

Classification Code

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INTRODUCTION

Fundamental rationale for the Classification Code

Since its earliest beginnings, classification has been the fundamental basis of Para sport, providing criteria for determining who is eligible to compete in order to establish a framework that allows for fair and meaningful competition by minimising the impact of athletes' impairments on the outcome of competition.

Para sport Classification systems are critical to the IPC's ability to achieve its mission to lead the Paralympic Movement, oversee the delivery of the Paralympic Games, and support IPC Members to enable Para athletes to achieve sporting excellence. In particular, such Classification systems allow the IPC's members to enable Para athletes to achieve sporting excellence by providing a framework for competitive sport for persons with disabilities. This unique framework groups athletes into Sport Classes which aim to ensure that the impact of impairment is minimised and competition outcomes are determined by sporting excellence.

Conceptually, Para sport Classification systems also support the IPC's wider vision to make for an inclusive world through Para sport. The unique contribution of Para sport Classification systems is that they provide vehicles for competitive (rather than participatory) sport for persons with disabilities, so that persons with disabilities can choose to take part in competitive sport just like persons without disabilities. By offering global audiences the opportunity to witness sporting excellence by athletes with impairments, the IPC is also then able to increase visibility and showcase what is possible when persons with disabilities are given equitable opportunities in life, including in areas outside of Para sport.

However, Para sport Classification systems do not - and are not intended to - facilitate competition opportunities for all persons with all disabilities in all sports. As explained above, they are designed to provide a framework to allow for competitive (rather than participatory) sport for persons with disabilities. This framework is necessarily exclusive as it must define who is and who is not eligible for Para sport. Not all persons with disabilities will therefore be eligible for Para sport.

The IPC acknowledges that separate organisations provide important sport opportunities for persons with disabilities that are not included in this Classification Code. The IPC views each organisation's efforts as an important part of the shared vision for a more inclusive world.

Background

Prior to the start of the 21st century, there were no agreed unifying principles to guide the establishment and development of Para sport classification systems. Classification policies and procedures were not standardised, but rather developed organically and in isolation. As a consequence, the rate at which classification systems developed, and the quality of those classification systems, varied greatly across sports.

The IPC Governing Board recognised that, to secure the future of the Paralympic Movement, a more harmonised approach to classification was required. In 2003, the IPC Governing Board approved the classification strategy, which ultimately led to the adoption of the first edition of the Classification Code in 2007. The second edition of the Classification Code was subsequently adopted in 2015. The overarching aim of both the 2007 and 2015 editions of the Classification Code was to ensure that classification was delivered to the highest possible standard across all Para sports to ensure that Paralympic stakeholders - including athletes, coaches, administrators, the public, and the media - could have confidence in the classification process and its outcomes.

The 2025 Classification Code seeks to keep pace with the rapid development of the Paralympic Movement, and so builds on the first two editions of the Classification Code. It is the result of an extensive three-year review of the 2015 Classification Code, based around open consultation with the IPC Membership and feedback received from other stakeholders including the IPC Classification Committee, IPC Athletes' Council, IPC Board of Appeal of Classification, classifiers, human rights experts, and other relevant experts.

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CHAPTER 1: PURPOSE OF CLASSIFICATION AND SCOPE OF THE CLASSIFICATION CODE

1. The purpose of Classification

- 1.1. 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.
- 1.2. 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.

[Comment to Article 1.2: The term 'impairment' refers to a loss or abnormality in body structure or physiological function (including mental functions). "Abnormality" here strictly refers to a significant variation from established statistical norms (i.e. as a deviation from a population mean within measured standard norms) and should be used only in this sense. Examples of impairments include loss of an arm or leg or loss of vision. In the case of an injury to the spine, an impairment would be the resulting paralysis.]

- 1.3. To achieve its purpose, Classification performs two critical functions:
 - 1.3.1. the determination of which athletes are eligible to compete in Para sport; and
 - 1.3.2. 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 the relevant sport.
- 1.4. Para sport Classification systems are 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 their specific sport. 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.

2. The Classification Code and supporting framework

- 2.1. The Classification Code is the fundamental document upon which Classification in the Paralympic Movement is based and it is designed to support the Paralympic Movement in developing effective Classification systems. It is intended to be specific enough to achieve harmonisation in areas where standardisation is required, and general enough in other areas to permit flexibility regarding the implementation of its principles.
- 2.2. The Classification Code is supplemented by:
 - 2.2.1. the following 'International Standards', which set out additional requirements and guidance on the implementation and practical application of the Classification Code:
 - 2.2.1.1. the International Standard for Classification Personnel and Training;
 - 2.2.1.2. the International Standard for Intentional Misrepresentation; and
 - 2.2.1.3. the International Standard for Classification Data Protection;
 - 2.2.2. position statements, which are conceptual models that help guide the development of Classification systems; and
 - 2.2.3. models of best practice and guidelines relating to implementation of the Classification Code.

3. Scope and application of the Classification Code

- 3.1. All IPC Members and Recognised International Federations (**RIFs**) are bound by and must comply with the Classification Code and the International Standards, subject to the following:
 - 3.1.1. International Federations are only required to comply with the Classification Code and the International Standards in relation to disciplines that are on the Paralympic Games Sport Programme. International Federations may choose to also apply the Classification Code and International Standards to disciplines outside of the Paralympic Games Sport Programme, but it is not mandatory to do so.
 - 3.1.2. Each RIF must undertake to be bound by and to comply with the Classification Code and the International Standards in relation to at

least one discipline that it administers. In respect of any such discipline(s), any reference in the Classification Code or the International Standards to (i) an International Federation will be deemed to include a RIF, and (ii) a National Federation will be deemed to include national members of a RIF, and any other relevant provisions will be read accordingly.

- 3.2. The Classification Code and International Standards apply to the following competitions (each, a **Covered Competition**):
- 3.2.1. the Paralympic Games;
 - 3.2.2. World Championships;
 - 3.2.3. any Competition that is part of the direct qualification pathway to participate in the Paralympic Games, as determined by the relevant International Federation;
 - 3.2.4. any Competition where Observation Assessment may take place as part of a Classification process; and
 - 3.2.5. any other event or Competition specified by the International Federation in its Classification rules.

International Federations may choose to also apply the Classification Code and International Standards to other competitions (for example, lower-level competitions), but it is not mandatory to do so.

- 3.3. All provisions of the Classification Code and International Standards are mandatory in substance. Some provisions of the Classification Code and International Standards must be incorporated without substantive change by each International Federation in its own rules. However, other provisions of the Classification Code and International Standards establish mandatory guiding principles that allow flexibility in the formulation of rules by each International Federation, or establish requirements that must be followed by each International Federation but need not be repeated in its own rules.
- 3.4. With this approach to the scope of the Classification Code and International Standards, the IPC aims to ensure that:
- 3.4.1. the Paralympic Movement implements a harmonised approach to Classification; and
 - 3.4.2. the highest possible standard of Classification is applied across Para sports, whilst at the same time not hampering the development of

and/or participation in sports/disciplines outside of the Paralympic Games Sport Programme or at levels below Covered Competitions.

4. Use of the IPC's 'Para' mark

- 4.1. The word 'Para' is a registered trade mark of the IPC, which the IPC protects and registers for the benefit of the Paralympic Movement. Any use of the 'Para' mark must be in accordance with the Constitution and the IPC's Intellectual Property Regulations.
- 4.2. The right to use the 'Para' mark is conferred on International Federations and RIFs that have agreed to comply with the Classification Code and the International Standards. However, International Federations and RIFs can only use the 'Para' mark in relation to those specific sports and disciplines for which the International Federation/RIF has agreed to comply with the Classification Code and the International Standards.
- 4.3. Sports and federations that are not International Federations or RIFs are not permitted to use the 'Para' mark under any circumstances.

CHAPTER 2: CLASSIFICATION

PART I: INTRODUCTION

5. Fundamental principles

Stages of Classification

- 5.1. Classification comprises four main assessment stages, each of which must be conducted by the International Federation (or its representatives):

UHC Assessment	Stage 1: an assessment to verify that the Athlete has (or has had) at least one medically and/or clinically diagnosed Underlying Health Condition, based on a review of Diagnostic Information provided by the Athlete's National Federation (UHC Assessment) (see Part IV.A).
Evaluation Session	Stage 2: an assessment to verify (i) that the Athlete has an Eligible Impairment catered for by the sport that is consistent with one or more Underlying Health Conditions reported in the UHC Assessment, and (ii) that there are no inconsistencies with such reported Underlying Health Condition(s) (Eligible Impairment Assessment) (see Part IV.B.1).
	Stage 3: an assessment as to whether the Athlete's Eligible Impairment meets the applicable Minimum Impairment Criteria for that Eligible Impairment within the relevant sport (MIC Assessment) (see Part IV.B.2).
	Stage 4: the allocation to the Athlete of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a Sport Class based on an assessment of the extent to which the Athlete's Eligible Impairment(s) impact(s) their ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport (Sport Class Assessment); and (ii) a Sport Class Status to indicate whether and when the Athlete may be required to undergo Classification in the future; (see Part IV.B.3).

