



Certification Study Guide

Level I

Contents

Contents	.....	2
Why certification	.....	3
What to expect	.....	3-7
Exam schedule	.....	8
How to prepare	.....	8-9
Study questions	.....	10
Lesson design	.....	11
Score card	.....	12
Resources	.....	13

Why certification?

Considering the investment of time and money required for certification, why should you bother? After all, the potential return on your financial investment is usually marginal, and the process puts a certain amount of self-esteem on the line.

To begin with, consider the larger question of why AASI and PSIA exist. All fields of endeavor have societies of one sort or another. Some act as educational bodies, publishing peer-reviewed journals and holding conferences. Others act as certifying or licensing bodies, allowing its members to work in the field. The public generally assumes that members of a professional society have a basic level of knowledge about the field. Would you go to a doctor who didn't have a license? How about an attorney who didn't pass the bar exam? Would you enroll at a University that didn't hire Ph.D. faculty, or hire a construction company that didn't have engineers with college degrees?

Consider the certification question this way: Except for the occasional billionaire dropout, you need a degree to get ahead. Think of AASI certification the same way. You might succeed without it, but Level I certification will show you're serious about teaching. Additional certifications may or may not be in your future, but you will have taken your first decisive step.

Some countries actually require certification before a person is permitted to teach snowboarding or skiing, or to own a school. Though certification has never been required to teach snowboarding in the United States, many schools have policies that reward instructors for being or becoming certified. Hiring certified instructors assures resorts and the public that they are getting a well-trained, highly-qualified professional. This makes it a little easier to sell your services.

In addition to the professional reasons for certification, consider the personal reasons. In preparing for certification, you can train with some of the best instructors available. You can read the latest literature on teaching, riding, and equipment. You can put all this knowledge to work and deliver better lessons. And at the end of it all, you can be recognized by your peers for your efforts. Certification is well worth it -- professionally and personally. It can help you become a sought-after employee, a respected teacher, and a better rider. Go for it.

What to expect

Certification standards

[View the Snowboard Certification Standards @ THESNOWPROS.ORG national website.](http://thesnowpros.org)

You will be scored in three areas: Teaching, riding, and professional knowledge. You must pass all three areas to become Level I certified.

Teaching

The successful Level I candidate will demonstrate the ability to present a teaching segment in a safe, effective manner that demonstrates the knowledge and comprehension of the AASI technical terms, concepts, and models listed below. The successful candidate will demonstrate the ability to teach a spectrum of riders, children to adults, from first-time riders to those who are learning and riding all green terrain, groomed blue terrain, and small freestyle features.

Teaching Standards

The successful Level I candidate will demonstrate the ability to present a teaching segment in a safe, effective manner that displays the knowledge and comprehension of AASI technical terms, concepts, and models listed in this document. The successful candidate will demonstrate the ability to teach a spectrum of riders, children to adults, and from first-time riders to those who are learning and riding all green terrain, groomed blue terrain, and small freestyle features.

Candidates will be evaluated on their knowledge and application of the following:

- Safety, Your Responsibility Code, Park Smart
- Use of AASI Snowboard Teaching System (STS) concepts
- Presentation of logical progressions, from simple to complex, that are appropriate for the skill level of each student and relevant to task and desired outcome
- Accurate demonstrations appropriate to the task and skill level of students
- Professionalism at all times
- Use of feedback models that are timely, appropriate, and accurate
- Communication skills
- Group handling appropriate for terrain, task, and skill level of students
- Recognition and appropriate adaptation to ages and stages of development
- Use of appropriate terrain for task and skill level of student
- Pacing of lesson appropriate for student profile
- Ability to adjust presentation of lesson content to accommodate different lesson types.

Movement Analysis and Technical Knowledge

The successful Level I candidate will demonstrate the knowledge and comprehension¹ of AASI technical terms, concepts, and models listed in this document. The successful candidate will also demonstrate the ability to recognize movement patterns in riders that are learning and riding all green terrain, groomed blue terrain, and small freestyle features.

