

**NISEKO UNITED Affiliated School System
2026-2027**

As the number of schools accredited under the NISEKO UNITED Snowsports & Guiding Business Affiliation System has reached a certain level, NFP has decided to continue not accepting new affiliation applications for the 2026-2027 season.

NISEKO UNITED Snowsports & Guiding Business Affiliation System

1. Introduction

Snowsports schools and Guiding businesses that are not owned by or directly aligned with a Niseko Free Passport Committee (hereafter "NFP") member lift company must be officially authorised by NFP in order to use the lifts of the NISEKO UNITED area (Niseko Annupuri International Ski Area, Niseko Village Ski Resort, Niseko Tokyu Grand HIRAFU and Niseko HANAZONO Resort).

The aim is to guarantee the quality of the experience guests enjoy on the ski fields of Niseko, so that their safety and enjoyment are maintained and improved at all times.

As such, NFP has formally established the NISEKO UNITED Snowsports & Guiding Business Affiliation System as the system for recognising third-party Snowsports schools and Guiding businesses as NISEKO UNITED Affiliated Snowsports schools and Guiding businesses. Accordingly, no Snowsports school or Guiding business may operate at any NISEKO UNITED ski area without being formally affiliated by NFP.

2. Affected Parties

Any groups, businesses or individuals already operating, or intending to operate, a Snowsports school or Guiding business (including guided photography businesses) anywhere in the Niseko area for profit (i.e. where financial reward is involved).

3. Affiliation Requirements

Affiliation of an applicant is at the discretion of NFP. An applicant may commence operations only after being accredited by NFP.

NFP will implement the following affiliation requirements for the 2026-2027 season.

- (1) No new affiliation applications will be accepted from anyone other than businesses accredited for the 2025-2026 season (hereafter "continuing applicants").
- (2) When a continuing applicant applies to continue operating a Snowsports school or Guiding business, the stipulated number of registered instructors and guides per business shall be at least 15. Individual instructors and guides may register with one accredited business only; duplicate registrations are not permitted. Failure to register the stipulated number of staff and purchase their commercial lift passes by Sunday 13 December 2026 will result in the withdrawal of accreditation.
Applicants must also employ a full-time, locally based Japanese-speaking staff member and establish a system that enables emergency response on site. Duplicate registration of this Japanese-speaking staff member is not permitted either.
- (3) Applicants must be legal entities registered in Japan and must operate in compliance with the laws and regulations of Japan.
- (4) All staff members, instructors and guides employed by the applicant must be legally entitled to work in Japan. In the case of foreign nationals, evidence of work eligibility in the form of the individual's Residence Card must be presented before the commercial lift pass is purchased (a Certificate of Eligibility (COE) will not be accepted).
- (5) Applicants must hold public liability insurance (minimum of 100 million yen per single accident) and accident insurance for their clients, both valid for the entire period of operation, and must submit certificates of both at the time of application.
- (6) A maximum of two types of uniform (outerwear) may be used by the applicant's instructors and guides, and these must be registered at the time of application.

- (7) When applying as a Snowsports school, the representative (head of school) must hold a snow sports qualification issued by a Japanese or internationally recognised ski and snowboard governing body as specified in the attached list, and the same applies to all instructors employed under the representative's supervision. The representative (head of school) must also be based locally on a full-time basis.
- (8) When applying as a Guiding business, all guides must hold one of the qualifications below; alternatively, up to five unqualified guides may be registered under the supervision of one qualified guide, and must guide under that qualified guide's supervision. The person in charge must also be based locally on a full-time basis.
 - ① Avalanche Operations Level 1 (professional avalanche worker qualification).
 - ② A ski or snowboard qualification equivalent to Guide Level 3, together with certification meeting the ISIA Avalanche & Guiding Module standard.
- (9) Should an accident such as a mountain rescue occur in a backcountry area outside a ski resort, the applicant must notify NFP immediately and submit a detailed report within three days (this includes incidents at other resorts or in mountainous regions outside Niseko).
- (10) Applicants must submit a staff training plan at the time of application and continue to improve the quality of their instructors and guides throughout the season.
- (11) Applicants must cooperate with NFP, the NFP Lift Pass Enforcement Patrols (monitoring of non-affiliated schools) and the operations staff of all NISEKO UNITED ski areas.
- (12) All instructors and guides must purchase and use a NISEKO UNITED Commercial Lift Pass issued by NISEKO UNITED. They must also wear the armband issued together with the pass on the upper arm (left or right), clearly visible at all times, together with the registered uniform (outerwear). The armband must not be worn anywhere other than the upper arm. One armband is lent free of charge per commercial lift pass. A deposit of 1,000 yen applies to each commercial lift pass, and will be refunded when both the armband and the commercial lift pass are returned to the place of purchase. As armbands become invalid at the end of the season, all armbands must be returned. A fee of 10,000 yen per armband will be charged for any armband not returned by 15 May 2027.
- (13) If even one instructor or guide is found not to be using the NISEKO UNITED Commercial Lift Pass and armband properly, the affiliated business to which that person belongs will be subject to withdrawal of accreditation. The representative (head of school) and the person in charge must take responsibility for ensuring proper management.

