

Professional Ski Instructors of America



Telemark Certification Standards 2015

National Standards: Level I, Level II, and Level III

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Registered	4
3. Level I	8
4. Level II	10
5. Level III	12
6. Telemark Certification Teaching Standards	14

1. Introduction

The following are the PSIA Certification Standards for Telemark (aka Nordic Downhill Skiing).

Terminology used throughout is consistent with PSIA's new *Telemark Technical Manual* and *Alpine Technical Manual* (both published in 2014), as well as *Core Concepts for Snowsports Instructors* (2001), the *Nordic Technical Manual* (2005), and the 2002 *Alpine Technical Manual*. These standards provide a training focus, and represent a minimum competency for each level of certification.

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

2. Registered (Educational outline for use by home school or for divisional training)

Registered instructor is PSIA's entry level of membership, designed to provide an educational introduction to ski teaching. The Registered-level event is conducted according to divisional criteria, and is not a level of certification recognized nationally by PSIA. Therefore, the criteria for Registered-level instructors within the National Standards serves only as a guideline for establishing divisional education criteria that prepares Registered-level instructors to meet future levels of certification according to the nationally recognized standards for Levels I, II, and III.

Category A: PSIA-AASI Education

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

The instructor will be able to:

1. Introduction to PSIA-AASI

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

2. Ski Industry

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

3. Professionalism

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

Category B: Skiing

Registered-level instructors must demonstrate the ability to ski safely on terrain common to the beginner/novice zone, and to consistently demonstrate the fundamental elements of stance and balance in a form that creates understanding and encourages further development. No specific parameters are set for the performance of any maneuvers until Level I certification. *(The term “balance” in the following descriptions refers to appropriate flex in the joints to keep the hips over the feet; proper hand and arm position; forward vision; appropriate stance width; and basic movements that facilitate fore/aft and lateral balance.)*

The instructor will be able to demonstrate the following in either telemark or alpine technique:

1. A balanced, athletic stance
2. Balance in a straight run
3. Balance in a traverse
4. Balance in a sideslip
5. Wedge turns
6. Slow, open telemark turns representative of new skiers on accelerated learning equipment

Category C: Core Concept Education

Core concept education for Registered instructors explores the personal motivation for teaching, and promotes a teaching style/learning environment guided by emotional involvement. Registered-level instructors must demonstrate understanding of risk management and safe class handling with beginner/novice zone students. Registered instructors have an awareness of basic physical, mental, and social characteristics of students, especially with regard to teaching children.

The instructor can:

1. Core ideals

- a. Describe personal motivation for becoming a snowsports instructor
- b. Describe personal strengths and weaknesses relative to the communication and people skills required to effectively teach snowsports

2. Understanding students

- a. Demonstrate an awareness of physical, cognitive, and affective development in a variety of student populations
- b. Demonstrate an awareness of physical, cognitive, and affective development in children

3. Class Handling and Organization

- a. Recognize the impact and importance of developing trust in the learning environment
- b. Manage risks present in the mountain environment in a responsible manner
- c. Demonstrate an ability to provide individual attention to students in a class
- d. Provide a beginner/novice zone lesson format based on the guidelines of the American Teaching System (ATS) and one's home resort

4. Risk Management

- a. Recite "Your Responsibility Code" and teach it to students at one's home resort
- b. Practice class handling that demonstrates appropriate decision-making based upon risk management principles

5. Customer Service

- a. Identify key elements of a student-centered and experience-oriented approach to teaching
- b. Relate various customer services at one's home resort to ski school students
- c. Demonstrate customer-oriented behaviors that create relationships with guests and students

Category D: Telemark Technical Education

The level of proficiency required of Registered-level instructors is defined by a general awareness of basic technical issues, and an ability to demonstrate typical movements and tasks of beginner/novice zone skiing.

The instructor can...

