and Self-Management:*** Maintains a professional environment by demonstrating self-awareness and self-management.

- Are you keeping yourself and your students safe? For example: do you stop the group in a safe place?
- When you work with your trainer how do you react to feedback? Are you open to change and willing to try new things?

Want to learn more? Check out page 4 of the People Skills Performance Guide ([HERE](#) under Performance Guides) and use it to guide your training.

***People Skills—Communication:*** Engages in meaningful verbal and non-verbal communication with the group as a whole.

- Do you use simple, clear words when you address the group? Does your non-verbal communication support your message?
- What kind of questions can you ask to get to know your group and their goals better?
- Is your feedback useful for the student and easy to understand and put into practice?

Check out the [Teaching Snowsports](#) manual, free in digital format to every current member, to learn more about verbal and non-verbal communication and feedback, and practice the skills you find there.

***People Skills—Relationships with Others:*** Identifies likely motivations and emotions of individuals and understands group dynamics.

- Practice learning the names of everyone in your group in every lesson! Encourage them to have fun with each other.
- Why did your students decide to take a lesson? Chat with them about their motivations and how they are feeling.

Dive deeper into building a rapport with your group and learning about their motivations in chapter 3 of the [Teaching Snowsports](#) manual.

***Teaching Skills—Assess & Plan:*** Plans Learning Outcomes and organizes progressive Learning Experiences relevant to beginner/novice students.

- Take a look at your student's riding, then make a plan with the group that keeps everyone moving.
- Check in with your students often, both visually and verbally, to see whether they understand.
- Provide lots of practice time on appropriate terrain.

For more ideas about creating Learning Experiences, check out pages 112-125 of the [Teaching Snowsports manual](#).



**Teaching Skills–Implement:** Facilitates Learning Experiences that guide students toward the agreed-upon outcome and engages them in the process.

- Do you lead activities that move progressively toward the goals of the group, giving plenty of time for exploration?
- Do you provide clear descriptions and perform demonstrations that match them?
- Do you give feedback to the whole group and to each person in it to help guide practice time?

Practice understanding and teaching all the elements of the beginner/novice zone progression found in chapter 7 of the [Snowboard Technical Manual](#), free in digital format if snowboarding is your primary discipline.

**Teaching Skills–Reflect/Review:** Communicates performance changes that target the learning outcome to help students identify that a change has been made.

- Watch for your students to have that “ah-ha!” moment and celebrate with them! Help them to understand what changes have occurred in their riding and why.
- Challenge your students to use their new skills in a different turn size or shape, or on new terrain, and guide them to the next steps in their learning.

Practice wrapping up your lessons using the Review and Preview part of the Teaching/Learning Cycle, found in chapter 3 of the [Teaching Snowsports manual](#).

**Technical Skills–Movement Analysis:** Articulates an accurate cause-and-effect relationship between body and board performance within any single snowboarding fundamental in a specific phase of a turn/ATML – taking equipment choices and stance setup into consideration – to offer a relevant prescription for change.

- How does your student’s movement cause a certain performance in the board? Would another movement help the student reach their goal more efficiently?
- Can you describe movement and prescribe change in words that are simple for the student to understand? Could you explain them to another instructor in terms of the fundamentals?
- How does equipment choice impact your riding and that of your students?

Check out the [Teaching Snowsports](#) manual to learn more about what the snowboarding technical fundamentals are. You will learn how to use them as a tool to understand what you see in your students, why common problems might be happening, and how to guide your students to a change in performance.

**Technical Skills–Riding Performance:** Utilizes the snowboarding fundamentals to demonstrate specific outcomes.

- Ride different turn sizes and shapes and on varying terrain and conditions, switching up the timing, intensity, or duration (TID) of your movements to change the outcome as you wish.
- Work on blending at least two snowboard technical fundamentals while you practice skidded turns, carved turns, and simple freestyle moves.