Order of stages of Classification

- 5.2. The UHC Assessment must always be performed first. Subject to that, the assessments themselves may be carried out in any order and/or combined, as specified by the International Federation. However, the decision-making process must still follow the four stages sequentially in the order set out above.

Fundamental requirements of International Federations' Classification rules

- 5.3. All International Federations must develop and implement Classification rules that comply with the Classification Code and the International Standards. In particular, those Classification rules must:

- 5.3.1. state the purpose of Classification specified in Article 1;
- 5.3.2. specify the scope of application of the Classification rules in accordance with Article 3.2;
- 5.3.3. state that the Classification rules are binding on, at a minimum: (i) the International Federation and its representatives; (ii) each National Federation and all National Representatives; (iii) all Participants; (iv) all Classification Personnel; (v) all persons participating in Evaluation Sessions (whether in person or virtually); and (vi) any other person who agrees in writing to be bound by the rules;
- 5.3.4. adopt and implement the four stages of Classification as set out in this Classification Code;
- 5.3.5. set out the Eligible Impairments that are catered for by the sport, which must include one or more of the Eligible Impairments listed in Article 8, but must not include any Non-Eligible Impairments;

[Comment to Article 5.3.5: International Federations must decide which Eligible Impairments their sports will cater for. For the avoidance of doubt, International Federations are under no obligation to provide sports opportunities covering all Eligible Impairments. For example, while some sports do include Athletes with all Eligible Impairments (such as athletics and swimming), other sports provide opportunities for only one Eligible Impairment (such as judo) or a selection of Eligible Impairments (such as cycling and equestrian).]

- 5.3.6. set Minimum Impairment Criteria in respect of each Eligible Impairment catered for by the sport (and each sub-category of

Eligible Impairment, if applicable), which criteria must be based upon and assessed using accurate and reliable methods;

- 5.3.7. set out the International Federation's processes, procedures, and methodologies for classifying Athletes; and
- 5.3.8. provide that Athletes may only compete in the Sport Class(es) allocated to them.

PART II: BODIES RESPONSIBLE FOR CLASSIFYING ATHLETES

6. UHC Assessor

- 6.1. International Federations are responsible for conducting UHC Assessments, which they may do through any of the following persons or bodies (each referred to as a **UHC Assessor**):
 - 6.1.1. a person or persons who represent and/or work on behalf of the International Federation, including staff, Classifiers, and/or external experts; and/or
 - 6.1.2. an internal or external body appointed by the International Federation.
- 6.2. International Federations must specify in their Classification rules:
 - 6.2.1. which of the types of UHC Assessor will be responsible for conducting UHC Assessments for: (i) Athletes with Intellectual Impairment; (ii) Athletes with Physical Impairments; and (iii) Athletes with Vision Impairment; and

[Comment to Article 6.2.1: International Federations may identify more than one type of UHC Assessor in respect of a single Eligible Impairment type (for example, Physical Impairments), and they may identify the same type of UHC Assessor in respect of more than one Eligible Impairment type (for example, Physical Impairments and Vision Impairment).]
 - 6.2.2. the process by which the UHC Assessor(s) will carry out UHC Assessments.
- 6.3. The International Federation must ensure that all persons acting as UHC Assessors (i) have the skills and experience required to conduct UHC Assessments, and (ii) sign appropriate confidentiality undertakings.

7. Classification Panel

7.1. International Federations must appoint Classification Panels to conduct Evaluation Sessions in accordance with this Article 7.

7.2. Except as provided in Article 7.3:

7.2.1. each Classification Panel must consist of a minimum of two Classifiers;

7.2.2. at least one member of the Classification Panel must be of a different nationality to the Athlete being assessed; and

7.2.3. it is recommended that members of the Classification Panel be of different nationalities to each other.

[Comment to Article 7.2: These provisions are intended to help manage potential conflicts of interest, whether perceived or actual. Conflicts of interest are addressed more broadly in the International Standard for Classification Personnel and Training, with further examples. For the avoidance of doubt, subject to Article 45.2 regarding the composition of a Protest Panel, a Classification Panel may consist of Classifiers who conducted previous Evaluation Sessions of the Athlete being assessed. However, while not mandatory, where reasonably practicable an International Federation is encouraged not to appoint any Classifier who was involved in any assessment or evaluation of the relevant Athlete for Classification purposes (whether at the national or international level) within a period of 12 months prior to the date of the anticipated Evaluation Session.]

7.3. In exceptional circumstances, an International Federation 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:

7.3.1. any Sport Class issued to the Athlete must be accompanied by the Sport Class Status 'Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)', with all resulting consequences; and

7.3.2. any sole Classifier must be certified to conduct all of the assessments within the Evaluation Session.

[Comment to Article 7.3: For example, 'exceptional circumstances' may arise if there are genuine and unavoidable operational difficulties at a Competition (such as travel delays, Classifier illness, or conflicts of interest) that result in an insufficient number of Classifiers being available to constitute Classification Panels with two or more persons, or of different nationalities to the Athlete being assessed.]

- 7.4. The International Federation must ensure that all members of the Classification Panel sign appropriate confidentiality undertakings.

PART III: ELIGIBLE IMPAIRMENTS

8. Eligible Impairments

- 8.1. There are currently seven Eligible Impairments in the Paralympic Movement (five 'Physical Impairments', 'Vision Impairment', and 'Intellectual Impairment'), as set out below:

8.1.1. Physical Impairments

All Physical Impairments must be consistent with an Underlying Health Condition that (i) originates from the central or peripheral nervous system; or (ii) is musculoskeletal. The five Physical Impairments are:

8.1.1.1. 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).

8.1.1.2. Impaired Passive 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.

8.1.1.3. Limb Deficiency and/or Limb Length Difference

Athletes with Limb Deficiency or Limb Length Difference 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.

This Eligible Impairment can be further divided into the following sub-categories:

- 8.1.1.3.1. limb deficiency;
- 8.1.1.3.2. leg length difference; and/or
- 8.1.1.3.3. arm length difference.

8.1.1.4. **Short Stature**

Athletes with Short Stature have reduced total body length (including head, trunk, and legs) as a result of congenitally or developmentally reduced length of the bones of the upper and lower limbs (and may also have reduced trunk length) that is consistent with an Underlying Health Condition. Athletes will not be considered to have Short Stature if their reduced total body length is the result of Limb Deficiency or Limb Length Difference only.

8.1.1.5. **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:

- 8.1.1.5.1. **Hypertonia/Spasticity:** an increase in muscle tension that may be velocity-dependent and/or a reduced ability of a muscle to stretch.
- 8.1.1.5.2. **Motor Ataxia:** limited precision in direction and velocity of voluntary movement.
- 8.1.1.5.3. **Dyskinesia (athetosis, dystonia, chorea):** involuntary movements that interfere with voluntary movements.

[Comment to Article 8.1.1.5: Coordination is the ability to voluntarily produce skilled movement fluidly, rapidly, and accurately (Connick et al., 2015; Runciman & Derman, 2018).]

8.1.2. **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.

8.1.3. Intellectual Impairment

Athletes with an Intellectual Impairment have an Underlying Health Condition causing restriction in general mental functions required to understand and constructively integrate the various mental functions including all cognitive functions and their development over the life span.

9. Non-Eligible Impairments

9.1. Any impairment that is not listed as an Eligible Impairment in Article 8 is a '**Non-Eligible Impairment**'.

9.2. Examples of Non-Eligible Impairments include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 9.2.1. pain;
- 9.2.2. hearing impairment;
- 9.2.3. low muscle tone;
- 9.2.4. hypermobility of joints;
- 9.2.5. joint instability, such as unstable shoulder joint or recurrent dislocation of a joint;
- 9.2.6. impaired muscle endurance or stiffness;
- 9.2.7. impaired motor reflex functions;
- 9.2.8. impaired cardiovascular functions;
- 9.2.9. impaired respiratory functions;
- 9.2.10. impaired metabolic functions;
- 9.2.11. tics and mannerisms, motor stereotypies, and motor perseverations;
- 9.2.12. vestibular impairment;
- 9.2.13. impairments in muscle metabolism resulting in fatigue; and
- 9.2.14. impairments stemming from psychological and/or psychosomatic causes.

- 9.3. An Athlete who has both an Eligible Impairment and a Non-Eligible Impairment may be evaluated by a Classification Panel on the basis of their Eligible Impairment, provided that their Non-Eligible Impairment does not affect the Classification Panel's ability to conduct an Evaluation Session (including Observation Assessment) and allocate a Sport Class.

[Comment to Article 9.3: For example, an Athlete with osteoarthritis might have Impaired Passive Range of Movement (an Eligible Impairment) and pain (a Non-Eligible Impairment). If the presence of pain restricts a Classification Panel's ability to conduct an Evaluation Session the Athlete might not be allocated a Sport Class, notwithstanding that the Athlete has an Eligible Impairment.]