1. Skills Concept

- a. Identify and define the four categories of skills

2. Phases of the turn

- a. Identify the three phases of a turn
- b. Identify dominant movements and skill areas during a turn typical of a student in the beginner/novice zone

3. Equipment

- a. Characterize the type of rental equipment most often seen at the home resort
- b. Describe proper fit of boots, ways to check the fit of students' boots, and methods of adjustment in fit
- c. Describe proper ski lengths for beginner/novice zone students

- d. List required clothing and safety items

4. Movement Analysis

- a. Recognize basic aspects of proper stance and sliding balance
- b. List activities that highlight specific movements relative to chosen categories of the Skills Concept

5. Stepping Stones

- a. Identify the basic principle of the *stepping stones*, as described in the *Telemark Technical Manual* (2014)
- b. Describe the teaching progression favored at one's home resort for teaching first-time skiers

3. **Level I**

Level I-certified members demonstrate a solid foundation of information and experience necessary to be an effective ski instructor. The Level I instructor possesses an understanding of *basic* skiing skills, teaching skills, and professional knowledge. It is not expected that Level I candidates will have *in-depth* knowledge and experience in each of the areas of competence listed in these standards. It *is* expected, however, that candidates will be able to show *basic* competence and knowledge in all of these areas. In addition, candidates are expected to demonstrate a *significant* level of competency with the skiing and teaching tasks listed specifically for assessment at a Level I event.

Category A: Skiing

Level I instructors must be able to ski all green and groomed blue terrain, demonstrating consistent balance and control of speed through turn shape. Demonstrations must display an “understandable picture” of the technical elements of beginner/novice zone skiing. The turn dynamics are limited by the speeds and terrain appropriate for beginner/novice zone skiing and tasks.

The instructor is able to...

1. General Characteristics

- a. Maintain a balanced stance throughout a series of turns
- b. Maintain consistent speed by controlling the shape of a turn
- c. Reduce speed without interrupting overall flow and rhythm
- d. Consistently link turns with sustained rhythm
 - Combine the movement of the body and poles
 - Adequately direct the center of mass in the direction of travel
 - Use poles
- e. Demonstrate an appropriate blend of skills (with consideration for the snow conditions, equipment, terrain, etc.)
- f. Ski a variety of turn sizes within a series of turns while maintaining speed control
- g. Demonstrate the “visual cues for effective telemark skiing”* relative to edge-, rotational-, and pressure-control movements in demonstrations and tasks common to beginner/novice zone skiers

*“Visual Cues for Effective Telemark Skiing,” from the *Nordic Technical Manual* do not address alpine stances. For these please refer to the “Visual Cues for Effective Skiing” in the *Alpine Technical Manual* (2002).

Please see the Matrix for Telemark Certification Standards, p. 14.

Describes specific skills at Level I

Category B: Teaching

Level I instructors demonstrate a solid foundation of information and experience necessary to be an effective instructor of beginner/novice zone skiers. A basic understanding of how to manage the Learning Partnership.

Please see the chart for Telemark Certification Standards, p. 14.

Describes specific skills at Level I

Category C: Professional Knowledge

Professional knowledge requirements for Level I instructors reflect a practical awareness of general terms and concepts, and an ability to use these concepts in basic lesson situations for beginner/novice zone students. Decision-making and lesson content will most likely follow preplanned options, with consideration for different skill development emphasis.

Please see the Matrix for Telemark Certification Standards, p. 14.

Describes specific skills at Level I

4. **Level II**

The Level II-certified member is one who has demonstrated commitment and dedication to the ski teaching profession and to his/her own personal development. Level II members are considered qualified to provide valuable instruction to a majority of ski school guests. A Level II instructor demonstrates the ability to relate movements and skill areas to movement outcomes and to apply that knowledge to teaching situations common to intermediate zone skiers. Level II instructors have a global understanding of the ski industry and are able to classify their responsibilities as a part of the resort team.

Category A: Skiing

Level II instructors have the skills to make short-, medium-, and long-radius turns on blue and groomed black terrain with minimal skidding. Skis make two separate, relatively defined arcs in the snow from before the fall line to completion. Skill application and accuracy may vary with terrain and snow conditions. Demonstrations should illustrate accurate movement patterns and reflect turn dynamics relative to the speeds and forces common to intermediate-zone skiers.

