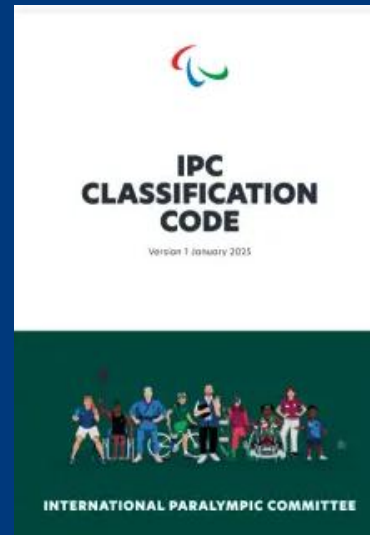


2025 IPC Classification Code

Overview of the main changes to the IPC Classification Code and WR Classification Regulations - effective April 2026



Definition and Purpose of Classification

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF CLASSIFICATION

The definition of the purpose of Classification within the Paralympic Movement has been **refined for better clarity**.

Article 2: The purpose of Classification

The purpose of **Classification** is to enable athletes with Eligible Impairments to participate in competitive Para sport with a pathway to sporting excellence, the pinnacle of which is the Paralympic Games. (Article 2.1)

Classification establishes a unique framework that **promotes fair and meaningful competition** by **minimising the impact of athletes' impairments** on the outcome of competition so that the outcome is determined by factors other than impairment.

Classification is therefore essential to the Paralympic Movement as Para sport cannot exist without Classification. (Article 2.2)

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF CLASSIFICATION

To achieve its purpose, Classification performs two critical functions:

the determination of **which athletes are eligible to compete** in Para Rowing; and

the **grouping of eligible athletes into Sport Classes** based on the extent to which their impairment(s) impact(s) their ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to Para Rowing. (Article 2.3)

Classification is not designed to group athletes into classes based on their sport performance. Rather, the unit of Classification is an athlete's impairment, and impairments are classified based on the extent to which they impact an athlete's ability to perform the fundamental activities in Para Rowing.

An athlete who improves their sport performance will become more competitive within their allocated Sport Class, but improved performance does not of itself provide a basis for changing an athlete's Sport Class. (Article 2.4)

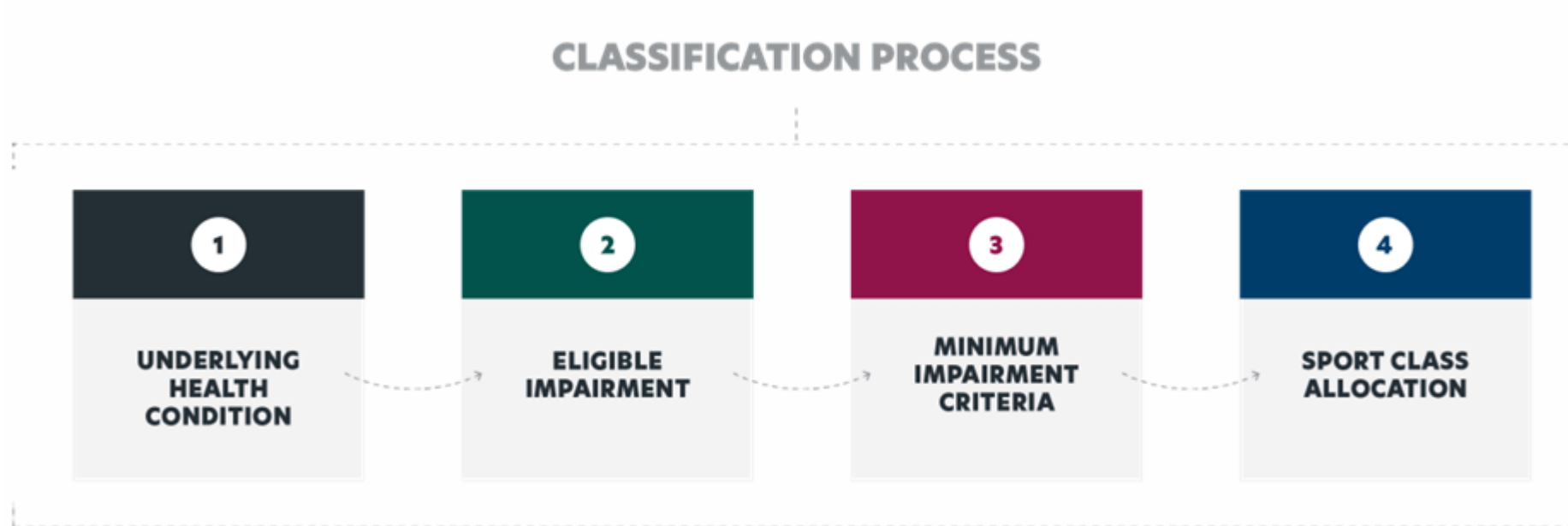
Fundamental Principles of Classification

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF CLASSIFICATION

The first two stages of Classification are **strengthened and clarified** in the 2025 Code.