10. Rationale for Eligible Impairments

- 10.1. Eligible Impairments do not include all impairment types. Instead, they are limited to those that have historically been part of the Paralympic Movement and that meet the criteria in Article 10.2.
- 10.2. The list of Eligible Impairments may only be expanded with the approval of the General Assembly, after consideration of the following criteria:
- 10.2.1. the impairment must be based on those listed in the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (known more commonly as ICF, published by the World Health Organization), as updated from time to time;
 - 10.2.2. the impairment must be consistent with one or more verifiable Health Conditions that are listed in the International Classification of Diseases (known more commonly as ICD, i.e. the World Health Organization diagnostic tool that is used to classify and monitor diseases and disorders);
 - 10.2.3. there is scientific evidence to indicate that the impairment can lead to an activity limitation in one or more Para sports;
 - 10.2.4. the impairment can be measured accurately and reliably;
 - 10.2.5. the impairment must be:
 - 10.2.5.1. Permanent; and
 - 10.2.5.2. capable of remaining consistent following Classification.

- 10.2.6. the application for including the impairment on the list of Eligible Impairments must be supported by an international organisation acting as a representative of people with the impairment;
- 10.2.7. there must be sufficient interest for competition opportunities from people with the impairment;
- 10.2.8. the sport-specific Classification system for the impairment must be based on multidisciplinary Classification Research;
- 10.2.9. the sport specific Classification system must be based on impairment type and the degree to which that impairment impacts the athlete's ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the relevant sport; and
- 10.2.10. the methods for establishing and measuring the impairment type and the Classification process must be compliant with the Classification Code.

PART IV: THE CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

A. Stage 1: UHC Assessment

11. Diagnostic Information

- 11.1. In order to begin the Classification process, an Athlete must provide their National Federation with all relevant Diagnostic Information required to enable the International Federation to assess the existence of an Underlying Health Condition and Eligible Impairment.
- 11.2. The Athlete's National Federation is responsible for providing the Diagnostic Information to the International Federation, and for ensuring that all Diagnostic Information provided by the Athlete is complete, accurate, authentic, and relevant.
- 11.3. The International Federation (including the UHC Assessor) may request from the Athlete's National Federation any additional information that it deems necessary to carry out the Classification process, including Diagnostic Information.
- 11.4. Diagnostic Information must be provided in its original format (i.e., the original document or a copy thereof) along with an English translation (if the original format is in another language), unless the International Federation specifies otherwise.

12. Conducting the UHC Assessment

- 12.1. The UHC Assessor will conduct the UHC Assessment for the purposes set out at Article 5.1, i.e., to verify that the Athlete has (or has had) at least one medically and/or clinically diagnosed Underlying Health Condition.
- 12.2. The UHC Assessor will conduct the UHC Assessment based only on the Diagnostic Information provided by the Athlete's National Federation.
- 12.3. If the UHC Assessor consists of more than one member:
 - 12.3.1. the individual members of the UHC Assessor must initially review the Athlete's Diagnostic Information independently of each other; and
 - 12.3.2. if the members are unable to reach a unanimous decision, the UHC Assessor must make its decision by majority.
- 12.4. If the UHC Assessor is satisfied that the Athlete has (or has had) at least one medically and/or clinically diagnosed Underlying Health Condition:
 - 12.4.1. the UHC Assessor must notify the International Federation of the outcome of its assessment in writing;
 - 12.4.2. the International Federation must provide the Diagnostic Information and the UHC Assessor's written outcome to the Classification Panel and should then proceed with scheduling an Evaluation Session;
 - 12.4.3. unless the Athlete already has a relevant Sport Class and Sport Class Status, the Athlete will automatically be allocated the designation 'New (N)'; and
 - 12.4.4. an Athlete with the designation 'New (N)' must attend an Evaluation Session prior to competing at a Covered Competition, unless the International Federation specifies otherwise (in which case the IF may assign an entry Sport Class to the Athlete).
- 12.5. If the UHC Assessor is not satisfied that the Athlete has (or has had) at least one medically and/or clinically diagnosed Underlying Health Condition:
 - 12.5.1. The UHC Assessor must notify the International Federation of the outcome of its assessment and provide a written explanation for the decision.
 - 12.5.2. The International Federation must:
 - 12.5.2.1. provide a copy of the UHC Assessor's written explanation to the Athlete's National Federation;

12.5.2.2. designate the Athlete as 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition (Re-evaluation)' with the resulting consequences specified in Article 13; and

12.5.2.3. arrange for a second UHC Assessor to repeat the UHC Assessment as soon as reasonably practicable in accordance with Article 12.6.

12.6. If a second UHC Assessor is required pursuant to Article 12.5.2:

12.6.1. The second UHC Assessor may comprise one or more members. Any member of the first UHC Assessor cannot serve as a member of the second UHC Assessor.

12.6.2. The second UHC Assessor must review all of the Diagnostic Information provided by the Athlete's National Federation. Before reaching a final decision, the second UHC Assessor must also review the written explanation of the first UHC Assessor.

12.6.3. If the second UHC Assessor is satisfied that the Athlete has (or has had) at least one medically and/or clinically diagnosed Underlying Health Condition, Article 12.4 applies.

12.6.4. If the second UHC Assessor is not satisfied that the Athlete has (or has had) at least one medically and/or clinically diagnosed Underlying Health Condition:

12.6.4.1. The second UHC Assessor must notify the International Federation of the outcome and provide a written explanation for the decision.

12.6.4.2. The International Federation must provide a copy of the second UHC Assessor's written explanation to the Athlete's National Federation as soon as reasonably practicable.

12.6.4.3. The Athlete must be designated as 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition', and the consequences in Article 13 will continue to apply.

13. Designation of 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition'

13.1. Subject to Articles 37 (Medical Review) and 52.3 (Changes to Classification systems), an Athlete designated as 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition (Re-evaluation)' or 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition':

13.1.1. is not eligible to compete in Covered Competitions in that sport; and

- 13.1.2. must disclose such designation if undergoing further Classification (whether in that sport or in another sport). Such designation may be automatically recognised by other International Federations in their respective sports, in their absolute discretion.

[Comment to Article 13.1: If an Athlete who has been designated 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition (Re-evaluation)' or 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition' subsequently (i) competes or attempts to compete in Covered Competitions, or (ii) undergoes or attempts to undergo further Classification (including in respect of another sport), in each case without disclosing such designation, they may be investigated in respect of potential Intentional Misrepresentation.]

- 13.2. Subject to Article 12.6, the designation of an Athlete as 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition (Re-evaluation)' or 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition' is not subject to review or Protest but may be Appealed in accordance with Part III of Chapter 3.
- 13.3. The International Federation must include all Athletes designated as 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition (Re-evaluation)' or 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition' on its Classification Master List in accordance with Article 36.

[Comment to Article 13.3: This requirement applies regardless of whether the Athlete is currently licensed by the International Federation.]

B. Evaluation Session

B.1 Stage 2: Eligible Impairment Assessment

14. Conducting the Eligible Impairment Assessment

- 14.1. Each International Federation must specify in its Classification rules how a Classification Panel will evaluate whether an Athlete has an Eligible Impairment catered for by that sport. At a minimum these provisions must:
- 14.1.1. require the Eligible Impairment Assessment to be conducted for the purposes set out at Article 5.1, i.e., to verify that (i) the Athlete has an Eligible Impairment catered for by the sport that is consistent with one or more Underlying Health Conditions reported in the UHC Assessment, and (ii) there are no inconsistencies with such reported Underlying Health Condition(s);
- 14.1.2. require that, as a preliminary step, the Classification Panel review the documentation relating to the UHC Assessment, namely the Athlete's

Diagnostic Information and the written outcome of the UHC Assessor; and

- 14.1.3. set out the criteria to be assessed for each Eligible Impairment and the full details of any impairment-based testing and/or other clinically recognised testing that will be used as part of the Eligible Impairment Assessment, and how the results of such testing will be evaluated.
- 14.2. The Eligible Impairment Assessment must take place in person, except in respect of Intellectual Impairments where the Eligible Impairment Assessment may be conducted based on evaluation of the Diagnostic Information provided as part of the UHC Assessment.
- 14.3. When conducting the Eligible Impairment Assessment, if the Classification Panel considers that there are any inconsistencies with the Underlying Health Condition(s) reported in the UHC Assessment, the Classification Panel will:
 - 14.3.1. designate the Athlete as 'Classification Not Completed (CNC)';
 - 14.3.2. prepare a written explanation identifying the inconsistencies and noting any additional information that is required, a copy of which must be provided to the International Federation and the Athlete's National Federation;
 - 14.3.3. if it considers it appropriate, specify a deadline by which such additional information must be provided by the Athlete's National Federation; such information must be provided in its original format (i.e. the original document or a copy thereof) along with an English translation (if the original format is in another language), unless the International Federation specifies otherwise; and
 - 14.3.4. if the additional information is not provided by the specified deadline or does not otherwise satisfy the Classification Panel, or if the Classification Panel does not require any additional information, refer the matter back to the UHC Assessor (which, if possible, should be the same UHC Assessor as before) for reconsideration in accordance with Part IV.A above, along with the written explanation and any additional information provided.
- 14.4. The Eligible Impairment Assessment will continue (either by the same or a new Classification Panel) only once that Classification Panel is satisfied by the additional information provided and/or the UHC Assessor completes the reassessment.
- 14.5. Upon completion of the Eligible Impairment Assessment:

14.5.1. If the Classification Panel is satisfied that (i) the Athlete has an Eligible Impairment catered for by the sport that is consistent with one or more Underlying Health Conditions reported in the UHC Assessment, and (ii) there are no inconsistencies with such reported Underlying Health Condition(s), it will proceed to the MIC Assessment.

