Australian Classifier Pathway

Generic Information

What is Classification?

Paralympic sport exists so that athletes with disabilities have equal opportunities to compete and be successful in sport. Paralympic athletes have impairments that lead to a competitive disadvantage in non-Paralympic sport. Classification groups athletes who have similar impairments together into classes for competition in their particular sport.

Classification involves an assessment to determine how the athlete's impairment influences the activities required in their sport, regardless of their level of training or development. Classification involves athletes undergoing physical, medical, visual or cognitive testing; demonstrating sport skills, and being observed during competition. Each Paralympic sport has a different classification system.

Classification allows athletes to determine whether they are eligible to compete in Paralympic sport, which they compete against and to begin the pathway toward international competition.

What is a Classifier?

Classifiers are officials who provide sport specific assessments, to determine in which class an athlete with a disability will compete. Classifiers work closely with their relevant sport organisations, Paralympics Australia and other Australian classifiers. Classifiers work in a voluntary capacity at a state, national and international level, all costs associated with attending the classification are covered.

Types of Classifiers

International Federations have two different types of classifiers: medical and technical. Some federations use only one of these, and some use a combination of both.
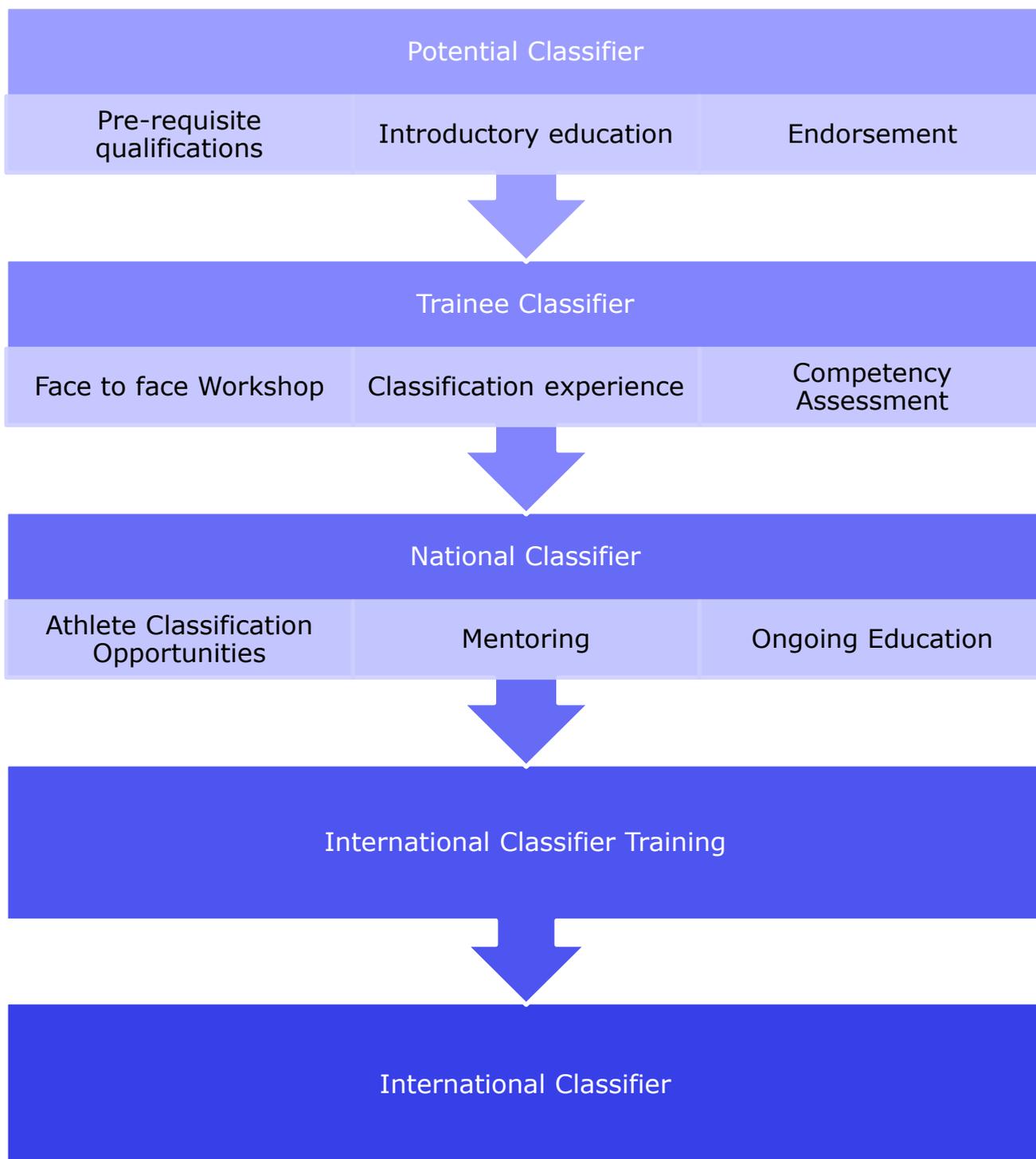
The IPC Athlete Classification Code and each international federation classification rules specify classification personnel and training. The Paralympics Australia and National Federations adopt this for Australian classification training where applicable.