The decision making **must follow the sequential order** of all four stages.



Eligible Impairments

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

ELIGIBLE IMPAIRMENTS

The definitions of Eligible Impairments have been **refined for clarity**.

The Eligible Impairments are defined in Appendices 1 and 2 of the World Rowing Classification Regulations.

Eligible Impairment	Examples of Underlying Health Conditions
Impaired Muscle Power Athletes with Impaired Muscle Power have a reduced (or no) ability to contract their muscles to generate force that is consistent with an Underlying Health Condition affecting the structure and function of the central or peripheral nervous system or the muscles (including the muscle origin and muscle insertion).	Examples of an Underlying Health Condition that may lead to Impaired Muscle Power include spinal cord injury (complete or incomplete), spina bifida, plexus injuries, poly(neuropathies) or muscular dystrophies.
Impaired Range of Movement Athletes with Impaired Passive Range of Movement have a reduced ability for a joint to be passively moved that is consistent with an Underlying Health Condition affecting a structure of bones, joints, connective tissue, or soft tissues.	Examples of an Underlying Health Condition that may lead to Impaired Passive Range of Movement include arthrogyposis and contractures resulting from joint dysplasia, rheumatoid diseases, or trauma resulting in anatomical changes and/or function of a joint.
Limb Deficiency Athletes with Limb Deficiency have a total or partial absence of a limb or anatomically irregular limb dimensions that are consistent with an Underlying Health Condition resulting from trauma, illness, or congenital causes affecting the bones and/or joints	Examples of an Underlying Health Condition that may lead to Limb Deficiency include traumatic oncologic or vascular amputation, illness (for example amputation due to infectious disease) or congenital limb deficiency (longitudinal or transverse).
Coordination Impairments Athletes with a Coordination Impairment have one or more of the following three movement disorders that (i) adversely affects the ability to voluntarily produce a full range of skilled movement fluidly, rapidly, and accurately; and (ii) is consistent with an Underlying Health Condition affecting the structure and function of the central nervous system: a) Hypertonia/Spasticity: an increase in muscle tension that may be velocity-dependent and/or a reduced ability of a muscle to stretch. b) Motor Ataxia: limited precision in direction and velocity of voluntary movement. c) Dyskinesia (athetosis, dystonia, chorea): involuntary movements that interfere with voluntary movements.	Examples of an Underlying Health Condition that may lead to one or a combination of Coordination Impairments include cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury or cerebrovascular disease.
Vision Impairment Athletes with Vision Impairment have an Underlying Health Condition affecting the structure or function of the eye, optic nerve, optic chiasm, post chiasma visual pathways, or visual cortex of the brain resulting in reduced or no visual function even when using the best possible refractive or optical correction.	Examples of an Underlying Health Condition that may lead to Vision Impairment include phthisis bulbi, Stargardt disease, retinitis pigmentosa, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma.

Designations and Tracking Code (OA)

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS DESIGNATIONS AND TRACKING CODE (OA)

Designation:

A formal status applied to an Athlete at a specific stage of the Classification process, which indicates the Athlete's **eligibility status**.

- The below designations will be published on the Master Classification List, as applicable. (Article 35)
 - New (N)
 - Not Eligible – Underlying Health Condition (NE-UHC)
 - Not Eligible – Eligible Impairment (NE-EI)
 - Not Eligible – Minimum Impairment Criteria (NE-MIC)
 - Classification Not Completed (CNC)

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

DESIGNATIONS AND TRACKING CODE (OA)

Designation: New (N)

There is no longer a Sport Class Status 'New (N)', instead this is now a designation 'New (N)' allocated to the Athlete after successful completion of the stage one of Classification process (UHC Assessment), which means that the UHC Assessor confirmed the presence of the Underlying Health Condition, and the Athlete is permitted to undergo the Evaluation Session.

