



CSIA Level 4 Certification

Updated January 2025

Who Should Take This Program?

The CSIA Level 4 Certification Program is designed to develop Canada's most skilled, adaptable, and professional ski instructors. Achieving this certification requires participation in the Level 4 Skier Development and Teacher Development training programs, along with individual practice to refine teaching methods and technical skiing abilities. Candidates must demonstrate expert-level proficiency in both skiing and teaching during an exam, in accordance with CSIA Level 4 standards.

Earning the CSIA Level 4 Certification is the highest achievement for a ski instructor in Canada. CSIA Level 4 Instructors often become Course Conductors for Levels 2–4, trainers within snow schools, or take on leadership roles in resort management and other industry-related positions. CSIA Instructors are known for their expert teaching and skiing skills and serve as role models for other CSIA members.

The CSIA Level 4 Certification is recognized internationally through the International Ski Instructors' Association (ISIA). Certified instructors can further their qualifications by meeting the requirements for the ISIA Stamp, enhancing their recognition on the global stage.

Prerequisites:

- CSIA Level 3 Certification
- CSIA Trainer Designation

How to prepare:

- Attendance at Level 1 Course Conductor Training and experience as a Level 1 Course Conductor can serve as valuable training and is strongly recommended.
- Teaching experience with a recognized CSIA affiliated Snow School
- Pro Days and Pro Sessions offer training opportunities to hone your skiing and teaching skills (e.g., Expert Bumps).
- Physical fitness is an important factor. While there is no specific physical test, it is well documented that strength, flexibility and agility (to name just a few) are important factors in injury prevention and performance at an expert level.
- Prior to the course participants should read the Canadian Teaching Approach and the 5 Skills Framework.

Level 4 Skier Development Course

The 4-day Level 4 Skier Development course will expose participants to the development and application of expert skiing skills in a range of terrain and situations including:

- High performance skiing skills at expert speeds on expert terrain
- Demonstration scenarios where expert skills are applied to skiing at slower speeds
- Achieving skiing objectives within a brush corridor environment

It is recommended that the Skier Development course be completed before the Level 4 Teacher Development course.

Level 4 Teacher Development Course

The 4-Day Level 4 Teacher Development course will expose participants to the application of expert teaching strategies and tactics to develop expert skiing skills in peer teaching situations. Participants will take an active role in their development by participating in practice teaching sessions as instructor and learner. The course conductor will create multiple practice teaching opportunities for each participant.

Course Feedback

Participants will receive ongoing feedback over the 4 days of each Skier and Teacher Development Course. At the completion of each, participants will receive a Development Plan to guide ongoing training. Development Plans represent a collaborative effort between course conductor and participant, identifying concepts or technical principals where further development or understanding is required or teaching strategies and tactics to explore and practice further.

Level 4 Exam

The Level 4 Exam is 3-days in length consisting of:

- 1.5 days Teaching Exam
- 1.5 days Skiing Exam
- Teaching exam day 1 and half of day 2. Skiing Exam half of day 2 and day 3.
- Results for Teaching only candidates will be available at end of day 2

Level 4 Teaching Exam

The teaching exam component will be held on the first full-day and half of the second day. Candidates will be expected to teach an expert level session to a group of 3-4 of their peers over 60 to 75 minutes, including lift rides. Candidates may choose the focus for their session within the scope of expert skiing on or off-piste. Candidates should use 'solution focused instruction' (Who, What, Where, When and How).

Prerequisites:

- Completion of the Level 4 Teacher Development Course
- CSIA Trainer Designation

Evaluation criteria include:

1. Lesson structure based on refinement of expert skiing objectives
2. Accurate assessment of skiing skills
3. Task design for skill development based on individual assessment outcomes (watching skiers from the ground up)
4. Application of CSIA 5 Skills Framework and Canadian Teaching Approach
5. Accurate demonstration of all skills and tasks
6. Effective use of terrain to enhance learning
 - Risk mitigation (mandatory, yes/no)

At the end of each lesson a debrief will be led by the Course conductor and two questions will be asked (i.e., what did you think worked well and what if anything would you do differently).