Classifier Training

Training is based on the International Federation pathway and classification rules. Where possible, educators recognised by the International Federation will be used for training Australian classifiers. Paralympics Australia works in partnership with the National Federations to identify the needs for classifier development.

The process involves identifying suitably qualified and interested individuals within targeted sports and geographic areas to progress through the pathway below. A nomination and selection process will take place to determine successful candidates to undergo training.

Classifier Pathway Structure

Potential Classifier		
Pre-requisite qualifications	Introductory education	Endorsement

Trainee Classifier		
Face to face Workshop	Classification experience	Competency Assessment

National Classifier		
Athlete Classification Opportunities	Mentoring	Ongoing Education

International Classifier Training

International Classifier

Classifier Pathway

Potential Classifier

a) Pre-requisite qualifications

To be eligible to complete the Australian Classifier pathway candidates must meet the following prerequisites and provide documentation relating to training and registration in their profession:

- **Medical classifiers**. Currently registered medical professional (physiotherapist or medical doctor, ophthalmologist/orthoptist); with minimum 5 years clinical experience with people with the relevant impairment types for the sport.
- **Technical classifiers**. Must hold a Tertiary qualification in sport science/ kinesiology / human movement science or other equivalent; as well as additional sport specific experience. It is preferred that they have experience with athletes who have relevant impairment types for the sport.
- **Involvement in their chosen sport.** Classification is a sport specific process, and all individuals must have a strong understanding of their particular sport. Experience may be from being a participant, official, coach, volunteer or administrator.

b) Completion of IPC Academy online module
Candidates are to complete the IPC's online education program "Introduction to Para-sport" – modules 1 and 2 http://www.ipc-academy.org/?academy=1&course=47

c) Completion of Introductory Classifier Training
Candidate may be required to undertake an International Sport Federation introductory learning programme for potential classifiers where it exists for a sport. This may take the form of self-directed, online, face to face learning programme.

d) Additional documentation, disclosure or training
Candidates may be required to undergo additional checks or training and provide documentation to the National Federation and Paralympics Australia. This may include Working with Children and/or Vulnerable people checks; online training regarding Child Protection, Discrimination and Harrassment; declaration of being competent for the role.

e) Endorsement from Sport
To be eligible for training as a classifier, trainees must obtain the support of the state or national federation for their sport. It is the trainee's responsibility to initiate contact with the appropriate organisation. Endorsement may take the form of a face to face interview, screening or induction process.

f) Selection of Candidate to progress to Classifier training
Successful completion of the components above are required for a classifier to be considered for selection to progress to face to face training.
The Paralympics Australia and NF will go through a selection process and advise successful applicants.

Note: Costs for the above are the responsibility of the applicant. Participants who progress to certification as national classifiers through completion of the training described above are able to apply for reimbursement of the cost of any introductory training.

National Classifier Training

1. Face to face workshop

Individuals meeting the above criteria are eligible to attend an on-site National Classification Workshop in their sport. This program is run by approved Classification Educators and managed by the national federation or international federation (depending on the IF training pathway).

Upon successful completion of the programme individuals shall be awarded National Trainee Classifier status in their sport.

2. Practical and/or Competition based classification training

Trainee National Classifiers undertake classification as part of a panel whilst being mentored and observed to a set of criteria by approved National Classification Educators.

3. Competency Assessment & Certification as National classifier

Subject to meeting all competency and assessment criteria, individuals will be certified by the Paralympics Australia and National Federation as Australian National Classifiers for the sport.

National Classifier

- **Classification Opportunities**
  National level classifiers are typically appointed to state based sporting events as part of a classification panel, and can expect to participate in a minimum of 1 state-based classification annually. They may also be asked to act as part of a classification panel for their chosen sport 1-2 times yearly at National events around Australia.

International Classifier Training

National classifiers may be identified to attend international classifier training and certification as experience and competencies develop. The Paralympics Australia and National Federation must endorse candidates prior to commencing any Australian classifier to progress to international classifier training.

International classifier training and certification are specified by the International Federation for the sport.

International Classifier

International level classifiers are appointed to international competitions events as part of a classification panel by the International Federation for the sport. International classifier education and certification are specified by the International Federation for the sport.Experienced international classifiers may progress to be classifier educators for their sport.