Stage of Classification	Condition	Designation Applied	Outcome
Underlying Health Condition (UHC Assessment)	A medically and/or clinically diagnosed Underlying Health Condition (UHC) is confirmed by the UHC Assessor	New (N)	An Evaluation Session will be scheduled, and the Athlete will be allocated the designation 'New (N)'. (Article 11.5)

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

DESIGNATIONS AND TRACKING CODE (OA)

The 2025 Code introduces and defines **three distinct 'Not Eligible' designations** to capture the different reasons an Athlete may not be eligible to obtain a Sport Class and compete in Para sport.

1. Not Eligible – Underlying Health Condition (NE-UHC)
2. Not Eligible – Eligible Impairment (NE-EI)
3. Not Eligible – Minimum Impairment Criteria (NE-MIC)

Stage of Classification	Condition	Designation Applied	Outcome
Underlying Health Condition (UHC Assessment)	No medically and/or clinically diagnosed Underlying Health Condition (UHC) confirmed by the (second) UHC Assessor)	Not Eligible – Underlying Health Condition (NE-UHC)	The Athlete is not eligible for an Evaluation Session. (Article 12)
Eligible Impairment Assessment	The classification panel (second panel) is not satisfied that the athlete has an Eligible Impairment for Para Rowing.	Not Eligible – Eligible Impairment (NE-EI)	The evaluation session will stop after the Eligible Impairment Assessment. (Article 14)
Minimum Impairment Criteria Assessment	The Athlete's Eligible Impairment does not meet the Minimum Impairment Criteria.	Not Eligible – Minimum Impairment Criteria (NE-MIC)	The evaluation session will stop after the Minimum Impairment Criteria Assessment. (Article 16)

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS DESIGNATIONS AND TRACKING CODE (OA)

Provisions regulating the process using 'Classification Not Completed' (CNC) are introduced.

Stage of Classification	Condition	Designation	Outcome
<p>Any stage of Classification following the UHC Assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistencies found with the Underlying Health Condition(s) reported in the UHC Assessment during the Eligible Impairment Assessment. (Article 13.3) The Evaluation Session is suspended by a Classification Panel for any reason. (Article 29.2) If the Athlete fails to attend an Evaluation Session and is unable to provide World Rowing with a reasonable explanation. (Article 30.2.2) 	<p>Classification Not Completed (CNC)</p>	<p><u>If an Athlete is allocated CNC on three or more consecutive occasions, they will not be entitled to undergo any further Evaluation Sessions for two years.</u> (Article 31.3)</p>

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS DESIGNATIONS AND TRACKING CODE (OA)

Designation	Description
OA (Observation Assessment)	Used to note that the Athlete's final Sport Class is subject to confirmation at an Observation Assessment. (Article 17.7.1)

Sport Class Statuses

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

SPORT CLASS STATUSES

Sport Class Status:

A status applied to a Sport Class to indicate whether and when an Athlete may be required to undergo Classification in the future.

The available Sport Class Statuses are as follows:

- Confirmed (C);
- Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO);
- Review with a Fixed Review Date (R-FRD);
- Expired (E).

(Article 19.2)

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

SPORT CLASS STATUSES

Sport Class Status	Description
Confirmed (C)	<p>The Classification Panel is satisfied that the Athlete's Sport Class is unlikely to change. (Article 20.1.1)</p> <p>No further evaluation is required. The Sport Class will be maintained indefinitely. (Article 21.1)</p>
Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)	<p>Allocated if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the Classification Panel consisted of one Classifier, or two Classifiers who were both of the same nationality as the Athlete• Medical Review Request• National Federation or International Federation Protest• 'Borderline' cases• the Classification Panel believes that a further Evaluation Session will be required at the Next Available Opportunity within the current calendar year and/or season. (Article 20.1.2) <p>The Athlete must complete an Evaluation Session prior to competing at any Competition with a Classification opportunity or within one year. (Article 20.1.4.2)</p>

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

SPORT CLASS STATUSES

Sport Class Status	Description
Review with a Fixed Review Date (R-FRD)	<p>Allocated if the Classification Panel believes that a further Evaluation Session will be required, but not within the current calendar year. (Article 20.1.3)</p> <p>The date of the Fixed Review Date will be after the end of the current calendar year. (Article 20.1.3.1)</p>