14.5.2. If the Classification Panel is not satisfied as in Article 14.5.1, the Athlete must be designated as 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment (Re-evaluation)', with the resulting consequences specified in Article 15.

[Comment to Article 14.5.2: When designating an Athlete as 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment (Re-evaluation)' or 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment', the Classification Panel must record the Eligible Impairment(s) for which the Athlete was assessed, for example, 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment' for Impaired Muscle Power and Impaired Passive Range of Movement.]

14.6. The Classification Panel must notify the International Federation of the outcome of the Eligible Impairment Assessment and provide a written explanation for the decision. The International Federation must provide a copy of the Classification Panel's written explanation to the Athlete's National Federation.

14.7. If the Athlete is designated as 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment (Re-evaluation)', the Athlete is entitled to undergo a second Eligible Impairment Assessment by a second Classification Panel as soon as reasonably practicable:

14.7.1. Any member of the first Classification Panel cannot serve as a member of the second Classification Panel.

14.7.2. Before reaching a final decision, the second Classification Panel must also review the written explanation of the first Classification Panel.

14.7.3. If the second Classification Panel is satisfied that (i) the Athlete has an Eligible Impairment catered for by the sport that is consistent with one or more Underlying Health Conditions reported in the UHC Assessment, and (ii) there are no inconsistencies with such reported Underlying Health Condition(s), it will proceed to the MIC Assessment.

14.7.4. If the second Classification Panel is not satisfied as in Article 14.7.3, the Athlete must be designated as 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment', and the consequences in Article 15 will continue to apply.

15. Designation of 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment'

15.1. Subject to Articles 37 (Medical Review) and 52.3 (Changes to Classification systems), an Athlete designated as 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment (Re-evaluation)' or 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment':

15.1.1. is not eligible to compete in Covered Competitions based on such Eligible Impairment(s) in that sport; and

15.1.2. must disclose such designation if undergoing further Classification (whether in that sport or in another sport). Such designation may be automatically recognised by other International Federations in their respective sports, in their absolute discretion.

[Comment to Article 15.1: If an Athlete who has been designated 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment (Re-evaluation)' or 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment' subsequently (i) competes or attempts to compete in Covered Competitions, or (ii) undergoes or attempts to undergo further Classification (including in respect of another sport), in each case without disclosing such designation, they may be investigated in respect of potential Intentional Misrepresentation.]

15.2. Subject to Article 14.7, the designation of an Athlete as 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment (Re-evaluation)' or 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment' is not subject to review or Protest but may be Appealed in accordance with Part III of Chapter 3.

15.3. The International Federation must include all Athletes designated as 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment (Re-evaluation)' or 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment' on its Classification Master List in accordance with Article 36.

[Comment to Article 15.3: This requirement applies regardless of whether the Athlete is currently licensed by the International Federation.]

B.2 Stage 3: MIC Assessment

16. Conducting the MIC Assessment

16.1. Each International Federation must in its Classification rules:

16.1.1. define the Minimum Impairment Criteria for each Eligible Impairment catered for by the sport (and each sub-category of Eligible Impairment, if applicable), which criteria must:

16.1.1.1. be based on and assessed using accurate and reliable methods; and

- 16.1.1.2. not consider the extent to which the use of Adaptive Equipment might affect how the Athlete is able to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport;

[Comment to Article 16.1.1.2: The role of Adaptive Equipment in defining Minimum Impairment Criteria is different to the role of Adaptive Equipment in the allocation of a Sport Class (see Article 18.5).]

- 16.1.2. specify how a Classification Panel will assess whether an Athlete's Eligible Impairment meets those Minimum Impairment Criteria. At a minimum these provisions must set out the following:

- 16.1.2.1. the MIC Assessment must be conducted for the purposes set out at Article 5.1, i.e., to assess whether an Athlete's Eligible Impairment meets the applicable Minimum Impairment Criteria for that Eligible Impairment within the relevant sport;

- 16.1.2.2. the MIC Assessment must be determined based solely on an evaluation of the Athlete's Eligible Impairment (i.e. impairment-based testing and/or other clinically recognised testing) and not based on an assessment of tasks or activities performed in the sport, nor any other aspect of the Athlete's sport performance; and

- 16.1.2.3. the specific means by which the impairment-based testing will be conducted and how the results will be evaluated.

- 16.2. The MIC Assessment must take place in person.

- 16.3. Upon completion of the MIC Assessment:

- 16.3.1. If the Classification Panel is satisfied that the Athlete's Eligible Impairment meets the applicable Minimum Impairment Criteria, it will proceed to the Sport Class Assessment.

- 16.3.2. If the Classification Panel is not satisfied that the Athlete's Eligible Impairment meets the applicable Minimum Impairment Criteria, the Athlete will be designated as 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria (Re-evaluation)', with the resulting consequences specified in Article 17.

- 16.4. The Classification Panel must notify the International Federation of the outcome of the MIC Assessment and provide a written explanation for the decision. The International Federation must provide a copy of the

Classification Panel's written explanation to the Athlete's National Federation.

- 16.5. If an Athlete is designated as 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria (Re-evaluation)', the Athlete is entitled to undergo a second MIC Assessment by a second Classification Panel as soon as reasonably practicable:
- 16.5.1. Any member of the first Classification Panel cannot serve as a member of the second Classification Panel.
- 16.5.2. Before reaching a final decision, the second Classification Panel must also review the written explanation of the first Classification Panel.
- 16.5.3. If the second Classification Panel is satisfied that the Athlete's Eligible Impairment meets the applicable Minimum Impairment Criteria, it will proceed to the Sport Class Assessment.
- 16.6. If the second Classification Panel is not satisfied that the Athlete's Eligible Impairment meets the applicable Minimum Impairment Criteria, the Athlete will be designated as 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria', and the consequences in Article 17 will continue to apply.

17. Designation of 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria'

- 17.1. Subject to Articles 37 (Medical Review) and 52.3 (Changes to Classification systems), an Athlete designated as 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria (Re-evaluation)' or 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria':
- 17.1.1. is not eligible to compete in Covered Competitions based on the same Eligible Impairment(s) in that sport; and
- 17.1.2. must disclose such designation if undergoing further Classification (whether in that sport or in another sport).

[Comment to Article 17.1: If an Athlete who has been designated 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria (Re-evaluation)' or 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria' subsequently (i) competes or attempts to compete in Covered Competitions based on such Eligible Impairment(s) in that sport, or (ii) undergoes or attempts to undergo further Classification (including in respect of another sport), in each case without disclosing such designation, they may be investigated in respect of potential Intentional Misrepresentation.]

- 17.2. However, the Athlete may be eligible to compete in Covered Competitions:
- 17.2.1. in the same sport based on a different Eligible Impairment if: (i) the sport caters for that Eligible Impairment; and (ii) the Athlete meets the sport's Minimum Impairment Criteria for that Eligible Impairment; and/or
 - 17.2.2. in a different sport based on the same Eligible Impairment(s) if: (i) the other sport caters for the Eligible Impairment(s); and (ii) the Athlete meets the other sport's Minimum Impairment Criteria for the Eligible Impairment(s).
- 17.3. Subject to Article 16.5, the designation of an Athlete as 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria (Re-evaluation)' or 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria' is not subject to review or Protest but may be Appealed in accordance with Part III of Chapter 3.
- 17.4. The International Federation must include all Athletes designated as 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria (Re-evaluation)' or 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria' on its Classification Master List in accordance with Article 36.

[Comment to Article 17.4: This requirement applies regardless of whether the Athlete is currently licensed by the International Federation.]

