

Little Athletics NSW Classification Guidelines for Athletes with a Disability



All athletes with a disability must have received at least a provisional classification from the National Sporting Organisation, in this case Athletics Australia, if they want to compete in multi class events conducted at Little Athletics championship competition. A provisional classification is whereby the athlete supplies medical reports/results to the National Sporting Organisation. In return they will grant you with a 'provisional' classification. The provisional classification will be in place until you are able to attend a classification day to be fully assessed by qualified classifiers (this only applies to physical impairment. All other impairments are not required to attend a classification day unless one has been organised by the Australian Paralympic Committee).

Classification in athletics has five areas or categories, and each have different requirements. If an athlete does not fall into one of the following categories, then they may not be able to be classified. If an athlete cannot be classified, they are ineligible to compete in disability events and must therefore compete in the able-bodies events.

Deaf (T/F 01) – A hearing loss of at least 55db in the better ear (three tone frequency average of 500, 1000 and 2000 hertz) as assessed by an audiologist.

Correspondence from the audiologist confirming that the athlete meets the classification guidelines outlined above must be sent to Little Athletics NSW. A copy of an audiogram is not enough.

Deaf Sports Australia – www.deafsports.org.au or info@deafsports.org.au

Visually Impaired (T/F 11-13) – Poor light acuity to total blindness.

Australian Paralympic Committee – classification@paralympic.org.au or 02 9704 0500

Intellectual Disability (T/F 20)

Sport Inclusion Australia – www.sportinclusionaustralia.org.au or mail@sportinclusionaustralia.org.au

Physical Impairment: Cerebral Palsy (T/F 32-38); Amputee & Les Autres (Little People) (T/F 40-46); Wheelchair Athletes (T51-54; F51-58) Limb Deficiency etc. (T/F 61-64)

Australian Paralympic Committee – classification@paralympic.org.au or 02 9704 0500

Transplantee (T/F 60) – A person who has received a kidney, heart, heart & lung, liver or bone marrow transplant.

Transplant Australia – www.tansplant.org.au or contactus@tansplant.org.au

Classification FAQs



What is the minimum age for classification?

The minimum age for classification is different for each sport and is linked to the age when an athlete can first compete in the sport against other athletes with a disability. In Australia, starting ages will change depending on the sport. Sports such as swimming and athletics allow athletes to compete from 8yrs of age onwards, classified occurs from this age.

Do I need to be classified more than once in a sport?

This will depend on your impairment and level of classification. Most athletes will be classified more than once during their sporting career. Classifiers will decide whether an athlete need to be reviewed during the classification process. Common reasons for attending classification more than once include:

- You may be allocated a review date and will need to be reviewed in a certain year or event.
- Your age
- You may be requested to attend classification at a major championships (such as a national or international championships)
- You have a deteriorating condition or your impairment has changed
- The classification rules for the sport change and you need to be reviewed

I have changed since I was last classified – what do I do?

If your medical condition has changed or you have had medical intervention that may impact upon your classification, you are required to advise your sport of these changes. This may result in a review of your classification. Any requests need to be accompanied by medical documentation. Contact your sport for more information.

I have a classification in one sport and want to compete in another, do I need to get classified again?

Each sport has a different classification process, so you will need to be classified by recognised classifiers for the sport and according to the classification rules for the sport.

It is possible that an athlete may meet the criteria in one sport, but may not meet the criteria in another sport.

There seems to be a broad range of disabilities in my class. Is this fair?

Athletes are matched as fairly as possible into a class with others who have a similar level of impairment. As no two athletes are the same, within each class there may be differences between athletes.

Do I need a copy of my classification?

Athletes should receive a copy of their classification paperwork which shows their sport class and sport class status. Athletes must keep a copy of this paperwork for future reference.

Do I need to prove that I have been classified when I enter into a competition?

All athletes who have been through a classification process will have their records kept on file and classification details will be entered into the classification masterlist for that sport. Competition organisers can confirm your classification by referring to the masterlist for your sport.

How long is my classification valid for?

Every time an athlete is classified their classification is given a status. The following outcomes may occur:

- An athlete is allocated a National Review (NR) status, with no date for review, which means they will be required to attend classification again at the next competition where classification is held, and it is an entry requirement to hold a valid classification.
- An athlete is allocated a fixed review year e.g. NR 2015, which means they will not be able to attend classification until the year that is allocated. Once the review year arrives, the classification will revert to NR status and the above NR Status conditions apply.
- An athlete is allocated a National Confirmed (NC) status, which means the athlete will not be classified again for any National competitions.

Regardless of what status is allocated an athlete may be classified again if:

- the classification rules for the sport change
- an athlete's condition has changed since their last classification to the extent that they most likely does not fit his/her current sport class due to medical interventions, change in condition (progressive/fluctuating) or skeletal maturity (growth) changes. Refer to the FAQ "I have changed since I was last classified – What do I do?".
- as an outcome of protest or appeal.

I've been to a classification assessment and have been told I'm not eligible for a sport – what does this mean?

There are rules surrounding ineligibility for each sport/competition.

If you have been told you are ineligible, this means that that you do not meet the minimal disability criteria for that sport as per classification rules. You will not be able to compete in Paraspport events/competitions as an athlete with a disability. Where an opportunity exists, you may be able to attend a second evaluation with alternative certified classifiers at an equal or higher level. In some sports, athletes who do not meet the minimal disability criteria have an opportunity to compete in an open or invitational class. As classification rules are specific to each sport, an athlete who is not eligible for one sport; is not necessarily eligible for another as the minimal disability criteria for each sport are different.

I do not agree with the class I've been allocated – what can I do?

Athletes have a right to lodge a disagreement or protest their classification. You should contact the National Federation for your sport. Also refer to the APC Classification policy.

I do not agree with the way my classification was conducted – what can I do?

Athletes have a right to lodge a disagreement or protest their classification. You should contact the National Federation for your sport. Also refer to the APC classification policy.

For further information contact Cheryl Webb, Diversity & Inclusion Lead, at cwebb@lansw.com.au or 02 9633 4511.