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

SPORT CLASS STATUSES

Sport Class Status	Description
Expired (E)	<p>An Athlete with Sport Class Status 'Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)' will automatically be allocated the Sport Class Status 'Expired (E)' if they have not completed a further Evaluation Session within one year. (Article 20.1.4.2)</p> <p>An Athlete with Sport Class Status 'Review with a Fixed Review Date (R-FRD)' will automatically be allocated the Sport Class Status 'Expired (E)' if they have not completed a further Evaluation Session within two years after the Fixed Review Date has passed. (Article 20.1.4.3)</p> <p>If an Athlete has been allocated the Sport Class Status 'Expired (E)', the Athlete cannot compete at any Covered Competition unless and until the Athlete has completed a new Evaluation Session and has been allocated a Sport Class and Sport Class Status. Athletes who previously held the Sport Class Status of 'Confirmed (C)' may return to competition in their original Sport Class with Sport Class Status 'Confirmed (C)' without the need to undergo further Classification. (Article 21.3)</p>

Observation Assessment

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

OBSERVATION ASSESSMENT

- The **purpose** of an Observation Assessment is to observe and evaluate the Athlete in a competitive environment in order to ensure that what is observed in competition is consistent with what was observed in the previous stages of Classification. (Article 17.8.1)
- Observation Assessments will be required for athletes with Physical Impairments, who hold a provisional Sport Class of PR1 or PR2, as well as for those athletes with a provisional Sport Class of PR3 who may be considered to be on the borderline between PR3 and PR2, at the discretion of the Classification Panel. (Article 17.8.2)
- Observation Assessments will not be required for athletes with Vision Impairments. (Article 17.8.3)

Provisional Sport Class	Observation Assessment
PR1 / PR2	✓ Required
PR3-PI (borderline PR2)	✓ At Classification Panel discretion
PR3-VI	✗ Not required

Responsibilities of Member Federations and Athletes in relation to Evaluation Sessions

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBER FEDERATIONS AND ATHLETES IN RELATION TO EVALUATION SESSIONS

The Code introduces updates aimed at strengthening the Classification process, by clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

Accompanying National Representative(s) (including any interpreter) must prove their identity to the satisfaction of the Classification Panel, in addition to the Athlete. (Article 24.4)

Acceptable documents include:

- Passport
- ID card
- Event accreditation

Location of Evaluation Sessions

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

LOCATION OF EVALUATION SESSIONS

- Unless specified by World Rowing, Evaluation Sessions for athletes with **Physical Impairments** competing in the **Classic** discipline of Rowing must take place **In-Competition***. (Article 32.1.1)
- Unless specified by World Rowing, Evaluation Sessions for athletes with **Physical Impairments** competing in the **Coastal** discipline of Rowing can take place **Out-of-Competition**. (Article 32.1.2)
- Athletes with **Vision Impairments** may be evaluated **Out-of-Competition**. (Article 32.1.3)

***In-Competition** means the period commencing from the day on which World Rowing offers Classification opportunities in relation to a Competition in which the Athlete is scheduled to compete through to the day such Competition ends.

Protests and Appeals

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

PROTESTS AND APPEALS

A few updates are made to the Code, **without any substantial changes** surrounding these two mechanisms to challenge the outcomes of Classification.

Protests:

A challenge filed against the Athlete's Sport Class. (Article 38.1)

Appeals:

A challenge to any aspect of the Classification process where a breach of the rules has occurred that could have led to incorrectly allocating a Sport Class or any of the designations, including 'Not Eligible – Eligible Impairment', 'Not Eligible – Minimum Impairment Criteria', and/or Sport Class Status.

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

PROTESTS AND APPEALS

- A Protest can **not** be made in respect of
 - (i) an Athlete's Sport Class Status,
 - (ii) any designation of 'Not Eligible – Underlying Health Condition', 'Not Eligible – Eligible Impairment' or 'Not Eligible – Minimum Impairment Criteria' (as in those cases the Athlete already receives an automatic second assessment),
 - (iii) any designation of 'Classification Not Completed (CNC)', or (iv) any other matter where Protests are expressly excluded under the IPC Classification Code.
- (Article 38.2)

- **A Member Federation may only make a Protest in respect of an Athlete under its jurisdiction.**
- In particular, it cannot make a Protest in respect of a Sport Class allocated to an Athlete from another Member Federation.
- However, it can raise any such concerns about the Sport Class allocated to such Athletes with World Rowing, so that World Rowing can consider if it wishes to make an International Federation Protest.