Check out the Snowboarding Technical Skills Performance Guide ([HERE](#) under Snowboard technical performance guide pages 4-7) for more information on incorporating knowledge of the snowboarding technical fundamentals into your riding. Learn more about TID in the [Snowboard Technical Manual](#).

**Technical Skills–Technical Understanding:** Uses current PSIA-AASI resources to identify and describe elements of a personal or observed performance, applying the snowboarding fundamentals and considering tactics and equipment choices.

- Learn the information that fuels the masters of our craft! Read our reference materials, and each time you learn a new concept, take it out on the hill and focus on how it impacts your next lesson.
- As you ride, think about how you would describe a specific part of the turn or freestyle move in terms of the snowboarding technical fundamentals.

Some topics for study might include the following from the [Teaching Snowsports](#) manual:

- the teaching/learning cycle
- teaching styles
- learning styles
- the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modes of receiving sensory input

The following topics from the [Snowboard Technical Manual](#) will be important to explore:

- the motor learning cycle
- reference alignments
- movement analysis

Find more information and examples of successful performance in the Snowboarding Technical Skills Performance Guide, the People Skills Performance Guide, and the Teaching Skills Performance Guide.

[HERE](#) under performance guides

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## ***Details of the Level 1 Assessment***

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### **Agenda:**

- You are being assessed for the duration of the day.

### **Day 1**

- 8:45am
  - Meet your group at the specified meeting location for and check-in. Arrive geared up ready to ride on snow.
- 8:45 am - 9:00 am
  - Group Introductions and Ed Staff Announcements.
- 9:00 am - 4:00pm
  - On snow group assessment.
  - 30 - 45 minute lunch break will be provided. Be prepared to eat at the resort.
  - Quick breaks are provided for restroom use. Warm up breaks are infrequent and only provided during severe weather conditions. Be prepared for a full day on-snow.
- 4:00pm
  - End of Day 1. Groups are encouraged but not required to network and socialize during the dinner hours with event participants from their event and other concurring events.

## Day 2

- 8:45am
  - Meet your group at the specified meeting location provided by the Ed Staff Member on Day 1. Arrive geared up ready to ride on snow.
- 9:00 am - 4:00pm
  - On snow group assessment. Quick breaks are provided for restroom use. Warm up breaks are infrequent and only provided during severe weather conditions.
  - A 30-45 minute lunch break or a quick snack break will be provided. Be prepared to eat at the resort.
  - Ed Staff will leave to complete evaluations and any necessary paperwork at the end of assessments. Candidates are free to ride and do what they choose.
- ~ 5:00 pm (night assessments run on a different schedule)
  - Awards Ceremony and Presentation of Outcomes.
  - Successful candidates will be announced. After receiving your results, you are highly encouraged to speak with your examiner and receive additional feedback.
  - *(Ceremony time may vary based on a variety of circumstances; the Ed Staff will communicate if there are any unexpected delays to the awards ceremony and work with candidates to make adjustments based on travel needs and extenuating circumstances.)*
- Within 24 hours of event closure
  - Candidates will receive electronic feedback and assessment forms.
  - Candidates will receive an event evaluation survey. Please complete this survey at the end of all events.

## Equipment & Gear:

- Ride and wear gear you are familiar with during the assessment
- Bring spare equipment or an extra set up (if available) in case of malfunction
- Bring clothing that will allow you to stay outside in **all weather conditions**, and extra layers in case of cold or wet weather
- Other items such as a tool, rub on wax, hand and toe warmers, extra goggles are recommended but not required. As such, these are a personal choice.