B.3 Stage 4: Sport Class and Sport Class Status allocation

B.3.1 Sport Class

18. Conducting the Sport Class Assessment

- 18.1. Subject to Articles 30 (Suspension or termination of an Evaluation Session) and 31 (Failure to attend an Evaluation Session), if an Athlete has been assessed to have an Eligible Impairment that meets the sport's Minimum Impairment Criteria, the Athlete must be allocated a Sport Class.
- 18.2. Each International Federation must in its Classification rules:
- 18.2.1. specify that the Sport Class Assessment will be conducted for the purposes set out at Article 5.1, i.e., to assess the extent to which the Athlete's Eligible Impairment(s) impact(s) their ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport;
 - 18.2.2. define its Sport Classes by reference to the extent to which the Athlete's Eligible Impairment(s) impact(s) their ability to execute the

specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport, including the impact of any Adaptive Equipment;

- 18.2.3. set out the assessment methodology and assessment criteria that the Classification Panel will use in evaluating which Sport Class to allocate to an Athlete; and
 - 18.2.4. set out what Adaptive Equipment (if any) may and may not be used by Athletes within each Sport Class, and whether the use of such Adaptive Equipment is mandatory or optional within that Sport Class.
- 18.3. When assessing which Sport Class to allocate to an Athlete, the Classification Panel must:
- 18.3.1. base its assessment solely on the extent to which the Athlete's Eligible Impairment(s) impact(s) their ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport; and

[Comment to Article 18.3.1: The Classification Panel must therefore distinguish factors such as fitness level and/or technical proficiency in order to ensure that these do not affect the Sport Class allocated. For this purpose, it may be helpful for the Classification Panel to consider an Athlete's training history and age.]
 - 18.3.2. with the exception of the Observation Assessment, conduct all parts of the Sport Class Assessment in a controlled non-competitive environment, meaning an environment that allows for the repeated observation of key tasks and activities.
- 18.4. The Sport Class Assessment must take place in person.
- 18.5. Use of Adaptive Equipment:
- 18.5.1. When conducting the Sport Class Assessment, the Classification Panel must evaluate the Athlete when they are using the Adaptive Equipment that they will use in competition (if any). The use of Adaptive Equipment permitted by the rules of an International Federation (whether mandatory or optional) is an integral component of the Athlete's ability to execute the specific tasks and activities required by a sport. Therefore, the Sport Class Assessment must take into account the optimal use of such equipment (such as strapping or gloves) during competition, whether an Athlete chooses to use it or not.

[Comment to Article 18.5.1: For example, if the rules of the sport permit Athletes competing in a wheelchair to use abdominal

strapping, and an Athlete opts not to use such strapping which leads to poor sitting balance, the Athlete should not be allocated a different Sport Class (reserved for Athletes with impairments that have a different impact on their ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport) on the basis of their decision not to use an optional piece of Adaptive Equipment.]

- 18.5.2. The International Federation, whether through the Classification Panel or otherwise, may assess whether any Adaptive Equipment proposed to be used by the Athlete in competition complies with the sport's Classification and/or other rules on the use of Adaptive Equipment. If the Athlete's equipment does not comply with such rules, the Athlete will not be permitted to use that equipment as part of the Sport Class Assessment, and the Classification Panel will not take use of that equipment into consideration when making its determination as to the Athlete's Sport Class.
- 18.5.3. If an Athlete's choice to use (or not use) Adaptive Equipment could affect their allocated Sport Class, the International Federation must:
- 18.5.3.1. establish a mechanism to record this information (for example, by creating specific designations for Adaptive Equipment); and
 - 18.5.3.2. have an appropriate system in place to ensure that: (i) the Athlete uses the same Adaptive Equipment (if they were allocated a Sport Class on the basis that they would use such Adaptive Equipment), or (ii) the Athlete does not use any or certain Adaptive Equipment (if they were allocated a Sport Class on the basis that they would not use such Adaptive Equipment).
- 18.6. Following completion of the initial stages of the Sport Class Assessment set out above, the Classification Panel will either:
- 18.6.1. allocate the Athlete a provisional Sport Class that is subject to confirmation at an Observation Assessment in accordance with Article 18.7 below, using the tracking code 'OA' for 'Observation Assessment'; or
 - 18.6.2. allocate the Athlete a final Sport Class, in which case the Athlete must also be allocated a Sport Class Status.

18.7. Observation Assessment:

18.7.1. 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.

18.7.2. Each International Federation must specify in its Classification rules:

18.7.2.1. whether or not (and, if so, in what circumstances) an Observation Assessment will be required before an Athlete can be allocated a final Sport Class and Sport Class Status;

[Comment to Article 18.7.2.1: For example, International Federations may specify in their Classification rules that Observation Assessments may be used in respect of certain Eligible Impairments and/or Sport Classes, but may not be used in respect of others.]

18.7.2.2. what a Classification Panel will observe during the Observation Assessment; and

18.7.2.3. how the Observation Assessment will be conducted.

18.7.3. If an Observation Assessment is required:

18.7.3.1. Except in exceptional circumstances, the same Classification Panel that conducted the preceding stages of the Athlete's Evaluation Session must also conduct the Observation Assessment.

18.7.3.2. The Observation Assessment must be conducted in person at the Covered Competition where the Athlete competes in their provisional Sport Class for the first time (**First Appearance**). The Athlete may compete at First Appearance with their provisional Sport Class.

18.7.3.3. First Appearance applies to participation in all events within the same provisional Sport Class. The Classification Panel may require the Athlete to be observed at one or more events during their First Appearance.

[Comment to Article 18.7.3.3: For example, in Para swimming the Sport Class with the prefix "S" encompasses events in three different strokes - freestyle, butterfly, and backstroke. If an Athlete has been provisionally allocated such a Sport

Class, the Classification Panel may observe that Athlete at one or more events in any or all of the strokes in which the Athlete is competing.]

- 18.7.3.4. For Team Sports, the International Federation must further define in its Classification rules when during First Appearance the Observation Assessment will be conducted (which must be at the earliest possible opportunity and be based on an Athlete's first meaningful participation in all relevant positions of the sport or when performing all the skills required for observation). For Team Sport competitions with preliminary rounds, any Observation Assessment must be conducted during such preliminary rounds.
- 18.7.3.5. Whenever possible, the Observation Assessment should not take place at the final of an event.
- 18.7.4. Following an Observation Assessment, the Classification Panel may:
 - 18.7.4.1. allocate the Athlete a final Sport Class and Sport Class Status; or
 - 18.7.4.2. require the Athlete to redo any prior stages of the Evaluation Session and/or undergo a further Observation Assessment.
- 18.7.5. The Classification Panel cannot, based on the results of the Observation Assessment alone, allocate the Athlete a Sport Class that is different from the one provisionally allocated in accordance with Article 18.6.1.
- 18.8. If an Athlete with a provisional Sport Class is ultimately allocated a different final Sport Class:
 - 18.8.1. for individual sports, such change will be effective immediately;
 - 18.8.2. for Team Sports:
 - 18.8.2.1. for Team Sport competitions with preliminary rounds, such change must be implemented immediately, and the Athlete may not participate further in the competition or in any other Covered Competition until the change has been implemented; and

18.8.2.2. for Team Sport competitions that do not have preliminary rounds, such change must be implemented either immediately (in which case the Athlete may not participate further in the competition or in any other Covered Competition until the change has been implemented) or immediately after the end of the relevant competition, as specified in the rules of the International Federation;

18.8.3. International Federations must specify in their rules what impact such changes in Sport Class will have on the results and prizes in the relevant Competition(s).

18.9. Athletes may only compete in the Sport Class(es) allocated to them.

19. Eligibility for multiple Sport Classes

19.1. Each International Federation is responsible for defining its own Sport Classes, and deciding whether and in what circumstances it is possible for an Athlete to be allocated multiple Sport Classes.

[Comment to Article 19.1: Some Athletes might be in a position to be eligible for more than one Sport Class within a sport. For example, this might be the case if an Athlete has a combination of Physical, Vision, and/or Intellectual Impairments.]

19.2. International Federations must specify in their rules if it is possible for an Athlete to be eligible for multiple Sport Classes, including the following:

19.2.1. if an Athlete meets the criteria to be allocated more than one Sport Class, whether the Athlete can be allocated multiple Sport Classes or instead must choose which Sport Class(es) they wish to compete in;

[Comment to Article 19.2.1: For example, in Para swimming, Athletes can be allocated multiple Sport Classes to cover different strokes (the Sport Class with the prefix "S" covers freestyle, butterfly and backstroke events; the Sport Class with the prefix "SB" covers breaststroke events). Similarly, in Para athletics, an Athlete can be allocated a "T" Sport Class (for track events) and an "F" Sport Class (for field events). In Para canoe, Athletes can be allocated both a "KL" and "VL" Sport Class, to cover the two types of boats.

In other situations, an Athlete must choose which Sport Class(es) they wish to compete in. For example, in Para athletics, an Athlete may be eligible to compete in field events in either a sitting or standing format, but must choose between those formats (and cannot compete in both). In Para triathlon, an Athlete with both a Physical

and Vision Impairment may meet the criteria to be allocated more than one Sport Class in relation to those Eligible Impairments, but must choose which Sport Class they wish to compete in.]

- 19.2.2. if an Athlete meets the criteria to be allocated more than one Sport Class and must choose which Sport Class(es) they wish to compete in, when and how an Athlete is able to change that choice; and

[Comment to Article 19.2.2: In deciding when and how such changes can be made, International Federations should consider, among other things, their sport's competition cycle and the qualification period for the Paralympic Games.]

- 19.2.3. in any event, the Athlete must be entitled to attend an Evaluation Session in respect of all their Eligible Impairments.

