

Athletes with a Vision Impairment

Classification Information Sheet



Which Paralympic sports may I compete in?

Summer Paralympic Sports		Winter Paralympic Sports
Athletics	Judo*	Alpine Skiing
Cycling	Paratriathlon	Cross Country Skiing and Biathlon*
Equestrian	Rowing	
Football 5-a-side*	Swimming	
Goalball		

*Currently limited programs offered in Australia

Who is eligible as an athlete with a vision impairment?

Athletes must have a diagnosis of at least one of the following:

- impairment of the eye structure;
- impairment of the optic nerve or pathways;
- impairment of the visual cortex of the brain.

Athletes must have an impairment in BOTH eyes and meet minimal disability criteria of:

- visual acuity that is less than or equal to LogMAR = 1.00 (6/60) and/or
- visual field that is less than a diameter of 40 degrees (20-degree radius).

Athletes are tested on their level of vision with and without correction. An athlete's classification will be based on the vision level of the best eye, with best corrected vision.

When do I need a classification?

- If you want to compete in Para-sport as an athlete with a vision impairment, you must undergo a VI classification assessment as required by the sport to competition.
- Minimum age for classification is 8 years.
- Classification should be arranged as early as possible and usually prior to regional or state championships.
- Athletes who are selected to represent Australia at international level competition will be required to attend international classification.

Who conducts a VI classification for Paralympic Sports?

Classification is conducted by authorised Paralympics Australia VI classifiers. These are low vision eye specialised officials (Ophthalmologist, Orthoptist, Optometrist) certified by the Paralympics Australia to conduct activities in Australia. Only these classifiers are able to determine whether an athlete meets the minimal disability criteria and which class they compete in. Classifiers operate out of low vision clinics in most states and territories in Australia.

What are the vision impaired classes?

Class	Description (General Guide only)
B1	Generally, athletes have a range from no light perception in either eye to light perception. Athletes generally have an inability to recognise the shape of a hand at any distance or in any direction. Visual acuity is poorer than LogMAR 2.60.
B2	Visual acuity below 2/60 (LogMar 1.50 to 2.60 inclusive) and/or the visual field of less than a diameter of 10 degrees.
B3	Visual acuity ranges from 2/60 – 6/60 (LogMAR 1.40 to 1 inclusive), and/or a visual field that is constricted to a radius of less than 20 degrees.
Not Eligible	Visual acuity above 6/60 (LogMAR below 1.0), and/or a visual field that is constricted to a radius of greater than 20 degrees. <i>Athletes are not permitted to compete in Paraspport nationally where competition utilises the classification system.</i>

Sport specific classes (converted from B class)

Through the VI Classification assessment process an athlete may seek a classification for more than one sport. This needs to be advised when an athlete seeks classification

Sport	B Class*	Sport Specific Class
Alpine and Nordic Skiing	B1	B1
	B2	B2
	B3	B3
Archery (non-Paralympic event)	B1	B1
	B2	B2
	B3	B3
Athletics	B1	T/F 11
	B2	T/F 12
	B3	T/F 13
Swimming	B1	S 11 (All swimmers are required to have blackened goggles and a tapper)
	B2	S 12 (Swimmers may elect to use a tapper)
	B3	S 13
Cycling	B1 – B3	B (Tandem)
Judo	B1 – B3	B1 – B3 (all classes are combined)
Football 5-a-side	B1 – B3	All classes are combined. All players except goalkeeper wear shades
Equestrian	B1	Grade 4
	B2	Grade 5
Goalball	B1 – B3	All players are required to wear a blindfold
Rowing	B1-B3	LTA –VI (B1-B3).
Triathlon	B1-B3	PT VI

How do I get classified?

NATIONAL LEVEL CLASSIFICATION

Athletes who attend a face to face classification with a certified Paralympics Australia VI Classifier in a capital city. Athletes should seek this as the preferred option for classification as it is valid for all levels of Para-sport competition in Australia. Please allow 2-3 months for this process to be completed.

Step 1

Request a classification using:

Get Involved/Get Classified form from <https://www.paralympic.org.au/get-involved-registration-form/>
OR *National VI Medical Screening Form* from <http://www.paralympic.org.au/vision-classification>

Step 2

Athlete compiles appropriate medical diagnostic documentation from a registered ophthalmologist:

- The National VI Medical Screening form must be completed by a registered ophthalmologist prior to face to face classification.
- If the athlete already has a separate report from their ophthalmologist (preferably from within the last 12 months) detailing visual acuity and visual field, this information may be used
- Depending on the impairment, athletes may also be required to provide additional evidence through test results such as visual field, OCT, VEP or ERG.

The athlete must bring the completed VI Medical Screening form (or report) and provide supplementary evidence each time they are classified. An athlete cannot be classified unless they provide the information required at the time of classification.

Step 3

Athlete makes an appointment and attends classification with a Paralympics Australia certified National VI classifier for a National level classification. Contact classification@paralympic.org.au or phone 08 8415 6803 for your nearest classifier.

The athlete must bring a completed VI screening form or current report from an Ophthalmologist each time they are classified (as indicated in step 2). The athlete should receive a copy of the classification from the Paralympics Australia VI classifier at the time of classification.

Step 4

Classification outcomes must be provided from the VI Classifier to Paralympics Australia in order for the classification to be officially valid and recognised. This will be shared and recorded in a central database held by the national sports federation and the Paralympics Australia.

REMOTE PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

For athletes who are unable to attend a face to face classification with a certified VI classifier due to geographical location. Provisional classification gives an indication of class only and athletes will need to undergo face to face classification at the earliest opportunity. Please allow 2-3 months for this process to be completed.

Step 1

Request a classification using:

Get Involved/Get Classified form <https://www.paralympic.org.au/get-involved-registration-form/> OR
Provisional VI Classification Form from <http://www.paralympic.org.au/vision-classification>

Step 2

Athlete compiles appropriate medical diagnostic documentation from a registered ophthalmologist:

- The Remote Provisional VI Classification form must be completed by a registered ophthalmologist
- If the athlete already has a separate report from their ophthalmologist (preferably from within the last 12 months) detailing visual acuity and visual field, this information may be used
- Depending on the impairment, athletes may also be required to provide additional evidence through test results such as visual field, OCT, VEP or ERG.

An athlete cannot be classified unless they provide the medical diagnostic information required.

Step 3

Athlete submits provisional paperwork documentation to the Paralympics Australia classification@paralympic.org.au or mail to PO Box 596 Sydney Markets NSW 2129.

Step 4

Paralympics Australia arranges for paperwork to be reviewed and assessed by a Paralympics Australia certified National VI classifier for a National level classification.

Step 5

Completed paperwork is provided from the Paralympics Australia to the athlete.

Step 6

Classification outcome will be shared and recorded in a central database held by the national sports federation and the Paralympics Australia.

Step 7

Athlete seeks opportunity to follow steps to obtain a face to face national level classification.

Links and Resources

Organisation	Contact Details
<i>Paralympics Australia</i>	Website: www.paralympic.org.au Phone: + 61 2 9704 0500 Email: classification@paralympic.org.au
<i>National Federations (for particular sports)</i>	Visit the sports pages on www.paralympic.org.au for links to each National Federation
<i>Sport Inclusion Australia</i>	Website: www.sportinclusionaustralia.org.au

The information provided in this document is based on international rules for sports and classification.