



***SKI DEVELOPMENT COACH
(LEVEL 3) AWARD OVERVIEW,
TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT***

SKI DEVELOPMENT COACH (LEVEL 3) AWARD OVERVIEW, TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT

Introduction¹

This award is designed for people who are going to work with skiers for a prolonged period using the coaching process. Some examples include:

- Training candidate Instructors who are working towards the Foundation Instructor (L1) and Instructor (L2) awards
- Coaching skiers in the development section of a club leading up to discipline specialisation and/or competing
- Coaching regular participants at an artificial slope ski centre (such as coaching mornings and regular children's session)

The award is designed for coaching all standards of skiers at artificial slopes, ranging from complete novices to those who are parallel steering and those becoming more specialised in their development. The key thing is that you intend to *coach* them for a prolonged period, over several months or longer.

If you are a snowboard instructor who wants to work on a long-term basis with your riders, [contact us](#) for a discussion about the available coach education pathways.

Entry requirements

To participate in this course, you need to be a licenced Ski Instructor (Level 2) or have equivalency formally endorsed by Snowsport England. This is done by assessing prior learning using the Snowsport England equivalency process <https://www.snowsportengland.org.uk/equivalency/>

The Course

The course covers the fundamentals of coaching novice to expert performers and prepares you for planning, delivering and reviewing a coaching programme. You are encouraged to fully immerse yourself in the content, which covers:

- The Coaching Process
- The components of skilful skiing
- Your personal skiing performance
- The role of tasks in performance profiling and skier development
- Types of feedback
- Observing performances and providing feedback
- Using coaching tools
- Planning a programme

The course lasts at least 35 hours, run over 6 days or in blocks of a minimum of 3 hours duration.

¹ This document supersedes related information contained in the UK Snowsports Level 3 and 4 Development Coach Resource Pack v2 dated 11 November 2011 (mainly contained in Unit 1 and Appendix 1), pending its update.

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Working towards accreditation

During the course your tutor will support you in creating an action plan to inform your ongoing development as a coach and skier.

After the course you will need to devise a 12-month coaching programme and deliver sufficient performance development blocks that enable you to profile the skiers' performance on three occasions. You will also need to attend to your action plan and prepare reflection notes and other records. For more detailed guidance please refer to the [portfolio guidelines](#). Much can be learnt from coaching and reflecting on your coaching practice. You will need an extensive period of being a coach before applying for assessment.

You will also need to maintain membership with Snowsport England, First Aid certification, safeguarding training and DBS check.

The components of the award are illustrated below:



Assessment

You must submit your Coaching Portfolio to Snowsport England at least 6 weeks prior to the assessment.

The one-day exam is organised by Snowsport England, held at an artificial ski slope and conducted by nationally appointed assessors. The Assessment typically takes place alongside a Ski Instructor (L2) Assessment in the UK.

There may be others attending, including candidates being assessed for other coach awards and observers for quality assurance or training. You will be advised accordingly, and the assessment may be videoed for training and verification purposes.

The assessors want to see what you can currently do and will use a variety of information sources to assess your standard against the award requirements.

The assessment covers the following areas:

1. Verification of the Coaching Portfolio
2. Skiing performance
3. Session delivery
4. Risk Management
5. Underpinning knowledge

Be sure to arrive in good time as it is **NOT** possible to join an examination after it has started. In such cases, both the fee and the right of access to that part of the examination (i.e., skiing or session delivery) will be forfeited.

Your clothing and equipment should be clean, tidy, well maintained, safe and appropriate for coaching and skiing on artificial slopes. You should have a professional appearance with ski clothing that is weather-appropriate, arms and legs fully covered and trousers fitting over the ski boots. You must wear gloves.

The usual running order for the assessment is (1) examination of portfolios (2) personal skiing and (3) session delivery, with an appropriate break for lunch. The examiners may vary this order with the intention of making fair, valid and reliable assessments.

Verification of the Coaching Portfolio

The examiners will have been sent your portfolio to read and prepare questions before the exam. In some circumstances you may be contacted prior to the exam to request further information. The assessors will want to discuss your portfolio and ask questions about it. You should bring a copy with you to the assessment.

You should ensure that your portfolio contains evidence of how you have attended to the course action plan.

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Skiing Performance

The examiners look at your skilful skiing performance rather than demonstrations.

You must be able to ski all areas of artificial ski slopes with performances that contain appropriate posture, active and reactive balance, control of speed and direction of travel. You will be expected to ski with anticipation and with authority over your equipment so that you gain early support in arcs and exhibit efficient, effective and appropriate movements in motion.