(Article 40.1)

- A National Federation Protest may be made where there is a reasonable basis to believe that the Athlete may have been allocated an incorrect Sport Class. (Article 40.2)

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

PROTESTS AND APPEALS

If an Observation Assessment is required, the National Federation may:

make a Protest **both prior to and following the Observation Assessment**, in which case the Protest made following the Observation Assessment cannot relate to any aspect of the Evaluation Session that preceded the Observation Assessment;

or

make a Protest **only prior to the Observation Assessment or only following the Observation Assessment** (in which case the Protest may relate to both the aspects of the Evaluation Session that preceded the Observation Assessment and the Observation Assessment itself).

(Article 40.5)

The deadline is **two hours** after the results of Athlete Evaluations are communicated to the Athlete and their National Federation

or no later than **two hours** after the final Sport Class and Sport Class Status following the In-Competition Observation are made official or published (if the Protest is made following the Observation Assessment).

(Article 40.6.2)

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

PROTESTS AND APPEALS

The Code includes a clarification that an Appeal cannot be submitted whilst a Protest is ongoing. However, in order to submit an Appeal, it is not necessary for the National Federation to have first made a Protest.

Appeals will be heard and determined by the **International Paralympic Committee's Board of Appeal of Classification (BAC)**. (Article 46.1)

National Federations who submit an Appeal which is heard by the BAC will be required to pay the applicable Appeal fee. If the Appeal is upheld, the appeal fee will be refunded to the appellant by World Rowing. (Article 46.1)

Classification Panels

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

CLASSIFICATION PANELS

- At least one member of the Classification Panel **must be of a different nationality** to the Athlete being assessed.
- It is **recommended** that members of the Classification Panel be of different nationalities to each other.
- In exceptional circumstances, an IF may authorise a Classification Panel to consist of a sole Classifier and/or Classifiers who are each of the same nationality as the Athlete being assessed, provided that:
 - any Sport Class issued to the Athlete must be accompanied by the Sport Class Status ‘Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)’; and
 - any sole Classifier must be certified to conduct all of the assessments within the Evaluation Session.
- The IF must ensure that all members of the Classification Panel sign appropriate confidentiality undertakings.

International Standard for Classification Personnel and Training

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR CLASSIFICATION PERSONNEL AND TRAINING

Roles and competencies of Classification Personnel have been addressed, and in respect to who can become and maintain Certification as a Classifier and Head of Classification in the context of addressing potential, perceived and/or actual **conflicts of interest**.

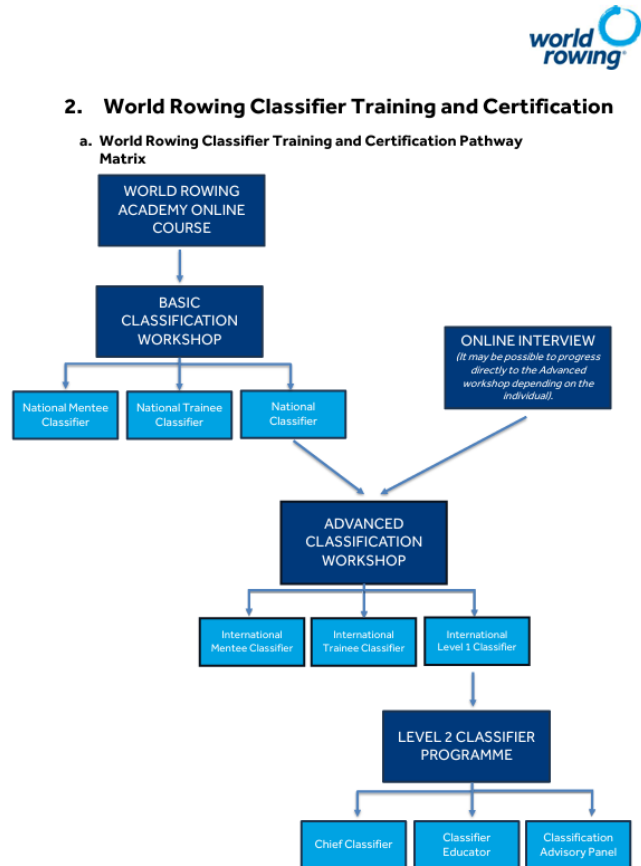
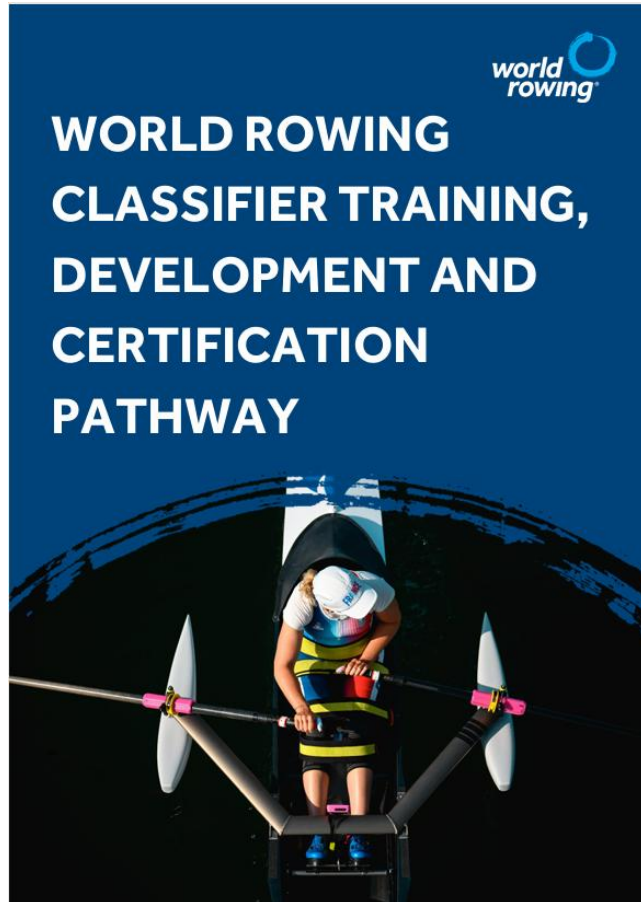
The International Standard addresses:

