



CLASSIFICATION OVERVIEW

Achieving is Believing.

What is Classification?

Classification is the process of testing an individual's physical ability and allocating them a class / grade. This class ensures that athletes of a similar ability are competing together in a fair competition.

Why do we classify athletes?

The classification of athletes with disabilities in sport is an attempt to ensure fair competition. The classification system enables athletes to compete at the highest level, regardless of individual differences in physical / visual / intellectual function.

What happens during classification?

During the process of classification athletes are tested for their physical function and limitations through a variety of tests including range of movement, muscle strength, and coordination for example. Athletes are also asked to complete sports specific movements, such as swimming freestyle, throwing the shotput, dribbling a basketball etc. Through these tests classifiers are able to determine an athlete's classification for their chosen sport/sports.

Classification Systems:

An efficient classification system must:

- Enable fair and equitable competition.
- Give each athlete with a disability an equal opportunity to compete at international level.
- Only measure functional limitations caused by the physical disability
- Be as simple as possible so that it can be used consistently.
- Be sport specific.

The following should **NOT** under any circumstances affect an athlete's class in any sport;

- Sporting skills or natural talent.
- Genetic superiority or inferiority
- Body size or type i.e. height, strength, arm length etc
- Gender
- Training affect (physical fitness)

Classification Categories

Athletes compete within the following categories:

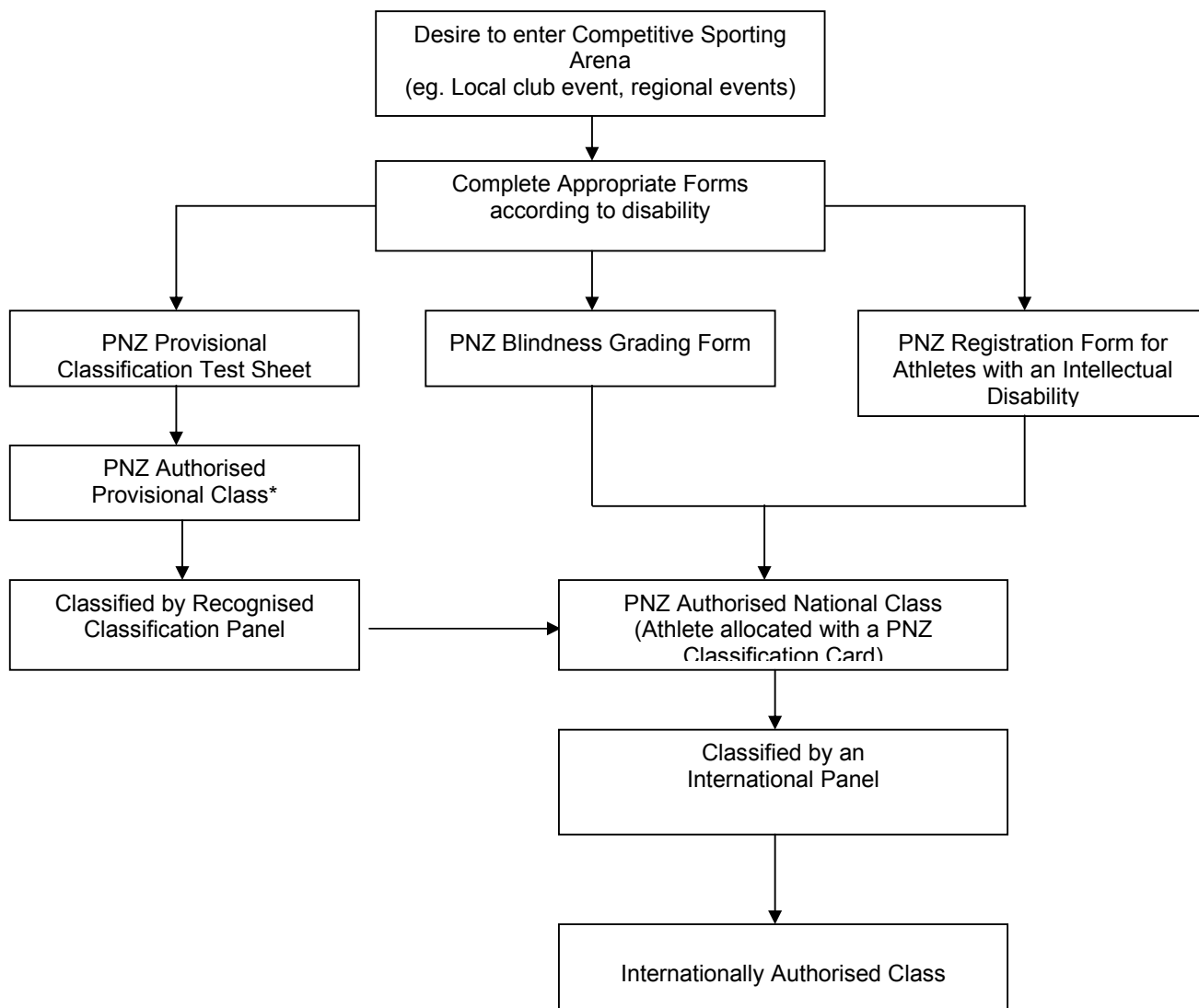
- Physical disability
- Intellectual disability
- Blind and Visually impaired

Once classified into these groups, athletes with a disability are then classified by their functional ability.

For example, swimming has 14 classes,

- *1 class for Intellectual disability*
- *3 classes for visually impaired*
- *10 classes for physical disability*

Classification Process in New Zealand



For more information on classification please contact:

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