Whilst performing, you should be able to:

- show continuously linked rhythmical steering
- make adjustments to speed of travel by controlling the shape of arcs
- use an appropriate blend of the fundamental elements of skiing [pressure control, turning of the legs, edge control and active balancing]
- make a variety of sizes and shapes of arcs during a descent
- adjust balance using appropriate posture
- respond sensitively to forces acting on the body whilst in motion
- ski dynamically with an ability to sustain support against the outside ski before it crosses the fall line
- respond and react appropriately to signals from the examiners
- maintain a back angle inclined at least as much as the shins
- rotate your legs in the pelvis
- make your legs rotate more than and before the pelvis and torso
- increase the inclination of the outer leg rather than moving the pelvis towards the steering ski

Posture and balance

These postural elements of active balancing should be visible:

- Horizontal eye-line
- Appropriate flexion of ankles, knees, hips and spine (trunk inclined forwards with a “back angle” at least as much as the shins)
- The whole of the foot used for support while in motion. The inside edges for propulsion and steering, heels for supporting body weight at low speeds and gripping and braking
- Centre of mass inside base of support (central and peripheral flow)
- Hand and arm carriage - relaxed and downwards
- Pelvis neutral – not tilted downwards or excessively upwards

Skiing Tasks

You will be asked to perform up to five tasks from the list below and repeat each one up to three times. You may be required to complete the task a fourth time for it to be videoed. Performance evaluation will be based on completion of the task and quality of performance.

Core Tasks

Tasks require variation of your pathway or movements in response to signals from the examiner including speed of travel, range of flexion/extension or width of corridor to ski. These take place during the descent. Skiers should be adaptable and able to make relatively automatic responses with high level of skill.

Core Tasks	Examiner changes	Unchanged
1) Continuously linked arcs with skis parallel	Amplitude	
2) Continuously linked arcs with skis ploughing	Amplitude	
3) Continuously linked arcs with skis parallel	Speed	Amplitude
4) Continuously linked arcs with skis ploughing	Speed	Amplitude
5) Continuously linked arcs with skis ploughing	Flexion - extension	Amplitude Speed
6) Descent around markers (Say 10 mini poles set in line and each between 6 and 10 metres apart)	Ski through every space or every other space	

Other Tasks

- 7) **Skidding to stop:** Aim a straight trajectory directly towards a marker, then skidding to a controlled stop, coming to rest with your feet within 0.5 metre of the marker and without hitting it.
- 8) **Free run:** A fluent, controlled descent with no other restrictions placed by the examiners. This shows your personal style and skill on the slope.



Guidelines for Candidates

The examiners want to see you:

- setting off with appropriate speed for the task in the prevailing conditions
- establishing your rhythm, making smooth continuously linked arcs
- seeking the target amplitude
- monitoring that your skis are ploughing or parallel, as specified by the examiner
- making proportionate and accurate responses to the examiner's signals for:
 - amplitude of arcs
 - speed of descent
 - range of movements

When responding to signals you are expected to make proportionate changes so that the continuity of arcs is maintained.

Performance evaluation

The evaluation considers the completion of the task and then the quality of performance, but only if the task was accomplished.

Example: Task 2, Parallel steering in a defined corridor. If these are achieved:

- Simultaneous edge change
- Both skis being steered around the arcs
- Arcs are linked without any traversing
- Support against the "new" steering ski before the arc reaches the fall line
- Hitting the specified target amplitude (or "corridor") within a tolerance of ± 1 'diamond', approximately ± 15 cm

then the quality of performance is judged using the performance criteria below.

Performance Criteria

Criteria	Observed Performance
Effectiveness	The task itself is completed effectively and accurately
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate levels of muscular tension • Optimum range of movement in relation to intended outcome so that the task is skilfully performed, not demonstrated • Appropriate speed and strength of movements in relation to intended outcome.
Consistency	The task is completed with the required degree of accuracy on each of several attempts.
Symmetry	Symmetry of motion and of movements: the path of the skier flows symmetrically in relation to the fall-line, deviating equally to either side, with body movements that mirror each other left to right.
Posture	Appropriate to task and responsive to changing forces
Central and Peripheral flow	Feet follow a wave-form path, whilst the centre of mass follows a shorter path. In Core Tasks there is clear differentiation of central and peripheral flow.
Movements and Motion	The timing, tempo, strength and range of movements are all appropriate to the skier's motion, e.g., the tempo of movements should match the tempo of turning.
Spatial	<p>Skier shows awareness of the terrain and of other slope users when performing the task. An appropriate choice of line and use of terrain features/contours is made in relation to the task.</p> <p>Skier is able to make effective adjustments for terrain changes and slope conditions to remain on task.</p>
Speed	Appropriate to the task, terrain and conditions. e.g. if the amplitude changes, the speed may also have to change.
Technical Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biomechanically sound • Legs rotate in hip sockets • Legs begin to rotate before pelvis, if pelvis rotates • No outward lateral pelvic movement: pelvis matches path of centre of mass
Activation Level	Skier is able to change their activation level to match the task and intensity of performance required.