- Classification personnel
- Classifier competencies
- Recruitment and retention
- Training and development
- Classifier certification
- Identifying and managing conflicts of interest
- Classification personnel and code of conduct

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR CLASSIFICATION PERSONNEL AND TRAINING

World Rowing has published the [Classifier Training, Development & Certification Pathway](#) in accordance with Article 63.3.



January 2026

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CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR CLASSIFICATION PERSONNEL AND TRAINING

Conflict of Interest is rigorously addressed in the Standard, emphasizing the importance of clear boundaries and professional integrity, especially concerning former athletes, coaches, and support personnel roles in Classification.

In order to manage actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest, it is not permitted for the following persons to (i) commence practical training to become a Classifier (i.e., they cannot participate in any Evaluation Sessions e.g., as a Trainee Classifier); (ii) receive or keep their Certification as a Classifier; or (iii) act as a Head of Classification: (64.6)

an international athlete who is currently competing in any Para sport, or who has retired from Para Rowing less than four years ago; (64.6.1)

a national team coach or national team assistant coach involved in Para Rowing, or who has retired from involvement in Para Rowing less than four years ago; or (64.6.2)

other Athlete Support Personnel in Para Rowing with direct involvement with a national team or with international athletes, or who have retired from such involvement less than two years ago (including but not limited to a team physiotherapist, medical doctor, psychologist, massage therapist). (64.6.3)

Article 64.6.3 is not yet in force

International Standard for Intentional Misrepresentation

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION

A **new framework** for Intentional Misrepresentation is introduced.

The International Standard addresses:

- What constitutes Intentional Misrepresentation
- Obligations to report and cooperate
- Investigations
- Proceedings
- Confidentiality
- Sanctions
- Decisions
- Appeals
- Public disclosure

CHANGES TO IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND WR CLASSIFICATION REGULATIONS

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION

- Article 50 covers obligations of participants and Member Federations to report anything that could constitute Intentional Misrepresentation.
- Article 52 covers proceedings. Disciplinary proceedings brought by World Rowing for alleged Intentional Misrepresentation will be heard before **World Rowing's Ad Hoc First Instance Body**.

The first instance body must be **operationally independent** from World Rowing and comprised of a pool of at least **three members**, each of whom must have **appropriate skills and experience** to hear Intentional Misrepresentation matters.

The Association of Paralympic Sport Organisations (APSO) is coordinating a central pool of experts who can form ad hoc panels for IFs, including World Rowing.

- World Rowing may require a proportionate recovery of costs from the Member Federation.