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## Classification Information

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## Information on Classification for Inclusive Skating

Classification gives each skater an impairment compensation, depending on how their medical conditions affect the ability to learn, practice or participate in skating. Inclusive skaters have many types of disabilities, and many have more than one type of disability. Some conditions (such as mental illness) do not get impairment compensation and these skaters are also welcome to skate in Inclusive Skating events.

Please bring all information with you to classification and do not send or post anything. We will ask you to retain and keep a copy of all your own medical records and we will not retain any. We will keep a record of any impairment compensation that is to be added to your skating score and record the necessary facilitation. When completing your entry form and at the event always inform us about the current facilitation requirements and any updates on the skater's needs.

Here is further information for skaters and their parents, carers and coaches.

## Classification Handbook

The Classification Handbook contains the information on what impairments are classified. The Classification Handbook is used by the Classifiers when they are classifying the skater. The more information we have the more accurate the classifiers can be.

Click here for the recently updated [Classification Handbook 4th edition](#)

The purpose of the Classification Handbook is to:

- Define whether the skater has an impairment
- Establish that the impairment leads to a competitive disadvantage in skating
- Compensate for the competitive disadvantage caused by the impairment by deciding what the whole person impairment compensation is
- Ascertain the technical level for elite participation related to the impairment and what is the impact on the specific tasks in that event.
- Define what facilitation (if any) the skater needs whilst competing.
- New skaters and local events can also use the Table of Frequently used Classifications as a guide

### Code of Classification

The Code of Classification is the formal part of the Classification Process that is required for ice skating to be recognised as a Paralympic Sport and it also provides good practice guidelines for Inclusive Skating Classification. Classification is a cornerstone of paralympic sport and provides the traditional structure for disabled competition. More fundamentally paralympic athletes must have an impairment in body structures and functions that leads to a competitive disadvantage in sport. Consequently the IPC stipulate that, "criteria are put in place to ensure that winning is determined by skill, fitness, power, endurance, tactical ability and mental focus, the same factors that account for success in sport for athletes who are able-bodied."

Therefore, the Code of Classification follows the IPC strategy on classification and seeks to provide a basis for equitable competition through classification processes that are robust, transparent and fair. This includes the protest and appeals process.

The Code of Classification must be read in conjunction with the Classification Handbook.

Click here for the [Code of Classification Feb 2014](#)

## Further Information

### Classification – When is this done?

Usually, this is done at your first National Championship Inclusive Skating Event. You will be given a time to attend for classification at the competition event.

Where possible, we will have the meeting before the skater's first competitive skate.

To make classification as relaxed as possible we aim to complete assessments within 20 minutes, with as little intrusive questioning as possible.

We also watch the skater during practice and the compulsory elements. So, there is usually a delay in releasing the results of the event. Don't worry, the impairment compensation is added on to the skating score so your skating score never changes.

### Classification – who is there?

The classification panel usually has three members with at least one doctor, and they will ask the skater about their disability and how it affects their skating.

It is very helpful for a parent, carer and/or coach to attend, particularly where the skater may find it difficult to explain their medical condition or where their first language is not English.

As inclusive skating is just getting started worldwide, you may find that an extra classifier is present, so that they can learn how to classify skaters in their own clubs and countries.

### Classification – What happens?

All skaters will be asked to bend, move and balance and the doctors will decide whether examination of lungs, heart or other systems is needed. It is the classifier's job to work out how the particular medical conditions of the skaters will affect the ability to skate and assign an impairment compensation. If there is insufficient medical information, or evidence or the disability does not directly affect skating, it may be impossible to give an impairment compensation. You will still be allowed to skate in the competition, you just will not be able to get any impairment compensation added on.

Alternatively, if the skater meets the minimal impairment criteria but there is not sufficient evidence to decide on a specific impairment compensation the Classification Panel may give an impairment compensation of 5%. If evidence does become available later the impairment compensation can be adjusted accordingly. If the skater's medical condition can or does change then the skater can also be given a review classification and can be reassessed.

It is also very helpful if you can tell us whether the skater will need adjustment of the competition rules to help them. This will be discussed with you at classification.

### What other information will be needed?

The skater needs to provide evidence of identity (such as a passport).

### Facilitation

We will try to make it possible for every skater to skate their best, and will enable adjustments that are needed because of a medical condition. Here are some examples:

Shortness of breath: The skater can stop for a brief period between compulsory elements or during a longer free skate. The skater may also be allowed to skate a reduced program and the number of technical elements will be adjusted accordingly.

Total / partial blindness: A facilitator on the ice during the warm-up and whilst the skater is performing.

Severe intellectual impairment: A facilitator on the ice during the warm-up to remind the skater of the compulsory elements

Deafness and visual impairment: Earphones with instructions from a facilitator during speed events.

Visual impairment: A facilitator with a bungee cord to help guide the skater's direction during speed events

Balance: The use of a harness or frame

Diabetes: First to skate after the warm-up

We are keen to find out what adjustments are helpful to skaters so if you have found something that helps, please tell us and we will be happy to consider this, so long as it is reasonable for the particular type of disability.

Facilitators are only allowed on the ice if they have been approved during classification. We also wish Inclusive Skaters to achieve independence where this is possible.

### Does the classification need to be repeated at each event?

No, most disabilities are stable over long periods so when the skater has been classified it will normally be accepted at later events. However, if the skater's health improves or deteriorates, you need to tell us before the next event, so that the skater can be reassessed. If the condition is one that is expected to deteriorate or improve, or where there is a degree of uncertainty about medical details, the doctors can give a review classification and you can be reassessed when necessary.

### Disability Specific events

Some Disability Specific Events that are being held by Inclusive Skating, such as British Blind Sport or Special Olympics, are classified by another organisation. Please bring evidence of this classification with you. Some Disability Specific events such as Inclusive Skating for Genes are assessed at Inclusive Skating Classification.

## Local Club competitions

For local club competitions unclassified skaters may be given an estimated review impairment compensation classification. This estimate is based on examples of previous classifications and is usually available for typical impairments that we have previously classified.

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