Candidates will be evaluated based on the following criteria, terms, concepts, and models:

- Movement Analysis
 - Cause-and-effect relationships
 - Reference alignments o Biomechanics related to snowboarding
 - Stance issues related to a rider's ability to flex, extend, and rotate
 - Equipment relating to performance
 - Turn shape, turn size, direction, turn type, movement pattern, upper/lower body relationship
 - Objective feedback
- Technical Knowledge
 - Cap Model
 - Piaget's Stages of Development
 - Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
 - Children's Teaching Cycle – Play, Drill, Adventure, Summary
 - ATMLTM Model o AASI Snowboard Teaching System (STS) concepts: Teaching, Learning, Riding, and Service Concepts
 - The design and function of modern snowboard gear
 - Basic physics concepts and how they apply to snowboarding
 - Board performance concepts
 - Fundamental movement concepts

¹ **Knowledge and Comprehension**—Defined as the ability to recall data or information. Understands the meaning and interpretation of instructions and problems. States a problem in one's own words.*

¹ **Application and Analysis**—Defined as the ability to apply what was learned in the classroom into novel situations in the work place. Separates material or concepts into component parts so that its organizational structure may be understood.*

¹ **Synthesize and Evaluate**—Defined as the ability to put parts together to form a whole, with emphasis on creating a new meaning or structure. Make judgments about the value of ideas or materials.*

*Definitions from Bloom B. S. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain*. New York: David McKay Co, Inc.

Riding

Evaluation

Candidate riding will be evaluated on the following variables:

- Turn size
- Turn shape
- Timing, intensity, duration of movements
- Control and performance of the board toward the intended outcome, e.g., the tail of the board follows the path of the nose

Candidates will be evaluated on the following movements and coordination: All tasks listed in each level need to be completed at a mature level.

- Isolated movements or combinations of movements
- Versatility in movements based on terrain or tactics
- Extends to initiate a new turn
- Extends to release the edge
- Flexes to initiate a new turn (creates a movement of the center of mass into the new turn)
- Flexes to release the edge
- Both legs are active
- Applies equal flexion/extension movements from both legs
- Uses a variety of ways to un-weight the board
- Applies independent flexion/extension movements from both legs
- Maintains reference alignments as appropriate to terrain and task
- Applies an active Athletic Stance
- Utilizes an appropriate range of motion

Riding: Applied Movements

Movements and coordination will be assessed based on the definitions of “initial,” “elementary,” and “mature,” as defined in Core Concepts (PSIA/AASI, 2001), pg. 20.

The “initial” movement stage occurs when a rider is unfamiliar with a movement and relies on sensory input and coaching to learn. At this stage the rider’s movements are often very sequential and each part of the movement is performed individually. The rider may periodically, but not consistently, show signs of a movement pattern.

The “elementary” stage denotes riders who can perform movements without looking at a particular body part involved in the movement, yet still need to think it through and concentrate on each of the move’s components. While movements are sequential, the rider will link them together in a more fluid manner. The rider in the elementary stage will be able to consistently demonstrate a movement pattern but may not be able to apply it in all situations.

The “mature” stage is characterized by smooth, fluid, and automatic movements without showing obvious, conscious thought reflected in the rider’s actions. The rider can also repeat and apply movements across a wide spectrum of situations. A rider possessing the ability to perform mature movements and the coordination of those movements can smoothly blend them for a specific outcome and be able to readily change or adapt movements to different terrain situations and snow conditions.

Riding

Terrain

Successful Level I candidates will demonstrate the ability to comfortably ride the following terrain:

- All green terrain
- Blue terrain, including off-piste conditions and small bumps

- Groomed black trails
- Small freestyle features

Riding

At a minimum, the successful Level I Rider will be able to perform:

- One-footed maneuvers including skating, straight glide, toe-side turns, and heel-side turns in the beginner area.
- Garlands
- Falling leaf exercises
- Basic, medium-radius turns on green terrain.
- Switch, Basic medium-radius turns on green terrain.
- Dynamic skidded, medium-radius, turns on blue terrain.
- Basic Carved, large-radius turns on green terrain.
- Basic freestyle elements, including straight airs over small natural or man-made features, ollies, and flatland 180s and 360s.
- 50/50 on small ride-on features or equivalent
- On transitional freestyle elements including halfpipes, quarterpipes, steeper spine / hip jumps or similar natural terrain, demonstrate the ability to make an edge change with the turn apex at the top of the transition zone.