The instructor is able to:

1. General Characteristics

- a. Maintain a balanced stance throughout a series of turns
- b. Use ski design and skill blending to shape telemark and parallel turns
- c. Link turns of consistent rhythm and size, such as a series of short or long turns
 - Blend the movements of the body and poles moving from turn to turn
 - Move the COM across the skis actively
 - Use pole movement to aid the flow and rhythm of the turn
- d. Reduce and maintain speed by adjusting turn shape without interrupting overall flow and rhythm
- e. Demonstrate a variety of turns
- f. Apply appropriate tactics and vary skill applications in a variety of conditions, including ungroomed snow or powder
- g. Demonstrate different types of skill blends in exercises, tasks, and turns, upon request
- h. Demonstrate the “visual cues for effective telemark skiing” * relative to edging, rotary and pressure control movements in demonstrations and tasks common to Intermediate zone skiers

* “*Visual Cues for Effective Telemark Skiing*,” from the *Nordic Technical Manual* do not address alpine stances. For these please refer to the “*Visual Cues for Effective Skiing*” in the *Alpine Technical Manual* (2002).

Please see the Matrix for Telemark Certification Standards, p. 14.

Describes specific skills at Level II

Category B: Teaching

Level II-certified instructors demonstrate an understanding of basic learning theory, communication and people skills, and human development. Practical knowledge of these concepts is required for students and teaching situations through intermediate-zone lessons. Level II instructors demonstrate the ability to adapt the lesson environment to meet a variety of options in the Learning Partnership.

Please see the Matrix for Telemark Certification Standards, p. 14.

Describes specific skills at Level II

Category C: Professional Knowledge

Professional knowledge for Level II instructors reflects a basic understanding of general terms and concepts applicable through the intermediate zone. Application of teaching concepts in actual lesson situations should reveal an ability to correctly interpret student behavior and performance, and to deliver technical content through relevant activities and simple language.

Please see the Matrix for Telemark Certification Standards, p. 14.

Describes specific skills at Level II

5. **Level III**

The Level III-certified member is one whose high levels of skill and knowledge allow him or her to make an uncompromised contribution to the customer, PSIA-AASI, and the ski industry. A Level III member has the ability to assess all variables with regard to student personality traits, goals, abilities, needs, the learning environment, conditions of the day, available terrain, equipment, etc. – and to synthesize these parts into a viable lesson plan. A Level III instructor can make adjustments to lesson goals and is able to appropriately adjust or modify lesson content as required by any situation.

Category A: Skiing

Level III instructors should have the skills to make short-, medium-, and long-radius turns with little or no skidding. The skis make two well-defined arcs from before the fall line to turn completion. Terrain and snow conditions should have a minimal effect on skill application, movement accuracy, and turn outcome. Turn dynamics should represent the terrain, speed, and snow conditions common to advanced-zone skiing. A Level III instructor has the ability to maintain dynamics and movement accuracy through most conditions, on any terrain on most mountains.

The instructor is able to:

1. General Characteristics

- a. Ski dynamic-telemark and parallel turns on any terrain on most mountains
- b. Reduce, maintain and generate speed without interrupting overall flow and rhythm
 - Consciously affect the movements of the body with pole movements to complement turn outcome
 - Actively and accurately move the center of mass from turn to turn with little interruption of rhythm and flow
 - Apply appropriate poling movements to specific turn shapes/tactics
- c. Ski a variety of turn sizes and shapes and apply them to different mountain situations
- d. Demonstrate different types of skill blends and movement patterns in exercises, tasks, and turns upon request, and as applied in different mountain situations
- e. Maintain control over turn shape and speed while skiing most conditions on any terrain on most mountains Demonstrate the “visual cues to effective telemark skiing”^{*} relative to edging, rotary and pressure control movements in demonstrations and tasks common to Advanced zone skiers

^{*}“Visual Cues for Effective Telemark Skiing,” from the *Nordic Technical Manual* do not address alpine stances. For these please refer to the “Visual Cues for Effective Skiing” in the *Alpine Technical Manual* (2002).

Please see the Matrix for Telemark Certification Standards, p. 14.

Describes specific skills at Level III

Category B: Teaching

Level III instructors must demonstrate an in-depth understanding of basic learning theory, communication and people skills, and human development issues. They must also display mastery of human development knowledge for all skiing populations (i.e., age, gender). Application of these concepts must produce a clear and concise delivery of information, and an uncomplicated learning environment through advanced-zone lessons.