Session delivery

Assessment is made by observing you delivering practical sessions with your peers and through discussion and questioning. You are expected to work with your peers at their own level of skiing performance and not through role play. You will be assessed on:

- Contracting and negotiation
- Profiling (Observing and analysing performance)
- Performance development session

You will be required to observe some skiers performing a task, commenting to the examiners on ski behaviour and your analysis of the skiers' movements. Having done this you should identify key development areas for each skier and describe what you would include in a 1-1.5-hour development session and the intended outcomes. You will then deliver some coaching.

Contracting and negotiation

You will negotiate and agree a "contract" with your skiers to coach them and establish a task that will enable each of them to attend to concurrent feedback whilst skiing. Having established that the task is being performed to the required accuracy you will then turn attention to the skiers' concurrent feedback. Your assessors will expect there to be consent, clarity of understanding and that any misunderstandings are quickly resolved.

Profiling (Observing and analysing performance)

In this part of the assessment the examiners want to see your capabilities in aspects of the profiling process.

You should be able to:

- establish a suitable task to observe the qualities of the skiers' performance
- describe the behaviour of the skis and desirable changes
- critically observe and analyse the skiers' movements
- identify links between the observed movements and behaviour of the skis
- prioritise changes that would improve performance
- identify desirable short-term goals
- create an activity/task list appropriate to the needs of the skiers.

This part of the examination will be conducted as follows.

You will observe some skiers who are performing a practical skiing task. You will stand beside the examiner and makes comments on their skiing performance. You should set up the activity to optimise time for focused observation and comment to the examiners about each performer. You are expected to comment on these factors:

Q: Did the skier complete the task that was set?

A₁: If no, describe what was seen and how it differed from the task set.

A₂: If yes, confirm each element of the task as completed. For instance:

- Sufficient speed
- Continuously linked arcs
- Skis parallel throughout
- Consistency of hitting the target amplitude

If yes, continue to describe to the examiner the profile of the skier's key performance attributes. You should comment on any observed strengths or weaknesses in the skill of each skier. The assessor may ask a variety of questions to explore your underpinning knowledge of effect, such as how the skis perform in the snow, and the causes.

Having observed several descents, you should agree a session goal with the objective of each skier developing their performance whilst being coached by you. You will then set up a session to make use of the Intention Attention feedback loop (IntAt).

Performance development session

You are expected to use the IntAt loop to:

- Get the skier to focus on sensory information gathered during their performance (Concurrent Internal Direct feedback)
- Extract this information through questioning (Pausing then Asking)
- Provide Terminal External Augmented feedback to calibrate the skier's self perceptions
- Develop the skier's performance towards the agreed session goal

The skiers continue with the same task for approximately 20 – 30 minutes. You are expected to affect some improvement in one or more elements in the performance of the task by improving the skiers' effectiveness, efficiency or both.

Risk Management (Health and Safety)

When skiing you will be expected to follow the FIS Rules for Conduct ("Ski Way Code"). When running sessions, you will be expected to manage risks accordingly. You will also be assessed on Health and Safety using your First Aid certificate, conduct and questioning.

If the assessors perceive that your conduct raises risk to unacceptable levels, they may intervene as they see fit. In this circumstance the assessors' judgement is final and you will fail the assessment outright.

Underpinning Knowledge

Throughout the assessment you will need to demonstrate sufficient underpinning knowledge for the level of the award. The assessors will gather information from observation and questioning. You will be expected to use your knowledge to optimise your coaching to the needs of the skiers, to be imaginative and responsive to the needs of your skiers.

Results

You will receive your result and reasoning on the day and a written report will follow. Comments provided will be aimed at helping you and related personnel (coach/mentor/supervisor) understand your strengths and weaknesses in skiing skill, knowledge, understanding and coaching practice.

Appeals

Appeals are possible under certain circumstances as set out in the Snowsport England Appeals Procedure, available on the web site or by contacting us by email. If considering an appeal, you should first consult the procedure to check that your circumstances are eligible for consideration.