Marking criteria: Teaching exams will be evaluated by 2 course conductors.

Course Conductors will issue a single mark, on a scale of 1 to 10, for each of criteria #1-6, from which an average will be established. Passing mark is 6.

Demonstrating adequate Risk mitigation is mandatory throughout the lesson

Level 4 Skiing Exam

The skiing exam component will follow a ski-off format with candidates completing the assigned runs, led by a Course Conductor “Coach”, who will provide tactical guidance and demonstration. The ski-off runs will be held over the morning of the second day and as much of the third day as required. Candidates will demonstrate skills on a spectrum of performance from one low-end maneuver to high-end expert turns. Slow speed movements will be demonstrated on blue terrain to increase difficulty. Terrain selection and order of runs will be determined based on snow and weather conditions to facilitate the best outcomes for all candidates.

Prerequisite:

- Completion of the Level 4 Skier Development Course
- CSIA Trainer Designation

Marking criteria:

- Candidates will execute each ski-off run twice.
- A field of Course Conductors will mark each run, on a scale of 1 to 10. Passing mark is 6.
- Candidates will receive a mark for each ski-off run. The average of all ski-off runs mark will be used to calculate an overall mark.
- Passing mark must be achieved for the overall mark, and at least 4 of 7 ski-off runs.

SKI-OFF RUNS

Expert Skiing - Groomed Terrain

- Expert short radius turns
- Expert parallel (formerly long turns) carved turns

Off-Piste Skiing – Ungroomed Terrain

- Bumps
- Free run

Objective Run

- Expert corridor

Demonstration Skiing

- Demonstration parallel (formerly medium turns) intermediate speed on black terrain
- One of the following:
 - Javelin turns (preferred)
 - Ski to Ski - Hop turn

Ski-Off Run Criteria

Expert Runs

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Type | <u>Short radius Turns</u> |
| Speed | Expert Speed |
| Performance | Steered |
| Pitch | Expert/Black |
| Surface | Groomed |
| Qualities | Speed remains consistent throughout, round linked turns, steering results in deflection of COM across the run, edge grip is apparent above the fall line, skis remain parallel throughout the turn. |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Type | <u>Expert Parallel</u> |
| Speed | Expert Speed |
| Performance | Carved |
| Pitch | Expert/Black |
| Surface | Groomed |
| Qualities | Round, linked turns, speed remains consistent steering of BOS directs COM beginning above fall line. |

Off-Piste Skiing Runs

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Type | <u>Bumps</u> (fall-line skiing)* |
| Speed | Expert Speed |
| Performance | Steered |
| Pitch | Expert |
| Surface | Bumps |
| Qualities | Speed remains consistent, turn shape and line are adjusted to terrain, skills are blended to produce an overall fall line run, snow contact is controlled at will |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Type | <u>Free Run</u> (off-piste terrain Interpretation) |
| Speed | Advanced/ Expert Speed |
| Performance | Expert |
| Pitch | Black |
| Surface | Off-Piste ungroomed or glades |
| Qualities | Turn shape and line are adjusted to terrain, speed is adjusted in relation to terrain, snow contact is controlled at will, CSIA technical elements are applied, creativity can be rewarded (e.g., switch skiing) |

*If bumps are not available due to snow or weather conditions (safety), a mixed radius run may be used instead.

