



Canadian Ski Instructors' Alliance

***Level 4 Certification Program
Candidate Guide 2024-2025***

**Level 4 Skier Development Course
Level 4 Teacher Development Course
Level 4 Exam**

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Mission Statement:

"The CSIA sets Canada's standard for the profession of ski teaching through innovative training and certification programs, contributing to the safety and growth of the industry and enjoyment of skiing for everyone."

Certified as a designated Educational Institute by the
Canadian Department of Human Resources Development



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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](#)

Learning Outcomes:

During each 4-day Course, participants will focus on Ski Improvement and Expert Teaching:

- Expert skiing skills, objectives and terrain
- Development planning
- Insight and preview of Level 4 Skiing Performance Criteria and Teaching Criteria review



Canadian Teaching Approach

- Explore and experience the [Canadian Teaching Approach](#) for expert skiers

Assessment and Development Skills

- Using the [5 Skills Framework](#) to assess and develop expert skiing objectives
- Assessment strategies and tactics
- Ski snow interaction (what) and skier movements – ‘how’ they are related
- Highlighting solution focused teaching (Who, What, Where, When and How)



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 qualities within a brush corridor environment

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

Video will be taken each day of the course (unless weather or visibility does not permit), and shared with each participant (examples: Airdropped, Send Anywhere, WhatsApp), Candidates will typically have the same course conductor for all four days.

Daily Summary:

note – the daily schedule may vary based on weather and snow conditions

Day 1: By the end of the day, the candidates will have been exposed to the following:

- Review of the course learning outcome
- Participants will review expert skiing skills, 'Tactic' runs and skiing qualities and goals
- A variety of turn shapes on groomed blue to black terrain
- Ski improvement/performance ranging from advanced to expert
- Specific individual development strategies for Demonstration Parallel
- Individual feedback and goals setting for the following 3 days
- Group debrief

Day 2: By the end of the day, the candidates will have been exposed to the following:

- Specific individual development strategies for expert short and expert parallel turns
- Understanding of equipment choice and how to engage ski design relative to expert skiing
- Corridor training with video
- One on one debrief

Day 3: By the end of the day, the candidates will have been exposed to the following:

- Off-piste skiing – different line choices based on snow conditions in the bumps and on variable terrain
- Varying speeds illustrating expert line, speeds, performance for the Level 4 standard
- One-on-one debrief with 'Development Plan' document
- How to develop a personal progress plan (i.e., ownership of process)
- Video and review



Day 4: By the end of the day, the candidates will have been exposed to the following:

- Review of each exam ski-off run
- Specific training on the qualities of each run, clearly illustrating the differentiation between pass and fail
- Individual skill development plan written by their course conductor
- Video review upload to snowpro.com profile of candidates
- Exam recommendation (e.g.,_what each candidate needs to do to be at the standard)

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 own development by participating in practice teaching sessions as both the instructor and learner. The course conductor will create multiple practice teaching opportunities for each participant. Course conductors will highlight 'solution focused instruction' (Who, What, Where, When and How) to provide a strong example of expert level 'assessment and development'.

Daily Summary:

note – the daily schedule may vary based on weather, snow conditions and lift lines. Candidates will typically have the same course conductor for all four days.

Day 1: By the end of the day, course participants will have been exposed to the following:

- Course Conductor led (morning) session modeling and labelling expert teaching, ski improvement lesson (expert parallel)
- Peer teaching, in pairs, based on the development strategies set out by the course conductor in the morning session
- Each candidate will teach for 30-45 minutes with their partner. Course participants will create a task and work through it based on the morning assessment
- Debrief

Day 2: By the end of the day, course participants will have been exposed to the following:

- Course Conductor lead session modeling and labeling off-piste expert skiing (morning), an example of a lesson that is above the Level 4 standard
- Peer teaching, in pairs, based on the development strategies set out by the Course Conductor
- The focus will be on knowing how to use terrain to develop expert skiing skills as well as how to expertly ski the terrain, assessing skiers using the 5 Skills,



- watch skiers from the ground up and finally how to select tasks that are not too hard and not too easy for each student
- By the end of the day participants will analyze video taken of the groups skiing and examined What, Where & How to assess and develop
- Debrief

Day 3: By the end of the day, course participants will have been exposed to the following:

- Course Conductor led session modeling and labeling expert skiing (short and long turns)
- Peer teaching in small groups (3), based on strategies set out by the Course Conductor
- Focus will be on determining cause and effect, the whole part whole method
- Using questioning to build a deeper understanding in students
- Development how to enhance/develop skiers by adjusting speed, performance level, terrain and turn shape
- Explore ability to develop skiers using tactics and drills how to adjust the task to make it more achievable for each candidate
- Lessons will be assigned (for day 4) to each participant
- Debrief

Day 4: By the end of the day, the course participants will have been exposed to the following:

- Peer teaching in small groups (3 or 4), expert skiing and off-piste teaching environments will be covered
- Candidates will assess their skiing, create a development strategy and work through it with the Conductor
- Groups to discuss the use of video analysis of their own skiing and analysis of their students using video analysis (What, Where & How)
- Video review of demonstrations and individual feedback
- Practice teach
- Video review of demonstration upload to snowpro.com profile of candidates
- Debrief and Exam recommendation

Course Feedback

Participants will receive ongoing feedback over the 4 days of each Skier and Teacher Development Course. At the completion of each course, participants will receive a Development Plan to guide ongoing training, written by the course conductor and attached to participants' snowpro.com member profile. 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 and use 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 demonstrative tactical requirement 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 SUMMARY

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



Ski-Off Run Criteria

Moving the body segments in the correct manner creates efficiency. Efficient movements help direct the COM from arc to arc with little interruption of momentum (motion). This is how we refer to the flow we notice when we see a good skier.

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
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 adaptation)
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 (on-piste)</u>
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 to 12-meter width)
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 qualities 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	Blue
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.