B.3.2 Sport Class Status

20. Sport Class Statuses

- 20.1. A Sport Class Status indicates whether and when an Athlete will be required to undergo Classification in the future.
- 20.2. The available Sport Class Statuses are as follows:
- 20.2.1. Confirmed (C);
- 20.2.2. Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO);
- 20.2.3. Review with a Fixed Review Date (R-FRD); or
- 20.2.4. Expired (E).

21. Allocation of Sport Class Statuses

- 21.1. Sport Class Statuses must be allocated in accordance with the below:
- 21.1.1. **'Confirmed (C)'**: A Classification Panel may allocate an Athlete the Sport Class Status 'Confirmed (C)' if it is satisfied that the Athlete's Sport Class is unlikely to change given the nature of the Athlete's Eligible Impairment and the extent to which the Athlete's Eligible Impairment(s) impact(s) their ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport.

21.1.2. **'Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)'**:

21.1.2.1. An Athlete will automatically be allocated the Sport Class Status 'Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)' where:

21.1.2.1.1. their Classification Panel consisted of: (i) a sole Classifier; and/or (ii) Classifiers who were each of the same nationality as the Athlete (see Article 7.3.1);

21.1.2.1.2. the International Federation has accepted a Medical Review request (see Article 37.10); and/or

21.1.2.1.3. a National Federation Protest has been accepted or an International Federation Protest has been made (see Article 45.1.1).

21.1.2.2. A Classification Panel may also decide to allocate an Athlete the Sport Class Status 'Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)' if:

21.1.2.2.1. the Athlete is 'borderline' (i.e. they narrowly meet the Minimum Impairment Criteria or they are on the boundary of two Sport Classes); and/or

21.1.2.2.2. 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.

[Comment to Article 21.1.2.2: A further Evaluation Session might be required for a number of reasons, including where the Athlete has only recently started competing in Covered Competitions, has one or more fluctuating and/or progressive or regressive impairment(s), and/or has not reached full muscular skeletal or sports maturity.]

21.1.2.3. An International Federation may also change an Athlete's Sport Class Status to 'Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)' where it has identified that changes to its Classification rules may affect the Athlete's (in)eligibility, Sport Class, and/or Sport Class Status (see Article 52.3.2).

21.1.3. **'Review with a Fixed Review Date (R-FRD)'**:

21.1.3.1. A Classification Panel may allocate an Athlete the Sport Class Status 'Review with a Fixed Review Date (R-FRD)' where it believes that a further Evaluation Session will be required, but not within the current calendar year and/or season. The Classification Panel must set a date (no earlier than the end of the current calendar year or season, as applicable) after which the Athlete must attend a new Evaluation Session at the Next Available Opportunity (the **Fixed Review Date**).

21.1.3.2. An International Federation may also change an Athlete's Sport Class Status to 'Review with a Fixed Review Date (R-FRD)' where it has identified that changes to its Classification rules may affect the Athlete's (in)eligibility, Sport Class and/or Sport Class Status (see Article 52.3.2). In such circumstances, the International Federation must set an appropriate Fixed Review Date.

21.1.3.3. The Fixed Review Date will typically be no more than four years after the Athlete's previous Evaluation Session took place.

21.1.4. **'Expired (E)'**:

21.1.4.1. An Athlete will automatically be allocated the Sport Class Status 'Expired (E)' when they retire, in accordance with the International Federation's rules. Each International Federation must specify the requirements for an Athlete to retire in its rules.

21.1.4.2. International Federations may also decide to use the Sport Class Status 'Expired (E)' where the Athlete does not complete an Evaluation Session within the specified time period. If an International Federation decides to do so, it must specify in its Classification rules: (i) the maximum period of time for which the Sport Class Status 'Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)' will remain valid; and (ii) the maximum period of time for which the Sport Class Status 'Review with a Fixed Review Date (R-FRD)' will remain valid after the Fixed Review Date has passed.

22. Impact of Sport Class Status on participation in Covered Competitions

- 22.1. An Athlete allocated the Sport Class Status 'Confirmed' is not required to undergo any further Classification, except if their Sport Class Status is subsequently changed as a result of: (i) an International Federation Protest, accepted National Federation Protest, or successful Appeal; (ii) an accepted Medical Review request; and/or (iii) changes to an International Federation's Classification system under Article 52.3.
- 22.2. Unless the International Federation specifies otherwise, if an Athlete has been allocated the Sport Class Status:
- 22.2.1. 'Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)', the Athlete must complete an Evaluation Session prior to competing at any Covered Competition.
- 22.2.2. 'Review with a Fixed Review Date (R-FRD)', the Athlete may compete in Covered Competitions up until the Fixed Review Date, but thereafter must complete an Evaluation Session prior to competing at any further Covered Competitions.
- 22.3. If an Athlete has been allocated the Sport Class Status 'Expired (E)', the Athlete cannot compete at any Covered Competition unless and until they complete the requirements specified by the International Federation, which may include completing a new Evaluation Session and being allocated a Sport Class and Sport Class Status.

[Comment to Article 22.3: International Federations may, for example, wish to provide in their Classification rules that Athletes with Sport Class Status 'Expired (E)' who previously had a 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.]

B.4 General provisions applicable to all Evaluation Sessions

23. General requirements for International Federations

- 23.1. International Federations must ensure that all persons participating in Evaluation Sessions (whether in person or virtually) are bound by their Classification rules and applicable code of conduct.
- 23.2. International Federations must provide National Federations with reasonable notice of Classification opportunities, including the location, dates, and the sports and impairment types that will be assessed.

- 23.3. International Federations must provide the Classification Panel with any information that becomes available to them that might be relevant to the Classification Panel conducting an Evaluation Session.
- 23.4. International Federations must retain copies of any forms, reports, or other written records from UHC Assessors and Classification Panels, which may be provided by the International Federation to future UHC Assessors and Classification Panels that evaluate the Athlete. The retention of such documentation is subject to the International Standard for Classification Data Protection.

24. Attendance at Evaluation Sessions

- 24.1. In addition to the Athlete and the members of the Classification Panel, the following individuals may attend Evaluation Sessions:
- 24.1.1. the Athlete's accompanying National Representative and (if required) interpreter, subject to the requirements in Article 25.2;
- 24.1.2. Trainee Classifiers and any other authorised persons involved in the training of such Trainee Classifiers, as determined by the International Federation (or the Chief Classifier, acting on behalf of the International Federation);
- [Comment to Article 24.1.2: International Federations should be respectful of Athletes when determining the number of Trainee Classifiers/trainers participating in an Evaluation Session.]*
- 24.1.3. observers appointed by the IPC as part of the IPC's monitoring of Compliance with the Classification Code and the International Standards; and
- 24.1.4. any person from whom the Classification Panel seeks medical, clinical, technical, and/or scientific advice in accordance with Article 28.
- 24.2. Except if specified otherwise in this Classification Code, the Athlete and the members of the Classification Panel must attend Evaluation Sessions in person.
- 24.3. Any other person entitled to attend an Evaluation Session pursuant to Article 24.1 may attend the Evaluation Session in person. Alternatively, they may attend the Evaluation Session virtually, whether by telephone or video (or other virtual technology), provided that they can do so without adverse impact on the Evaluation Session, and provided that they comply with all of the same requirements as those attending in person.

[Comment to Article 24.3: An Evaluation Session would be adversely impacted if, for example, the internet connection of the person attending the Evaluation Session virtually was so weak or intermittent that the Evaluation Session was continually interrupted.]

25. Responsibilities of National Federations and Athletes in relation to Evaluation Sessions

25.1. International Federations must specify in their Classification rules that an Athlete's National Federation is responsible for ensuring that the Athlete complies with the responsibilities applicable to them in relation to Evaluation Sessions.

25.2. International Federations must specify in their Classification rules the following rights and responsibilities of Athletes in relation to Evaluation Sessions:

25.2.1. Athletes may be accompanied during the Evaluation Session by a maximum of:

25.2.1.1. one National Representative whose role is to support the Athlete and facilitate their Classification process (Athletes who are Minors or lack legal capacity in accordance with the laws applicable in their country of residence must be accompanied by such a National Representative); and

25.2.1.2. if required, one interpreter (to be arranged and paid for by the Athlete's National Federation, and who will be deemed a National Representative).

25.2.2. An Athlete must give their best efforts during an Evaluation Session and must comply with all reasonable instructions given to them by a Classification Panel.

25.2.3. Unless expressly provided otherwise in the International Federation's rules, the Athlete must (i) attend the Evaluation Session with any sports attire and Adaptive Equipment permitted under the International Federation's rules that they intend to use in any Covered Competition; and (ii) disclose their intended use of such attire and Adaptive Equipment to the Classification Panel.

25.2.4. Medication, medical devices/implants, and procedures:

25.2.4.1. an Athlete must disclose to the Classification Panel the use of any medication and/or medical device/implant (including any audio aids and/or refractive or optical correction such

as eyeglasses or corrective lenses) and any medical procedure that may affect the Classification Panel's ability to conduct an Evaluation Session; and

[Comment to Article 25.2.4.1: For the avoidance of doubt, the Athlete's obligation to disclose their use of any medication, medical device/implant, and medical procedure under this Article is entirely separate to their obligations under any applicable anti-doping rules, including but not limited to in respect of therapeutic use exemptions and disclosures on a doping control form. Any such disclosure by an Athlete to the Classification Panel in no way equates to a disclosure or application for the purposes of such separate anti-doping rules, and vice versa.]