Level 1: Applied Movements

Movements to be applied at Level I include flexion, extension, and rotation, and these will affect the performance outcomes of twist, tilt, pivot, and pressure control. The candidate will be asked to demonstrate flexion, extension, and rotational movements separately and in a blended fashion when performing the outcomes listed previously. At a minimum the candidate must demonstrate up-unweighting and terrain unweighting. The candidate must also be able to perform at a mature level the purposeful movement of the COM across the board by extending the legs at the initiation of the new turn, resulting in edge change and facilitating edge engagement.

In addition, at the request of the examiner the rider will demonstrate:

- 1) equal and/or independent extension and flexion of both legs,
- 2) appropriate timing, intensity, and duration of movements relative to the desired outcome
- 3) an ability to maintain reference alignments in all conditions and terrain listed previously (with the exception of freestyle outcomes).

While riding, the candidate must demonstrate safety awareness through line choice, behavior, and the negotiation of traffic patterns on the hill.

Exam format

The Level I certification process is unique in that it includes a full day of education in addition to the more typical scoring day. The following section describes what normally happens each day of the Level I exam. Keep in mind that conditions may require your examiner to modify various aspects of your exam.

Day one

Candidates will have varying levels of skill, knowledge, and teaching experience. The examiner will devote the first day to reviewing what is expected from candidates on the second or scoring day. Introductions usually start off the day followed a brief explanation of the days activities. Much of the day will be spent with the examiner demonstrating various aspects of lesson plans.

While reviewing these plans with the examiner, you will have the opportunity to ask technical questions, practice various maneuvers and receive feedback, and discuss how you will use movement analysis to improve a student's experience. Your examiner will lead you through discussions about professional knowledge, teaching methodology, and riding. Your examiner will lead you through the riding maneuvers you will be scored on during day two, and will give you feedback on your riding skills.

By the end of the first day, you should have a solid understanding about what is expected from you to successfully complete the exam process.

Day two

Teaching

You will be asked to teach one portion of a new rider lesson. Typically, your teaching segment will last from 15 to 20 minutes. For example, you may be asked to teach straight glide. Review your AASI manual for examples of teaching models. Also, pay attention to your examiner's teaching from the first day. Your examiner will score your overall conduct (professionalism), your overall lesson plan, how well you communicate, how well you control the group, your risk management skills (safety), and your ability to monitor and adjust your lesson based on the students' progress. In addition, your examiner may demonstrate a maneuver poorly and ask you for the proper correction. Your segment will usually end with a professional knowledge question that will pertain to the segment you just taught.

Riding

You will need to perform various riding maneuvers, as described earlier, and be scored on your performance. Your riding will also be judged while you're performing various maneuvers during the teaching segments of your fellow candidates. Don't worry about having "one shot" at performing a maneuver. Your examiner will explain that your riding is evaluated all day, not just on a specific maneuver. You'll also have a chance to show off your free riding skills. As mentioned earlier, you need solid riding skills at the lower end of the Y model. High end riding is not required, but is a bonus.

Professional Knowledge

You will complete a closed-book written exam designed to evaluate your technical and professional knowledge. Study your AASI manual, as well as other snowboard related material. Your examiner will also observe you while you're teaching, and may ask you questions before, during, or after your teaching segment. Your general participation during group discussions throughout the two days will also be considered. Remember to monitor the performance of your fellow candidates during your teaching segment, and offer corrections as needed. This movement analysis will be part of your professional knowledge score.

EXAM SCHEDULE (times may vary, but this is a good timeline)

DAY ONE

- 8:00 am REGISTRATION AT HOST RESORT
- 9:00 am GENERAL MEETING / INTRODUCTIONS
- 9:30 am MORNING CLINIC SESSION ON SNOW
- 12:00 pm Lunch
- 12:45 pm AFTERNOON CLINIC SESSION ON SNOW
- 4:00 pm ON YOUR OWN

DAY TWO

- 8:00 am WRITTEN EXAM
- 9:00 am MORNING SESSION ON SNOW
- 12:00 pm Lunch
- 12:45 pm AFTERNOON SESSION
- 4:00 pm RESULTS HANDED OUT

How to prepare

People prepare for exams in many different ways. You are encouraged to explore all available resources and decide which methods work best for your learning style. There is no “right” way to prepare.

Ride. On-snow training is a critical part of your preparation. Take advantage of training opportunities at your home area and other nearby areas. If you want to go the extra mile, seek out formal and informal exam preparation groups. If possible, ride the area where you plan to take the exam so that you are familiar with terrain choices and the lift system.