Please see the Matrix for Telemark Certification Standards, p. 14.

Describes specific skills at Level III

Category C: Professional Knowledge

Professional knowledge for Level III instructors reflects a strong, accurate understanding of skiing terminology and concepts beyond the scope of ski teaching manuals. Related industry sources, ski coaching, and familiarity with various peripheral resources promote well-rounded teaching with the capacity to create exceptional experiences for most students, in most conditions, and on any terrain at most mountains.

Please see the Matrix for Telemark Certification Standards, p. 14.

Describes specific skills at Level III

6. Telemark Certification Teaching Standards

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Level I – Beginner/Novice Zone <p><i>The candidate is able to...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Level II - Intermediate Zone <p><i>...and the candidate is able to...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Level III - Advanced Zone <p><i>...and the candidate is able to...</i></p>
<i>Awareness, Understanding and Knowledge</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand the coach/student relationship and how to develop trust between them ● Recall the components of the learning environment and discuss how they affect lesson outcomes ● Identify the components of the Teaching Cycle ● Demonstrate knowledge of the teaching, skiing, and guest service principles of ATS, relative to beginner/novice-zone students ● Understand student needs of specific groups (i.e., student makeup) ● List considerations for managing the learning environment for children at different stages of development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consider and address safety concerns as students move beyond the beginner/novice zone learning environment ■ Understand and identify the components of the learning process, and relate these concepts to individual learning styles and preferences ■ Understand the importance of options in lesson plans based upon the mental, emotional, and physical needs (development) of individual students ■ Demonstrate the components of effective feedback in the learning environment ■ Accurately distinguish “What is happening” with regard to movement analysis ■ Formulate lesson plan options for a variety of student needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Consider safety concerns as students move beyond the intermediate zone learning environment ◆ Make specific lesson plan decisions based upon accurate interpretation of student behavior and performance ◆ Adjust the depth and pacing of information and feedback to address the needs, motivation, and interest level of the students ◆ Address a variety of learning styles and use various feedback systems to facilitate an experiential learning environment ◆ Identify the elements of Multiple Intelligences theory and relate these concepts to sensory preferences in communication and information exchange ◆ Describe, in depth, the skier services and activities available at one’s home area as well as within the ski industry ◆ Display a strong ability to answer the “How do I get

		<p>there?" question regarding movement analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Display an in-depth understanding of cause-and-effect relationships relative to skill references and specific movement issues ◆ Create effective lesson plans through a strong understanding of people and ski technique
Application		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teach the public through the beginner/novice zone ● Demonstrate an ability to develop a relationship of trust between teacher and students ● Identify learning styles and preferences and cite examples of how to use them in a lesson ● Recognize the importance of <i>stepping stones/progression use</i> to identify a pathway to learning based on the needs of students specific to the instructor's home area ● Handle a class based on group energy level, conditions, safety, and lesson content ● Predict and meet the needs of specific groups (i.e., student makeup) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teach the skiing public through the intermediate zone ■ Identify the personality traits and learning preferences of students, and make broad adjustments in lesson plans and delivery to accommodate those traits/preferences ■ Work with ranges of student performance and personalities within a group; maintain group cohesiveness and a personal, emotional attachment with students and the learning environment ■ Make technical lesson-content decisions based upon both movement analysis observations and student desires and needs through the intermediate zone ■ Demonstrate an effective balance between the amount of information and the amount of practice time; display an effective use of teaching activities ■ Develop accurate lesson-plan options that tailor lesson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Teach the skiing public through the advanced zone ◆ Account for the mental, emotional, social, and physical cues encountered with students in most lesson situations ◆ Consider the conditions of the day to create meaningful and safe experiences ◆ Make technical and/or tactical lesson-content decisions based upon specific movement analysis observations, as well as non-movement factors (mental, emotional, physical) ◆ Encourage students to become responsible for their own learning ◆ Teach lessons characterized by a continuously developing lesson plan based on observations and the development and adjustment of guest goals; rather than a preconceived lesson plan based upon initial perceptions