25.2.4.2. an Athlete must attend the Evaluation Session (i) with all disclosed medical devices/implants; and (ii) if required by the International Federation's rules or otherwise requested by the Classification Panel, with any or all disclosed medication(s) and/or related medical prescription(s).

26. Responsibilities of the Classification Panel in relation to Evaluation Sessions

26.1. International Federations must specify in their Classification rules the following responsibilities of the Classification Panel in relation to Evaluation Sessions:

26.1.1. Classification Panels are responsible for conducting Evaluation Sessions.

26.1.2. Except as provided in Article 14.4, or in other exceptional circumstances, the same Classification Panel must conduct all of the stages of an Evaluation Session in relation to an Athlete.

[Comment to Article 26.1.2: For example, 'exceptional circumstances' may arise if there are genuine and unavoidable operational difficulties (such as Classifier illness) that mean the same Classification Panel is not available to conduct all aspects of the Evaluation Session.]

26.1.3. The Classification Panel must conduct Evaluation Sessions in English, unless specified otherwise in the International Federation's rules.

26.1.4. The Classification Panel must inform the Athlete of the names and roles of all persons attending the Evaluation Session on behalf of the

International Federation (whether they are attending in person or virtually).

- 26.1.5. When conducting an Evaluation Session, the Classification Panel may only consider the information provided to it by the relevant Athlete, National Federation, or International Federation, and any additional information obtained under Article 28 below.
- 26.1.6. The Classification Panel must record their assessments at each stage of Classification in writing, in such format as required by the International Federation, and provide a copy of such records to the International Federation.

27. Consideration of prior Evaluation Sessions

- 27.1. If the Classification Panel is evaluating an Athlete who has previously undergone one or more Evaluation Sessions:
 - 27.1.1. before reaching a final decision, the Classification Panel must review the applicable forms, reports, or other records from previous Classification Panel(s); and
 - 27.1.2. in relation to the Evaluation Session, the Classification Panel must not consult with any of the members of previous Classification Panels regarding their prior evaluation of the Athlete. For the avoidance of doubt, the Classification Panel may seek expert assistance in accordance with Article 28, including from any persons who provided equivalent assistance to previous Classification Panels.

[Comment to Article 27.1.2: For the avoidance of doubt, subject to Article 45.2 regarding the composition of a Protest Panel, a Classification Panel may consist of Classifiers who conducted previous Evaluation Sessions of the Athlete. In those circumstances, such Classifiers should not discuss their previous evaluation of the Athlete with the new Classification Panel (beyond reviewing the documentation referred to in Article 27.1.1).]

28. Classification Panel requests for additional information or expertise

- 28.1. At any stage the Classification Panel may request that an Athlete's National Federation provide any additional information (including Diagnostic Information) that the Classification Panel believes is necessary for it to complete the Evaluation Session. If the Athlete's National Federation provides such information within the timeframe specified by the Classification Panel, the Evaluation Session may continue. If the Athlete's National Federation is unable or fails to provide such information within the

timeframe specified by the Classification Panel, the Classification Panel may suspend the Evaluation Session in accordance with Article 30.

- 28.2. At any stage the Classification Panel may, with the agreement of the International Federation, seek the assistance of such other medical, clinical, technical, and/or scientific experts as it considers necessary for it to complete the Evaluation Session.

29. Requirement to redo prior stages of the Evaluation Session

- 29.1. The Classification Panel may at any time require the Athlete to redo any prior stages of the Evaluation Session if it considers it necessary to do so.

30. Suspension or termination of an Evaluation Session

- 30.1. A Classification Panel, in consultation with the International Federation (or the Chief Classifier, acting on behalf of the International Federation), may suspend an Evaluation Session if it is unable to complete the Evaluation Session for any reason, including in one or more of the following circumstances:

- 30.1.1. failure on the part of the Athlete to comply with any part of the applicable Classification rules;
- 30.1.2. failure on the part of the Athlete or the Athlete's National Federation to provide any information that is reasonably required by the Classification Panel;
- 30.1.3. the Classification Panel believes that any use (or non-use) of any medication or medical device/implant or any medical procedure disclosed by the Athlete may interfere with the Classification of the Athlete;
- 30.1.4. the Athlete has a Health Condition or impairment that limits or prevents them from complying with the requests of the Classification Panel during an Evaluation Session, which the Classification Panel considers will affect its ability to conduct an Evaluation Session in accordance with the applicable Classification rules;
- 30.1.5. the Athlete is unable to communicate effectively with the Classification Panel, even in the presence of an interpreter;
- 30.1.6. in the reasonable opinion of the Classification Panel, the Athlete is physically or mentally unable to comply with the instructions of the Classification Panel;

- 30.1.7. the Classification Panel believes that the Athlete is not giving their best efforts, or the Athlete refuses to comply with any reasonable instructions given by the Classification Panel;
 - 30.1.8. the Athlete or their accompanying National Representative or interpreter (or any other person associated with the Athlete or the Athlete's National Federation) is found to be photographing or recording the Evaluation Session;
 - 30.1.9. there are more people attending the Evaluation Session than permitted under the applicable Classification rules, or the identity of someone attending is not clear;
 - 30.1.10. the Classification Panel believes that the Athlete's Eligible Impairment is inconsistent (i.e., is subject to significant fluctuation) such that it is unable to complete the Evaluation Session and allocate the Athlete with an appropriate Sport Class; and/or
 - 30.1.11. the Athlete's representation of their abilities is inconsistent with other information available to the Classification Panel.
- 30.2. If an Evaluation Session is suspended by a Classification Panel, the Classification Panel must designate the Athlete as 'Classification Not Completed (CNC)'. Subject to Article 14.3, the following steps must be taken:
- 30.2.1. the Classification Panel must prepare a written explanation (i) explaining why the 'Classification Not Completed (CNC)' designation has been applied (including, where applicable, identifying any observed inconsistencies in the Athlete's representation of their abilities), and (ii) if applicable, specifying the details of any remedial action that is required for the Evaluation Session to be resumed, a copy of which must be provided to the International Federation and the Athlete's National Federation;
 - 30.2.2. the Classification Panel must separately record (in any format required by the International Federation) any concerns regarding potential Intentional Misrepresentation, if applicable; and
 - 30.2.3. if an Athlete completes any specified remedial action to the satisfaction of the International Federation (or the Chief Classifier, acting on behalf of the International Federation), an Evaluation Session will be rescheduled as soon as reasonably practicable.
- 30.3. If an Evaluation Session is suspended by a Classification Panel and cannot (for any reason) be resumed and completed at the same Classification opportunity by the same Classification Panel, the Evaluation Session must be

terminated and the Athlete will remain designated as 'Classification Not Completed (CNC)'.

- 30.4. Nothing in the Classification Code prevents an International Federation from adopting its own specific disciplinary rules in respect of conduct by Athletes and other persons that results in the suspension or termination of an Evaluation Session (but which does not, of itself, constitute Intentional Misrepresentation).

31. Failure to attend an Evaluation Session

- 31.1. An Athlete is personally responsible for attending all stages of their Evaluation Session(s). Without limiting the Athlete's personal responsibility, an Athlete's National Federation must take reasonable steps to ensure that the Athlete attends their Evaluation Session(s).

- 31.2. If an Athlete fails to attend an Evaluation Session as required, the Classification Panel will report the failure to the International Federation as soon as reasonably practicable.

31.2.1. If the Athlete is able to provide the International Federation with a reasonable explanation for their failure to attend the Evaluation Session, the International Federation may reschedule the Evaluation Session to a revised date and time at the same Classification opportunity.

31.2.2. If the Athlete is unable to provide the International Federation with a reasonable explanation for their failure to attend the Evaluation Session, the Athlete will be designated as 'Classification Not Completed (CNC)'.

[Comment to Article 31.2: International Federations are under no obligation to provide unlimited opportunities for an Athlete to attend an Evaluation Session.]

32. Designation of 'Classification Not Completed (CNC)'

- 32.1. An Athlete designated as 'Classification Not Completed (CNC)' may not compete in Covered Competitions until they complete an Evaluation Session (except for purposes of completing an Observation Assessment as part of such Evaluation Session).

- 32.2. A designation of 'Classification Not Completed (CNC)' is not subject to review or Protest or Appeal.

- 32.3. If an Athlete has been designated as 'Classification Not Completed (CNC)' on three or more consecutive occasions, the International Federation may specify in its Classification rules that the Athlete is not entitled to undergo any further Evaluation Sessions for a specified (fixed) period of time.

33. Location of Evaluation Sessions

- 33.1. Evaluation Sessions may take place at any time or place specified by the International Federation in its Classification rules, with the exception of Observation Assessments, which must take place at a Covered Competition.