Read. Get the AASI STS manual. The companion video can help you visualize concepts introduced in the manual. Try to Read articles in AASI’s national publication, *The Professional Rider*, and you can login to in Central Division web page and access newsletter online, *The Central Line*. Also check the organizations’ web sites for more information. Read books about the history of snowboarding. Learn about anatomy, physics, biomechanics, physiology, kinesiology, mental training, and teaching. You don’t need to know everything about snowboarding; just find the aspects of snowboarding that appeal to you, and use them as a springboard for your learning.

Watch. In addition to the AASI video, there are tons of great videos about snowboarding. Use them to practice your movement analysis! The more riding you watch, the better you will become at picking apart a rider’s movements. Do this when you ride chairlifts, too. Look at riders, and look at tracks. Try to understand **HOW** what you see was done. (Then go try to do it yourself!)

Talk. Talk with an examiner. Talk with other level 1, 2 or 3 certified instructors. If possible, schedule a training day or evening. Even telephone conversations can help clarify concepts and generate teaching ideas.

Teach. Get lots of practice teaching beginners. Shadow experienced instructors while they teach beginner lessons.

Again, remember to find a method of preparation that fits your learning style. The road to certification is more important than the destination. The learning you will do in preparation for the exam is by far the most beneficial part of the entire exam process. With proper preparation, you will be relaxed and confident during the exam. You might even enjoy the experience!

If you have any questions, contact the Central Division office.

List of Certification Exam Do's

AASI educational and certification courses use a group format. You will be placed in a group at each event that you attend. At both educational events and exam situations, there are some basic expectations of how you should behave: what is acceptable

Do...

- Build a team out of the group you have been assigned, starting when you first meet.
- Show respect to all of those participating in the event and resort guests
- Practice safety at all times
- Keep an open mind
- Try new things
- Please, feel free to fall
- Help your team mates out
- Be yourself
- Support your group members
- Joke around
- Have a great time
- Soak up every drop of information you can
- If you are unclear about what you are supposed to do, ask

Equipment

During a certification course, it is best to ride familiar equipment that you have had a great deal of experience with. Make sure when you attend an exam that you pack extra pieces and parts, we all know equipment can break while riding.

Attire

Please wear appropriate clothing for being outside for long periods of time with all weather conditions imaginable. Please come in what makes you comfortable and will help you perform at your highest level. As we are a professional organization, it is best to portray that image when appearing at a certification exam.

Pre-exam Checklist

Be sure to bring items on this list, as well as perform the task listed. This list will help you to remember things when you are preparing to take the all-important trip to your exam location.

- Make sure you read and understand concepts in the American Association of Snowboard Instructors manual. It contains valuable information for your teaching and what will be expected of you at the exam.
- You must have 10 or more hours of teaching experience.
- Have a basic understanding of movement analysis.
- Assess what you may need to work on to prepare for an exam by reviewing this guide and understanding all the information and expectations contained within.
- Determine what event you will be attending and sign up for it as early as possible.
- Answer the training questions provided in this guide and review them with trainers or peers.
- Choose which equipment you will be riding for the exam and stay on that equipment as much as possible.
- Continuously consult your trainer or mentor to guide your training and performance.
- If you can, prior to the exam, ride the entire mountain to get an idea of terrain at that area.
- Pack a writing implement and a small notebook.
- Pack your deck, your boots, extra binding parts, and extra gear.
- Make sure to make all travel arrangements, including transportation and hotel, as soon as you decide where you are taking your exam.
- Talk to your peers and see what their plans are for exam taking. Having moral support can be invaluable.
- Talk to your peers who have gone to the exam and listen to what they have to say about the experience.

Study Questions

The following questions are not meant to be a comprehensive list of exam topics. Rather, they should help you understand what type of questions might be asked on the written exam and suggest some topics you should probably understand.

