

SCOTTISH DISABILITY SPORT

Intellectual Impairment Classification Policy

Introduction

Classification provides a structure for competition to ensure that an athlete's impairment is relevant to sport performance and to ensure that the athlete competes equitably with other athletes. Classification has two important roles:

- To determine eligibility to compete
- To group athletes and players for competition

There is only one international class for each specific sport for athletes with a learning disability. Each sport within the IPC programme has a sports class which is identified by a letter and number as follows:

- Swimming - S14
- Athletics (Track) - T20
- Athletics (Field) - F20
- Table Tennis - T11

There are many other performance sports that do not have a Paralympic pathway that have classification opportunities for athletes with a learning disability. These sports associations can also apply for an individual to be classified using the same process.

Athletes with a learning disability (intellectual impairment) must provide evidence that they have an eligible impairment that impacts on athletic performance.

Classification explained

1. Scotland – Scottish Disability Sport

- Access to SDS competitive events for athletes and players with a learning disability, since the mid 70s, has been based entirely on trust. Schools, college, centre and club representatives determine the eligibility of an individual to participate. This decision is based on competition qualifying criteria. At junior level the decision on whether a pupil is eligible will be confirmed by school staff and only if necessary by an Educational Psychologist. At senior level Social Services, Health Services or Voluntary Organisation personnel may be called in if confirmation of eligibility is required. No formal assessment or supporting evidence is required by SDS.
- Scottish athletes and players with a learning disability who produce performances that indicate they have the potential to move forward and challenge for representative honours at GB, UK, Virtus or IPC level, transfer to the UK system of classification evaluation. The decision on who should move forward to this higher level of classification rests with the individuals who are involved in the performance programme for the specific sport.

2. Great Britain and the United Kingdom

United Kingdom offers two levels of classification for performance athletes and players:

- UK Level classification for competitions within the UK only.
- International Level for competitions organised under the jurisdiction of Virtus or the IPC.

Scottish Disability Sport is responsible for the preparation and submission of applications to UKSA and Virtus (through UKSA) for Scottish athletes. The UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability (UKSA) manages UK and International level classifications for all UK athletes. For athletes and swimmers with a learning disability applications for Virtus are sent directly to British Athletics & British Swimming to process onto UKSA.



2.1 UK Level Classification

Committed performance athletes and players with a learning disability, who are successful within their Home Country, but have yet to record GB or International qualifying performances should pursue the UK Level Classification. This level of classification is valid for UK athletes who compete in UK competitions only. A UK level classification is not obligatory for all UK competitions. It is important that the entry form and more specifically the qualifying criteria are checked.

All Scottish applications for UK level classifications are submitted to UKSA (UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability) through SDS. UKSA expects submissions from SDS to be lodged with UKSA at least FOUR weeks prior to the closing date for entries for the competition at which the athlete plans to compete. The submission of a UK level classification application is no guarantee that a classification will be granted.

Only athletes who have been classified on the UK system since January 1st 2009 will hold a valid UK classification.

2.2 Further Guidance on UK Classification

To obtain copies of UKSA (national) classification application forms, eligibility criteria and guidance notes please contact the Scottish Disability Sport Performance Manager:

Gary Fraser
Performance Manager
Scottish Disability Sport
1 Redheughs Rigg
Caledonia House
Edinburgh
EH12 9DQ

gary.fraser@scottishdisabilitysport.com

0131 625 4412

2.3 International Level Classification

This is for athletes who have reached national standards and are about to reach international standards in their sport or who are demonstrating talent and progression along the performance pathway.

International classification is required to compete in long course swimming competitions organised by Activity Alliance.

In 2017 Virtus introduced two new trial classes in some sports. The three Virtus classes are:

- II1 – for athletes with an intellectual impairment
- II2 – trial group for athletes with a more significant intellectual impairment
- II3 – trial group for athletes with high-functioning autism

II2 – includes athletes with down syndrome (T21). The two new classes are *an Virtus initiative only*. Events in the UK and programmes run by NGB's do not recognise athletes with down syndrome or autism as separate classes. They are not classes on the Paralympic programmes.

Virtus has advised that athletes with mosaic down syndrome will from January 2019 compete across all sports in class II1 only.

Please contact UKSA for more information on how these are being managed for athletes in the UK.

PO Box 1318
Enfield, Middlesex EN1 9ZH
Tel: 020 7490 3057
Email: info@uksportsassociation.org

Performance athletes with the potential to reach GB National and International standards in their sport should access the International level classification.

UKSA will coordinate, monitor and evaluate applications as part of their remit as the official British member of Virtus.

Scottish applications, through SDS, should reach UKSA (for Table Tennis) or British Swimming and British Athletics at least FIVE months prior to the closing date for entry to any competition at which the athlete hopes to

compete. The submission of an International level application through SDS to UKSA is no guarantee of a classification being granted.

In January 2018, Virtus released a new international classification form for the primary eligibility check - Stage 1 application. As with previous submissions, psychologists have to be engaged to complete two specific athlete assessments to satisfy the requirements of an International level classification application.

The coach of each athlete is required to complete the Training History & Sport Activity Limitations Questionnaire (TSAL). The TSAL does not form part of the eligibility checking process but is an important tool to aid the development of the sport's specific classification process.

Virtus has produced a TSAL online version. Where possible, the coach should use the online version. When access to the online facility is not possible a paper version may be completed. If a hard copy (paper version) of the TSAL is required it should be downloaded and submitted with the classification application.