4. NISEKO UNITED Commercial Lift Passes

- (1) 2026-2027 Season NISEKO UNITED Commercial Lift Pass Pricing
 - ① NISEKO UNITED Commercial Season Pass: 434,500 yen (including consumption tax)
 - ② Niseko Winter Guiding Association (NWGA) / Guided Photography Business Commercial Season Pass: 184,400 yen (including consumption tax)

* Pass ② is for instructors and guides who are members of the Niseko Winter Guiding Association (NWGA), and for other guided photography business operators. NWGA members who wish to conduct lessons on the slopes must apply for and obtain accreditation under the Snowsports & Guiding Business Affiliation System. In this case, the NISEKO UNITED Commercial Season Pass ① must be purchased.
- (2) Commercial Season Passes are issued to individuals and carry the holder's name and photograph. They may not be transferred or lent to anyone other than the holder.
- (3) Change of holder's name and reissuance of Commercial Season Passes
 - ① Change of holder's name: 20,000 yen per case
 - ② Reissuance due to loss: 3,000 yen per case (deposit charged separately)

5. Application Process

Applicants must submit the affiliation application form together with the required documents no later than one week prior to their intended date of commencement. Applicants must submit their application to the NFP member ski area (Niseko Tokyu Grand HIRAFU or Niseko Annupuri International Ski Area) from which they will most frequently start their lessons.

<Required documents>

- (1) The designated NISEKO UNITED Snowsports & Guiding Business Affiliation System application form
- (2) Sworn Statement
- (3) Corporate verification documents (Certificate of Registered Information, Certificate of Registered Seal, etc.), together with a detailed description of the company, including its profile, location, business activities, summer and winter contact details, and contact details of Japanese-speaking staff members
- (4) Emergency Management Plan
 - * Required in the event of injury to a guest or staff member, or a serious incident
- (5) Staff Training and Development Plan
- (6) Colour photographs of the two types of uniform (outerwear) to be used: front, back and side
- (7) Details of the representative (head of school) and the person in charge, and copies of their qualification certificates
- (8) The number and a list of the instructors and guides to be registered
- (9) For foreign staff members, evidence of eligibility to work in Japan (e.g. a copy of the work visa) and a copy of the individual's Residence Card
- (10) Copies of the insurance policies for public liability insurance (minimum of 100 million yen per single accident) and client accident insurance

Applicants must promptly report any changes or updates to their application, together with the required documents, to the ski area where the affiliation application was submitted. Failure to report may result in the withdrawal of accreditation.

6. Prohibited Acts

Applicants must be fully familiar with, and strictly observe, the various rules set by each ski resort, including the terms of the NISEKO UNITED Snowsports & Guiding Business Affiliation System, the Conditions of Contract for Cableway Transport, the Conditions of Use for Ski Resorts, the Detailed Regulations for Use of Ski Resorts, the Niseko Rules and other local rules. Applicants must check the details directly with each ski resort in advance.

