



PREPARATION FOR PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT (PI) INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION

2021

This document is for athletes with a physical impairment who are seeking International Classification as a part of qualification preparation for WPA Championships and Paralympic Games.

What is International Classification?

Classification is a system that has been put in place to minimise the impact of impairments on sport performance and to ensure the success of an athlete is determined by skill, fitness, power, endurance, tactical ability and mental focus. Classification determines who is eligible to compete in Para Athletics and it groups the eligible athletes in sport classes according to their impairment and activity limitation.

To compete internationally, athletes require an International Classification.

International Classification is managed by World Para Athletics (WPA) and is held in conjunction with selected WPA approved competitions. Athletes are classified by a panel of international classifiers (a minimum of 2 classifiers).

For an Australian Athlete to be considered to progress to International Classification, he/she must have a current National Classification.

Australian Athletics reserves the right to use its absolute discretion when nominating athletes for international classification. Athletes will be prioritised based on their recent performances*, performance progression* and likelihood of international representation within two years.

*Athlete performances in Paralympic pathway events will be prioritised (see Paralympic Games Medal Events).

What occurs at International Classification?

Classification for athletics typically includes three components – Physical, Technical and Observation assessments.



Classification component	Details
Physical Assessment	Assessment of physical impairment, depending on type of impairment. Examples of tests are measurements of range of movement, muscle strength, spasticity, limb length.
Technical Assessment	Assessment of sport related tasks for the relevant track and/or field events.
Observation in Competition	Athlete is viewed whilst competing in the relevant track and/or field events.

Who needs to present for WPA International Classification?

Athletes who hold the following sport class level and status will be required to attend international classification prior to the commencement of international competition:

- International New (*this applies to athletes who have not been classified internationally, including National Review and National Confirmed athletes*)
- International Review (*with no review year*)
- International Review (*with fixed review year prior to or in the current year*)

To check your current International Classification Status please visit the following website: <https://www.paralympic.org/athletics/classification/master-list>

Or alternatively contact Steve Caddy – steve.caddy@athletics.org.au

Your previous classification paperwork and medical diagnostic reports will be shared between Paralympics Australia, AA and selected PI classifiers to assess what you may require as a part of your International Classification. If you do not wish for this to occur, please email Steve Caddy (steve.caddy@athletics.org.au).

AA Requirements

To attend International Classification, athletes are required to fulfil the following requirements:

1. PI Medical Diagnostic Form (MDF)

Please arrange for the PI Medical Diagnostics Form to be completed electronically by your specialist and ensure testing is done to provide supporting evidence of your physical impairment.



Information on the PI Medical Diagnostics form must clearly outline your diagnosis and level of impairment.

This medical document must have been completed no more than 12 months prior to the date of the upcoming international classification.

2. Additional medical diagnostic evidence of physical impairment

All athletes must provide additional relevant medical reports from their specialist to support the PI Medical Diagnostic form.

Athletes with the following impairments/diagnosis, or with a complex condition or multiple impairments are also requested to provide additional relevant medical documentation including:

Impairment type / Diagnosis	Details
Neurological impairments (e.g. Cerebral Palsy, Acquired Brain Injury)	Documentation from neurologist detailing condition and impairment (ataxia, hypertonia, athetosis), surgeries, all medications used and recent/future treatments (such as botox). <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modified Ashworth Scale scores are to be provided for all athletes.
Limb deficiency	X-Rays are to be provided of relevant joints for athletes who have an amputation or dysmelia through ankle, knee, wrist or elbow joint.
Spinal cord injury or damage	Reports from rehabilitation specialists detailing date of injury, how the injury occurs, extent of fixation (if applicable) and any subsequent surgeries. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ASIA Scale test results are to be provided for athletes with a spinal injury.
Short Stature	Documentation from endocrinologist, rehabilitation consultant or orthopaedic specialist which confirms diagnosis and details growth curves.
Multiple Sclerosis	Brain and Spine MRI and lab results may be required to confirm diagnosis along with a report to clarify the athlete's condition and if it is stable or fluctuating.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modified Ashworth Scale scores are to be provided for athletes with hypertonia, ataxia or athetosis.
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This medical documentation must have been completed no more than 12 months prior to the date of upcoming international classification.

1. Obtain a WPA license for the season

For IPC licensing please see this link - <https://www.athletics.com.au/para-athletics-high-performance/wpa-licensing/>

Your completed PI Medical Diagnostic form, supporting evidence and licensing documentation must be provided back to Australian Athletics by December in the year prior to classification.

What happens if an athlete doesn't have the required documentation?

Without all the appropriate information, AA, WPA or a PI classification panel may:

1. Not register the athlete for international level classification with WPA.
2. Decide not to classify an athlete as they do not have all the requested verification information. The athlete will be ineligible to compete at international level competition.
3. Provide the athlete with a Classification Not Complete, meaning the athlete has not finalised all aspects of classification. The athlete will be ineligible to compete at international level competition.

Timeframes

The below time frames are based on the typical timeline of WPA confirming the International Classification Calendar and the Australian competition likely to be assigned with international classification.

This timeline is subject to change when the International Classification is confirmed for the following year.





AA provides PI Medical Diagnostics form and outlines requirements to athletes.	October
Athlete arranges specialist appointment. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have the PI Medical Diagnostics form completed.• Have additional tests results as required by the paperwork.	October/November
AA provides information regarding competition in which PI International Classification is offered.	November
Completed PI Medical diagnostics form, supporting documentation & licensing documentation to be provided back to AA.	Early December
PI Medical Diagnostics reviewed with Paralympics Australia and additional information followed up as necessary.	December
Athlete ensures they have an IPC License.	December
Athlete to enter the event in which classification is being conducted.	In line with competition entry deadline.
Preparation with program staff and identification of athlete representative.	1 month prior to the identified event.
AA provides athletes with the classification schedule to present for classification.	1 week prior to identified event.
Athlete attends Classification.	1-2 days prior to identified event.



WPA International Classification Rules

Please refer to WPA Classification Rules and Regulations:

<https://www.paralympic.org/athletics/classification/rules-and-regulations>

Contact

Australian Athletics Para Classification Team

classification@athletics.org.au / (03) 8646 4550