2.4 Further Guidance on International Classification

To obtain copies of Virtus (international) classification application forms, eligibility criteria and guidance notes please contact the Scottish Disability Sport Performance Manager:

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2.5 Classification in more than one sport

To compete in more than one sport an athlete is required to submit separate classification applications for each sport. A Scottish athlete must complete the additional sport application form and pro-forma and submit to UKSA through SDS observing standard timeframe for submissions. Document one and two must be completed and submitted to Virtus for consideration for the process to be successful.

To obtain copies of the UKSA (national) and Virtus (international) additional sport application form please contact the Scottish Disability Sport Performance Manager:

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Scottish Disability Sport
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Caledonia House
Edinburgh
EH12 9DQ

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2.6 Classification Fees

There is an application fee for either level as follows:

UKSA:	£45.00
Virtus:	£55.00

If you choose to apply for both at the same time the fee is £65.00

Virtus registration fee: £56.00

There will also be a fee required for the Educational Psychologist to carry out the appropriate tests and compile the reports. This fee varies between practitioners. SDS can arrange this for the athlete in advance.

2.7 Classification Management

The UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability (UKSA) holds the central database for all United Kingdom athletes who have been successfully classified at UK or international level. The Virtus master list of all athletes who have an I11 classification can be accessed here:

https://inas.sport80.com/public_reports/master_list/intellectual_impairment/international

Classification cards are no longer issued when an athlete's classification is verified. A letter is sent to each Scottish athlete from UKSA with a copy sent to SDS with the classification outcome. SDS retains a central database of all classification outcomes but UKSA and Virtus retain the official databases for all athletes classified. If there is doubt about the status of an athlete or you require further guidance or would like more information about the classification process then contact the SDS Performance Manager.

2.8 Primary Eligibility Criteria

Three criteria must be met for an athlete to be classified at UK or international level as an athlete with a "learning disability".

- Evidence of IQ - a full scale score of 75 or lower on a recognised and professionally administered IQ test.
- Evidence of significant limitations in adaptive behaviour - a measure of how learning disability affects both daily life and the ability to respond to life changes and environmental demands - conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills
- Evidence of age of onset pre 18 - must be able to demonstrate that the learning disability was evident before the athlete was 18 years of age.

An athlete must complete a UK or international application form and submit evidence in support of the application. To provide the evidence required in each section, an athlete must provide a series of reports with results from professionally administered tests carried out by a valid HPC registered professional psychologist.

For International level classifications (Virtus), these criteria and evidence are only the first stage. This is known as the "Primary Eligibility checks". An athlete must meet the requirements of stage 1 before they can proceed to stage 2. Stage 2 of the international classification process is called the "Sports Specific Classification".

Successfully completing the primary eligibility checks of the international process is no guarantee that an athlete will meet the requirements of sports specific classification.

When submitting the paperwork for either a UKSA or Virtus classification application form, a Home Country checklist will be completed by the SDS Performance Manager and included with the documentation.

2.9 Sports Specific Classification

Procedure

This is the second stage of the international (Virtus) classification process. The sports specific classification process is part of the agreement for athletes with learning disability to being included in the Paralympic Games.

An athlete will only be considered for the sports specific classification if the athlete has successfully completed stage 1 and the eligibility check.

- Swimmers need to be nominated to stage 2 classification by British Swimming which is conducted at International meets.
- Athletes need to be nominated to stage 2 classification by British Athletics which is conducted at International meets.
- Table Tennis players need to be nominated to stage 2 by British Para Table Tennis which is conducted at International meets.

Stage 2 classification will require the athlete to undergo on site testing by a classification panel appointed by the International Federation responsible for the specific sport.

On site testing will focus on how the athlete's learning disability impacts on their ability to perform in their sport. The tests will gather "sports intelligence" on the athlete to assist the classification panel arrive at a decision.

Sports intelligence will include information on reasoning, working memory and learning, visual spatial perception, reaction time and processing speed, attention and concentration and executive function.

The tests will be evaluated against sport specific minimal disability scores. An athlete must meet the minimal disability scores to be eligible to compete.

3. Scottish Disability Sport procedures for applications.

3.1 The Role of SDS Personnel and Others

The SDS Performance Manager will coordinate applications for UKSA and Virtus registrations on behalf of Scottish athletes and players. All submissions to UKSA must be signed off by the Performance Manager before they are submitted to UKSA.

Athletes and players with a learning disability who are identified as meeting the level of performance as outlined in 2.1 and 2.3 will be put forward for application to the Performance Manager who will, in discussion with the

sports specific contact, determine what level of performance they are achieving and whether they would be meet the criteria to be put forward for classification. The SDS Regional Managers will assist with this process. The key personnel are as follows:

SDS Performance Manager – Gary Fraser

Highland and Islands – Kirsty Ewen

Grampian – Alison Shaw

Central – Cheryl Lappin/ Louise Gillespie

Fife – Richard Brickley OBE

Tayside – Graeme Doig

East of Scotland – Neal Herbert

West of Scotland – Lynn Alison & Andrew McKenzie

Scottish Swimming – Paul Wilson

Scottish Athletics – Pamela Robson

Table Tennis Scotland – Terry McLernon MBE

Tennis Scotland – Karen Ross

Additions to this group may be made as and when required.

The process of classification of athletes is led by the SDS Regional Development Manager and/ or the SDS Performance Manager.

Notes:

In December 2019 INAS-FID changed its operating name to Virtus as part of a rebrand. The classification documentation has yet to change and may still refer to Inas or INAS-FID.

April 2020