- (1) Violations of the affiliation requirements
 - a) Soliciting or engaging in any form of publicity for business within any NISEKO UNITED ski area or its facilities, or placing flags, signs, etc. to mark lesson or meeting places.
 - b) Conducting lessons without wearing the designated uniform (outerwear) registered with NFP.
 - c) Failure of the ski area to reach the emergency contact (the full-time Japanese-speaking staff member).
 - d) Failure of the representative (head of school) or the person in charge to be based locally on a full-time basis without special reason.
 - e) Using any lift pass other than the NISEKO UNITED Commercial Lift Pass.
 - f) Lending or transferring a commercial lift pass to others, or using the pass of a staff member who is no longer employed without changing the holder's name.

- g) Using the ski areas or directly operated facilities (hotels or rental counters) of Niseko HANAZONO Resort or Niseko Village Ski Resort as a lesson starting point or meeting place, or advertising them as such, under any circumstances.
 - h) Making a false statement in the application.
 - i) Any act in violation of Japanese law.
- (2) Any act in violation of the terms and conditions, detailed regulations or other local rules of each ski resort.
 - (3) Any act in violation of the Niseko Rules.
 - (4) Any act at a resort outside Niseko that violates the rules set by that resort, or that results in a caution or warning.
 - (5) Conducting lessons or guiding with a Guided Photography Business Commercial Season Pass.

* If any prohibited act is discovered, it will be taken into consideration when reviewing the following season's accreditation application.

Penalties for violations of the above prohibited acts are set out in the attached List of Penalties for Prohibited Acts.

7. Exclusions

Affiliation is not required in the following circumstances:

- ① Domestic school teachers instructing their pupils on a temporary or short-term basis as part of school classes.
- ② Official Snowsports schools and Guiding businesses of NFP member ski areas.
- ③ Teaching on a temporary or short-term basis by organisations or individuals approved by each ski area.

8. Enforcement Procedures

NFP respects and protects the investment that accredited Snowsports schools and Guiding businesses make in purchasing commercial lift passes to operate their businesses. To this end, NFP deploys Lift Pass Enforcement Patrols, which may take photographic records of persons conducting lessons or guiding, and check whether the correct lift passes are being used.

- (1) The Lift Pass Enforcement Patrols will approach individuals on the slopes and elsewhere, and use hand-held scanners or similar devices to check items including the following:
 - ① The type of lift pass
 - ② The holder's name and colour photograph
 - ③ The lift pass number

* The hand-held scanner can record lift pass history data for reference.

- (2) If a Lift Pass Enforcement Patrol considers a case suspicious, the patrol will hand the individual a Consultation Request document together with documentation on the NISEKO UNITED Snowsports & Guiding Business Affiliation System. To avoid any trouble, there will be no further engagement on the spot.

Any individual who is handed a Consultation Request document, or who is considered to be in violation, must request an individual meeting with an NFP member within 48 hours in order to prove that the correct lift pass is being used. If no meeting is arranged within 48 hours, the individual's lift pass will be automatically suspended.

- (3) If the individual responds and attends the meeting within 48 hours, the following outcomes will apply.

<Accredited schools and guides>

- ① If NFP confirms that no violation has occurred, no further action will be taken.
- ② If NFP is satisfied that a violation has occurred, the designated penalties will be imposed.

* Please note that a violation by even a single individual will result in a penalty against the affiliated business to which that individual belongs.

<Non-accredited schools and guides>

- ① If NFP confirms that the individual has not received financial reward, no further action will be taken.
- ② If it remains suspected that the individual has received financial reward, the individual will be warned not to teach or guide (first warning).

The individual will also be required to sign a declaration stating that they are not engaged in snowsports teaching or guiding.

- ③ If NFP is satisfied that the individual has received financial reward, the lift pass held by the individual will be suspended immediately with no refund.

(4) If an individual from a non-accredited school or guiding operation receives a second warning, the following will apply:

The individual must request an individual meeting with an NFP member within 48 hours. If no meeting is arranged within 48 hours, the individual's lift pass will be automatically suspended.

(5) If the individual responds and attends the meeting within 48 hours of the second warning, the following outcomes will apply.

- ① If NFP confirms that the individual has not received financial reward, no further action will be taken.
- ② If NFP is satisfied that the individual has received financial reward, the lift pass held by the individual will be suspended immediately with no refund.