## Teaching Expectations:

### Overview

A Level 1 Assessment candidate should come to the Level 1 Assessment planning to demonstrate how their personal experience and knowledge help them to teach students in the beginner and novice zones of the mountain and on extra small and small freestyle features. Each candidate should expect to spend 15 - 25 minutes demonstrating their ability to teach lessons in the beginner and novice zones of the mountain. Teaching Topics can include (but are not limited to) all phases of a beginner lesson from the stage of meeting a guest through linking turns, carving, riding boxes, jumping, grabs, and pressure tricks (butter, ollies, etc.). Candidates should come practiced and proficient at teaching any/all of those topics regularly at a satisfactory or better level. During the Teaching Assessment, Level 1 candidates will be assessed on their Teaching Skills,

People Skills, and Instructor Decisions and Behaviors. Candidates should expect to spend time in front of the group creating learning experiences for other group members, participating in both group and 1-on-1 conversations with the Examiner(s), and engaging with all other group members in a positive manner. Teaching activities are based on the needs, motivations, and riding performance of beginners through novice students.

### **Learning Outcomes**

#### **Teaching Skills**

- **Assess & Plan:** Plans learning outcomes and organizes progressive learning experiences relevant to beginner/novice students.
- **Implement:** Facilitate learning experiences that guide students toward agreed upon outcomes and engages them in the process.
- **Reflect/Review:** Communicate performance change that targets the learning outcome to help students identify a change has been made.

#### **People Skills**

- **Communication:** Engages in meaningful verbal and non-verbal communication with the group as a whole.
- **Relationships with Others:** Identifies likely motivations and emotions of individuals and understands group dynamics.

#### **Instructor Decisions & Behavior**

- **Professionalism and Self-Management:** Maintains a professional environment by demonstrating self-awareness and self-management.

## **Riding Performance**

- Assessed on the rider's ability to Integrate Fundamentals, Highlight Individual Fundamentals, modify T.I.D. to affect outcomes (Versatility) and adjust speed and tactics to suit conditions, speed, terrain and riding activity.
- Riding activities will be demonstrated by the examiner.
- The examiner will choose terrain including but not limited to groomed green, blue and black trails, extra-small to small freestyle features, intermediate bumped/ungroomed terrain.

## **Movement Analysis**

- Assessment criteria may be demonstrated and assessed through observations of the general public, peer-to-peer activities (including teaching segments), and video analysis.
- Candidates can expect to provide information and answer questions for each of the assessment criteria in reference to the rider being analyzed or to the desired outcome in the beginner/novice zone.

## **Technical Understanding**

- Demonstrated and assessed in various on-snow and/or off-snow Assessment Activities including group discussions, Q&A sessions, E-Learning courses, and written tests.
- These Assessment Activities create opportunities for you to demonstrate your technical understanding as related to your personal riding performance or desired outcome.

## **Professionalism and Self-Management**

- Participate in the assessment from the beginning of the day at check-in to the end of the day.
- Interactions with examiner, other candidates, resort employees, and resort guests are all taken into consideration.
- There is an expectation to behave as a professional
- Follow Your Responsibility Code at all times.

## **People Skills**

- Communication and relationships with others are assessed not only while candidates teach their peers in a lesson, but throughout the event.
- While you are expected to participate in group discussion, you are not expected to provide comments on every single topic. Leave room for everyone to contribute.
- Do your part to create a positive group dynamic. You are not in competition, there are enough pins for everyone.

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## ***Reference Materials and Further Reading***

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### **Online Resources:**

- [PSIA-AASI Level 1 Video](#)
- [Snowboard Level 1 E-Learning Course](#)
- [Course for New Instructors](#)
- [Delivering the Beginner Experience](#)
- [AASI-Eastern Snowboard Event Schedule](#)
- The Learning Connection Model [HERE](#) under Fundamentals

### **Books:**

- [Snowboard Technical Manual](#)
- [Teaching Snowsports Manual](#)

### **Standards:**

- Snowboard Certification Standards [HERE](#) under Certification Standards
- Responsibility Code [Updated](#)

### **Performance guides:**

The Performance Guides have examples of successful and unsuccessful contributors. As you read through them, pay more attention to the successful ones. Each line item from the assessment form has a chart/table in the performance guides. When studying the Performance Guides, it helps to keep the assessment form in front of you for reference. Make sure to read the heading for the correct level you are looking to learn about

Performance Guides [HERE](#) under Performance Guides