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Type | <u>Mixed Radius</u> (on-piste) |
| Speed | Expert |
| Performance | Steered - Carved |
| Pitch | Black |
| Surface | Groomed |
| Qualities | Round linked turns, run must show varied radius turns from short, to long size turns, speed is consistent, minimum two rhythm changes, must finish with short turns. |

Objective Run

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Type | Expert Corridor (8-12m) |
| Speed | Expert |
| Performance | Expert |
| Pitch | Black |
| Surface | Groomed |
| Qualities | Round linked turns, to pass the run skier must use the entire corridor, speed is fast across the run and consistent, must maintaining expert speed, greater number of turns will result in a higher mark (without increasing vertical drop) |

Marked outcomes:

1. Maximum number of turns in a run (frequency) when compared to Level 4 Course Conductors and the field
2. High Speed deflection - consistent and tactical
3. Turn Shape (radius) consistent using the full corridor width (symmetry and consistent vertical drop)

Demonstration Runs

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Type | <u>Demonstration Parallel</u> |
| Speed | Moderate Speed |
| Performance | Steered |
| Pitch | Black |
| Surface | Groomed |
| Qualities | Round linked symmetrical turns, speed remains consistent, rotational control results in the appropriate steering angle for the objective of the run. Edge control results in outside ski directing COM throughout, precise execution to achieve the objective, skis change edge at transition simultaneously. |

One of the following:

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Type | <u>Javelin Turn</u> |
| Speed | Moderate Speed |
| Performance | Steered |
| Pitch | Black |
| Surface | Groomed |
| Qualities | Round linked turns starting from a parallel stance starting on one ski, steering the outside ski under the inside ski, speed remains consistent, rotational control results in the appropriate steering angle for the qualities run, edging control results in outside ski directing COM throughout. |

Marked outcomes:

1. Balance
 - Ability to transfer weight from outside ski to outside ski
2. Rotary/Edging
 - Measure ability to turn the lower body to manage steering throughout the arc (outside ski turns under inside ski)
 - Appropriate amount of edge to produce a steered arc
3. Pressure
 - Effective use of lower joints (flexion and extension) to transition from one foot to the next
4. Coordination
 - Flow turn to turn
 - Pole plant optional

or

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Type | <u>Ski to Ski</u> – Hop turn |
| Speed | Medium |
| Performance | Steered |
| Pitch | Blue |
| Surface | Groomed |
| Qualities | Speed remains consistent, pressure control provides controlled "hop" through transition, transition is from inside edge to inside edge, edging control results in immediate grip and direction of COM. Inside ski remains parallel and off the snow throughout, rotational control used to lead turning effort with pressure management to use stored energy in the lower body. Skills are blended and coordinated. |

Marked outcomes:

1. Balance
 - Equal distribution of weight (tip and tail off snow)
 - Only one ski on the snow at all times either on one foot or the other
2. Edging
 - Steered throughout the turn and run
3. Pressure
 - Effective use of lower body joints (flexion and extension) to transition from one foot to the next.
4. Rotary
 - Manage separation to balance on the outside ski.
5. Coordination
 - Flow from turn to turn, pole plant optional

Ski Off Marking Scale

Each ski off run has qualities that relate to speed, turn shape and level of ski performance. Within all ski off runs, the CSIA technique is to be used to achieve these outcomes. Both the qualities and technique are considered in determining individual marks.

The scale works as follows (read the mark of 6 first)

8 or higher – precise execution of run qualities AND precise technical execution. Example: can effectively control line in the bumps and maintain fast/expert speeds AND is precise technically, well above the Level 4 standard.

7 –precise execution of run qualities OR precise technical execution. Example: skier is able to control turn shape but at a higher speed and level of performance OR timing and coordination is more precise resulting in a more dynamic run.

6 –achieves the qualities of the run and uses appropriate Canadian technique described above in the ski-off run criteria.

5 –achieves the qualities of the run but does not use appropriate technique OR uses appropriate

technique but does not achieve the qualities of the run. Example: correct speed and turn shape, however, shows rotation OR good technique, but speed is too slow or too fast for the qualities of the run.

4 –fails to achieve the qualities of the run and does not demonstrate appropriate technique. Example: rotation affects the ability to maintain speed control and turn shape.

3 or lower – does not achieve the run qualities and technique and is well below the L4 standard. Example: basic skiing skills are deficient such as stance and balance, therefore, speed, turn shape and ski performance are greatly affected.

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