Accredited Snowsports schools and Guiding businesses may identify individuals or groups they believe to be operating without accreditation or in violation of the rules, and report them to the Lift Pass Enforcement Patrols. Based on that information, the patrols will report all lift pass data relating to those individuals to NFP.

9. General

In order to protect the quality of experience, safety and enjoyment of all guests using NISEKO UNITED, NFP will take a strict approach based on the various rules set by each ski resort, including the Conditions of Contract for Cableway Transport, the Conditions of Use for Ski Resorts, the Niseko Rules and other local rules.

NFP will take a firm stand against rule violators. To this end, NFP reserves the right to immediately suspend, without refund, all lift passes purchased and held by violators, and to refuse the purchase of any further lift passes.

NFP reserves the right to modify or amend the NISEKO UNITED Snowsports & Guiding Business Affiliation System at any time.

Snowsports schools and Guiding businesses affiliated under this system will not be entitled to any form of priority in the use of slopes, ski area facilities or lifts at any NISEKO UNITED ski area.

NFP may place signage informing residents and guests of the NISEKO UNITED resort area of the benefits of the NISEKO UNITED Snowsports & Guiding Business Affiliation System, and that only instructors and guides belonging to affiliated Snowsports schools and Guiding businesses are permitted to operate within NISEKO UNITED.

End of document

List of Qualifications

2026-2027	
COUNTRY	GROUP
OVSV AUSTRIA	STAATLICHER
FRANCE	FULL
AMSI / ITALY	3
DSLVL / GERMANY	LEVEL 3
BASI / UK	LEVEL 3
PSIA / USA	LEVEL 3
CSIA / CANADA	LEVEL 3
APSI / AUSTRALIA	LEVEL 3
NZSIA / NEW ZEALAND	LEVEL 3

* SAJ and SIA (JPN) qualifications are accredited in accordance with the respective rules of SAJ and SIA (JPN).

* Qualifications from countries not listed above will be confirmed at the time of application.

(Attachment) List of Penalties for Prohibited Acts

NISEKO UNITED Snowsports & Guiding Business Affiliation System: Penalties for violations of each item of Section 6, Prohibited Acts

6	Penalties for Prohibited Acts		
1)	Violations of the affiliation requirements		
	a) b) c) d)	1st	Strict warning (written undertaking to be submitted by the school)
		2nd	All lift passes held by the school suspended for 3 days
		3rd	Withdrawal of accreditation
		* Notwithstanding the above, accreditation may be withdrawn if the violation is deemed malicious.	
	e) f)	Confiscation of the commercial lift pass of the individual concerned (no pass will be issued the following season)	
		1st	Strict warning (written undertaking to be submitted by the school)
		2nd	All lift passes held by the school suspended for 3 days
		3rd	Withdrawal of accreditation
		Penalty of 100,000 yen + compensation for unauthorised lift use	
		* Notwithstanding the above, accreditation may be withdrawn if the violation is deemed malicious.	
	g) h) i)		
	Immediate withdrawal of accreditation		
	2)	Violations of the terms and conditions, detailed regulations or other local rules of each ski resort	
		1st time: Strict warning (written undertaking to be submitted by the school) + compensation for unauthorised lift use	
		2nd time: All lift passes held by the school suspended for 3 days + compensation for unauthorised lift use	
		3rd time: Withdrawal of accreditation + compensation for unauthorised lift use	
3)	Violations of the Niseko Rules		
	Confiscation of the commercial lift pass of the individual concerned (no pass will be issued the following season)		
	1st time: Strict warning (written undertaking to be submitted by the school)		
	2nd time: All lift passes held by the school suspended for 3 days		
	3rd time: Withdrawal of accreditation; penalty of 100,000 yen		
	* Notwithstanding the above, accreditation may be withdrawn if the violation is deemed malicious.		

* Misuse of commercial lift passes by guides, including conducting lessons or guiding with a Guided Photography Business Commercial Season Pass (Section 6 (5)), is subject to the same penalties as those applied to instructors' commercial lift passes (item 1) e) f) above).