	situations to individual needs and goals	
Terminology		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define and explain basic skiing terminology as described in the <i>Telemark Technical Manual</i> ● Define and explain basic terminology as described in the <i>Core Concepts</i> manual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Define and understand terminology as described in the <i>Telemark Technical Manual</i> ■ Relate skiing terminology to students in simple language; communicating <i>what, why,</i> and <i>how</i> the terms and concepts apply to individual students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Demonstrate a strong understanding of industry wide terminology ◆ Display an ability to compare and contrast various types of information regarding skiing and ski teaching from a variety of resources ◆ Demonstrate the ability to translate most skiing terminology into layman's terms
Equipment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify equipment needs for skiers through the beginner/novice zone ● Categorize the basic options and benefits of modern ski designs ● Identify common equipment safety issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe changing equipment needs as students move through the intermediate zone ■ Understand the options, solutions, and benefits modern designs provide; provide general guidance for selecting equipment ■ Understand and convey the intended benefits of equipment design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Describe changing equipment needs as skiers move through advanced zone ◆ Tailor lesson plans to fit student equipment capabilities ◆ Serve as an industry ambassador, shop liaison, and general authority for equipment questions and advice
Skills Concept		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss the role of balance relative to the other skill categories and movements ● Identify effective movements and skill development through the beginner/novice zone ● Understand the concept of skill blending, and identify 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand the connections between movements and skills, and how changes in movements affect skill blends ■ Understand the application of the Skills Concept to ski performance, movement patterns, and ski-to-snow interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Understand appropriate application of the Skills Concept (as a tool to communicate, organize, and assist the teaching of movements) ◆ Understand and utilize the controlling elements of skiing movements (duration,

<p>how different skill blends create different outcomes regarding ski performance for a beginner/novice-zone skier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teach an accurate skill blend for beginner/novice-zone skiers ● Develop beginner/novice-zone skiers along a track to telemark skiing that is appropriate to their snowsports background ● Create an activity list for each skill category 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand how various skill blends are applied to specific intermediate-zone skiing situations relative to terrain, conditions, and desired student outcome ■ Use specific activities to target specific skill development 	<p>intensity, rate, and timing) relative to skill blending</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Apply skill blending to tactical choices in a variety of conditions
<h3><i>Movement Analysis</i></h3>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recognize movement patterns relative to skill categories in beginner/novice-zone skiers ● Identify desired skill and movement outcomes in various types of beginner/novice-zone skiing ● List exercises and tasks that address a student's needs, the equipment being used, terrain options, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand the “visual cues of effective telemark skiing” relative to Intermediate zone applications ■ Understand cause-and-effect relationships between movements and resultant ski performance in intermediate-zone skiing ■ Describe the forces acting on a skier in a turn; relate how a skier uses muscular effort and movements to manage these forces ■ Consider non-performance factors such as age, past experience, conditioning etc., when analyzing the ability of students ■ Communicate movement analysis information to students in simple language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Incorporate all aspects of student-teacher communication as a part of movement analysis, assessing personality traits such as motivation and emotion in addition to actual skiing performance ◆ Understand the “visual cues of effective telemark skiing” relative to advanced-zone skiing applications ◆ Understand cause-and-effect in relation to skill blending, ski performance, body movements and tactics in advanced-zone skiing ◆ Use informal movement analysis (in addition to formal situations) to constantly monitor all aspects of movement and movement patterns as an ongoing process throughout a lesson ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness and performance of practice

		activities, and continuously adjust lesson plans accordingly
<i>Personal Mastery</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify and develop a vision for personal growth as a snowsports teacher ● Understand the pathways for personal and professional growth by identifying the resources available both inside and outside of PSIA-AASI ● Plan short- and long-range schedules for training and certification goals ● Know, abide by, and teach “Your Responsibility Code” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Include resort-wide interests in all lesson situations, addressing student needs beyond learning to ski ■ Demonstrate an ability to handle internal and external conflict resolution ■ Demonstrate an ability to interact in resort areas outside of the lesson environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Seek outside education options to promote a broader understanding of the sport ◆ Seek involvement in helping less experienced teachers