1. What do AASI, STS, ATS, and PSIA stand for?
2. What is the relationship between PSIA and AASI?
3. What are the three core values of snowboard instruction?
4. What are the seven points of Your Responsibility Code?
5. How do you present the Responsibility Code to your clients?
6. Describe the Y-model.
7. What are the parts of a turn?
8. What are the elements of the Movement Concept?
9. What are the elements of the Performance Concept?
10. How are the Movement Concept and the Performance Concept related?
11. What are the various elements of stance?
12. What are the purposes of bones, muscles, ligaments, and tendons?
13. Define sliding, slipping, and skidding.
14. Define inclination and angulation.
15. List several learning styles.
16. List several teaching styles.
17. What are the parts of a lesson? What happens during each part?
18. List the pros and cons for different types of snowboards, bindings, and boots.
19. How do snow conditions affect your lesson plans?
20. How does equipment affect your teaching?
21. What is the difference between an exercise and a progression?
22. What are two types of motivation?
23. What is the fall-line? How do you organize and move your class in relation to it?
24. List some ways you can minimize the risk of injury to your students.
25. How can a good lesson summary help sell additional lessons?
26. Create three lesson plans for teaching flexing/extending movements.
27. Create three lesson plans for teaching rotary movements.
28. Create three lesson plans for teaching skidded turns.
29. What are the Reference Alignments? Why use them?
30. How can you tell if a rider's weight is forward or backward on the board?
31. How does child development affect riding?
32. How can you use turn shape to control speed?
33. List five words that describe flexing/extending movements.
34. List five words that describe rotary movements.
35. Describe three freestyle tricks you teach beginning riders. How do they help?
36. How do you share your enthusiasm for snowboarding with your clients?

AASI Snowboard Lesson Design

The 3 part lesson plan for teaching: introduction, body, and conclusion.
The “IBC” snowboard teaching model.

Introduction (Staging)

Develop a learning pathway for each student.

The elements of the introduction are:

1. Rapport – connection, background, interests, concerns, safety, trust, humor
2. Assessment – motivation, athleticism, physical conditioning, & movements (movement analysis)
3. Goals – specific, measurable, achievable
4. Action Plan – movements and snowboard performance, instructor, student, and terrain

Body (Delivery)

The goal of the body of the lesson is to ride.

Teaching others to ride requires a combination of

1. Explanation – Verbal description
2. Demonstration – Visual explanation (include a static exercise and show students a front, side, & back view of your demonstration)
3. Practice – (doing) sensations or feelings
4. Feedback – what is correct and what needs improvement. Focus on the positive

Conclusion

This is your opportunity to “wrap it up” and encourage students to return for another lesson.

1. Review what was covered in the lesson.
2. Relate lesson content to the original goal.
3. Set practice focus for the students.
4. Discuss the next step in development

AASI-C Certification Candidate Assessment Form

Overall Outcome: **No Pass Pass**

Candidate Name _____

Dates _____

Location	Examiner Name (print)	Examiner Signature
Teaching Skills	Did not meet the standard	Met the standard
Introduction: rapport & assessment		
Goal Setting		
Lesson Plan		
Concise Explanations		
Demonstration		
Guided Practice (static & active)		
Movement Analysis		
Monitor & Adjust		
Feedback		
Conclusion/Wrap up		
Multiple Learning Styles		
Transfer of Skills		
Time Management		
Professionalism		
Group Safety		
Riding Skills	Did not meet the standard	Met the standard
Basic skidded turns (1)		
Dynamic skidded turns (1)		
Switch (1)		
Flatland Freestyle (1)		
Jumps (1)		
Off-Piste (1)		
Bumps (1)		
Halfpipe (1)		
Basic Carved turns (1)		
Dynamic Carved turns (2)		
Air 180 (2)		
50/50 (2)		
Boardslide (3)		
Air 360 (3)		
Linked toe-side turns (3)		
Aligned/Balanced Stance		
Turn Shape/Line		
Movements: Rotation		
Movements: Flexion/Extension		
Performance: Rotation		
Performance: Edge		
Performance: Pressure		
Performance: Torsional Flex		
Professional Knowledge	Did not meet the standard	Met the standard
Questions Asked		Written Test Score

Recommended Reading / Resources

These are all great sources to find study material!

The Snowboard Technical Manual AASI 2015

The Snowboard Instructor's Guide (STS) manual and video. AASI 2007

The Snowboard Teaching System (STS) manual and video. PSIA 1998

PSIA/AASI Core Concepts for Snowsports Instructors (2001)

AASI Snowboard Movement Analysis Handbook (2003).

The Snowboard Teaching System (STS) manual and video. PSIA.

The American Teaching System (ATS). PSIA.

AASI Park and Pipe Instructor's Guide (2005).

Snowboard Certification Standards 2015

National Standards: Level One, Level Two, Level Three