[Comment to Article 33.1: Evaluation Sessions may take place In-Competition or Out-of-Competition to provide Athletes with the greatest possible opportunity to be evaluated by a Classification Panel and allocated a Sport Class. For example, Out-of-Competition Classification opportunities may be provided by an International Federation using a competition venue for another sport; at a Covered Competition where the relevant Athlete is not competing; or at a location away from competition, such as a low vision expertise centre or a sports science institute.]

- 33.2. Subject to Article 33.1, International Federations must specify in their Classification rules:

33.2.1. which parts of an Evaluation Session must take place In-Competition and which parts (if any) may take place Out-of-Competition; and

33.2.2. which impairment types must be evaluated In-Competition and which (if any) may be evaluated Out-of-Competition.

- 33.3. All Evaluations Sessions must be conducted in a manner that complies with the Classification Code and the International Standards. In particular, the venue at which the Evaluation Session takes place must be properly equipped to conduct all necessary aspects of the Evaluation Session. The International Federation must specify the requirements for hosting Classification and the approval procedure for Classification venues.

- 33.4. If the allocation of a Sport Class might require an Observation Assessment, an International Federation may still allow for part(s) of the Evaluation Session to take place Out-of-Competition, but the International Federation must (in advance of the Evaluation Session) advise the relevant National Federations that a Classification Panel may conclude that it is unable to allocate a final Sport Class without an Observation Assessment (in which case the Athlete must be designated 'Classification Not Completed (CNC)' and required to undergo a further Evaluation Session at a later date).

34. Photographs and audio-visual technology

- 34.1. The Classification Panel may make, create, and/or use photographs and/or audio-visual technology, including but not limited to during any Observation Assessment. Copies of any such materials must be provided to the Athlete or their National Federation on request. Such materials must be dealt with in accordance with the International Standard for Classification Data Protection.
- 34.2. Subject to Article 34.1, no photography or audio or video recording of the Evaluation Session is permitted. For the avoidance of doubt, this prohibition applies to all persons, regardless of whether they attend the Evaluation Session in person or virtually.

PART V: NOTIFICATION AND PUBLICATION

35. Notification of Classification outcome

- 35.1. International Federations must notify the outcome of Classification to the Athlete concerned and/or their National Federation as soon as reasonably practicable after completion of Classification. International Federations must specify in their Classification rules the process for such notification.
- 35.2. In the context of a Competition, a Chief Classifier must notify all relevant International Federation technical delegates and event organising committee representatives of the Sport Class (including any provisional Sport Class) and Sport Class Status allocated to each Athlete. If Observation Assessment takes place, further notification must be provided as soon as reasonably practicable following completion of the Observation Assessment.
- 35.3. International Federations must make available the following information to participants at the venue for a Covered Competition:
- 35.3.1. any provisional Sport Class (that is subject to confirmation at an Observation Assessment) allocated to an Athlete entered in the Covered Competition, as soon as reasonably practicable after it is allocated; and
 - 35.3.2. the final Sport Class and Sport Class Status allocated to each Athlete entered in the Covered Competition, as soon as reasonably practicable after completion of their Classification.

36. Classification Master List

- 36.1. International Federations must maintain, publish, and keep up-to-date a 'Classification Master List', which must include (at a minimum) the following information regarding: (i) each Athlete; and (ii) any Participant currently suspended by the International Federation for Intentional Misrepresentation:
- 36.1.1. name;
 - 36.1.2. gender;
 - 36.1.3. year of birth;
 - 36.1.4. nationality;
 - 36.1.5. Sport Class and Sport Class Status;
 - 36.1.6. any designations (including 'New (N)', 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition', 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment', 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria', and 'Classification Not Completed (CNC)'), any 're-evaluation' status attached to a designation, and tracking codes (such as 'OA' for Observation Assessment); and
 - 36.1.7. any current designation for Intentional Misrepresentation ('IM'), together with the duration and commencement date of the period of ineligibility.
- 36.2. Publication must be accomplished at a minimum by placing the required information on a publicly-available website.
- 36.3. International Federations must update their Classification Master Lists as soon as reasonably practicable following any change to the information.
- 36.4. Classification Master Lists must be dealt with in accordance with the International Standard for Classification Data Protection.

PART VI: CHANGE IN CIRCUMSTANCES

37. Medical Review

- 37.1. A change in the nature or degree of an Athlete's Eligible Impairment might mean that a reassessment is required to ensure that the outcome of the Athlete's previous Classification remains correct (for example, to ensure that an Athlete remains eligible or that the Sport Class allocated to an Athlete remains correct, or to reassess an Athlete previously found to be not eligible). This is known as a '**Medical Review**'.

[Comment to Article 37.1: For example, a Medical Review request would be appropriate where the effect of surgery, a new medication or device, or some other medical procedure has resulted in changes to an Athlete's ability to execute the specific tasks and activities relevant to a sport. A request may also be appropriate where an Athlete has a new Underlying Health Condition.]

- 37.2. International Federations must set out the procedures for requesting and conducting Medical Reviews in their Classification rules.
- 37.3. A Medical Review request must be made by a National Federation on behalf of an Athlete.
- 37.4. A Medical Review **must** be requested by a National Federation if there is a change in the nature or degree of an Athlete's Eligible Impairment.
- 37.5. A Medical Review request must:
 - 37.5.1. explain in detail why the request is being made (including how and to what extent the Athlete's Eligible Impairment has changed, and whether and why it is believed that the outcome of the Athlete's previous Classification is no longer correct); and
 - 37.5.2. be accompanied by all relevant supporting documentation, including updated Diagnostic Information in accordance with Article 11.

[Comment to Article 37.5: Ordinarily, any Medical Review request will need to be accompanied by detailed medical records.]

- 37.6. As set out in Article 11, the International Federation may request from the Athlete's National Federation any additional information that it deems necessary to assess the Medical Review request, including Diagnostic Information.
- 37.7. International Federations may require National Federations to pay a non-refundable fee when submitting a Medical Review request.
- 37.8. A Medical Review request will be accepted where the International Federation determines that the National Federation has complied with Articles 37.5 to 37.7, and the International Federation is satisfied that there is a change in the nature or degree of an Athlete's Eligible Impairment(s) that may impact the Athlete's ability to perform the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport in a manner that is clearly distinguishable from changes attributable to age, levels of training, fitness, and technical proficiency. If this test is not met, the Medical Review request will be dismissed.

- 37.9. The International Federation must decide whether to accept a Medical Review request as soon as reasonably practicable following receipt of a complete request.
- 37.10. If the Medical Review request is accepted by the International Federation, where applicable the Athlete's Sport Class Status must be changed to 'Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)' with immediate effect.
- 37.11. If the Medical Review request is dismissed by the International Federation, the International Federation must notify the Athlete's National Federation of the decision and provide a written explanation setting out the basis upon which the Medical Review request is dismissed. The decision of the International Federation is not subject to review or Protest or Appeal.
- 37.12. If an Athlete or other Participant becomes aware of changes in their/the Athlete's circumstances that would require a Medical Review but fails to draw those changes to the attention of the International Federation, the Athlete and/or other Participant may be investigated in respect of potential Intentional Misrepresentation.

PART VII: COMPETITION FORMATS

38. Combined Class Events

- 38.1. Given the purpose, principles, and scientific rationale behind Classification in the Paralympic Movement, it follows that in individual sports Athletes should be grouped for competition only with Athletes from the same Sport Class, to ensure fair and meaningful competition by minimising the impact of Athletes' impairments on sporting outcomes. However, the IPC acknowledges that this may not always be possible in practice (for example, in lower-level competitions where there are an insufficient number of Athletes within a single Sport Class to ensure that an event remains viable). Consequently, in certain circumstances, International Federations may decide to allow Athletes with different Sport Classes to compete against each other (**Combined Class Events**), provided that the International Federation's rules make clear:
- 38.1.1. which Sport Classes may be combined, and in respect of which Covered Competitions;
- 38.1.2. any conditions or criteria applicable to such Combined Class Events (for example, that only specific combinations of Sport Classes are allowed); and

- 38.1.3. the reasons why the International Federation has decided to allow such Combined Class Events, and why it considers that the relevant Sport Classes may be combined in respect of such Covered Competitions and subject to the applicable conditions or criteria.

[Comment to Article 38.1: For example, Combined Class Events may include the following:

1. 'Competing up': a mechanism where an Athlete can compete against Athletes from a different Sport Class in circumstances where the relationship between those Sport Classes is linear, hierarchical, and comparable in relation to the impact of the Athlete's impairment(s) on the sport activity. The Sport Classes can therefore be combined while still preserving the integrity and fairness of the competition (with an Athlete 'competing up' against Athletes whose impairments have a lesser impact on the sport activity). However, it cannot be assumed that the relationship between any given Sport Classes is linear, hierarchical, or comparable; indeed, that is often not the case as each Sport Class reflects fundamentally different sport activity limitations. It should also be noted that the Sport Class numbering used by certain International Federations does not necessarily mean that there is a linear, hierarchical, or comparable relationship between Sport Classes. The consecutive numbering is simply a system that is commonly used by International Federations for labelling their various Sport Classes, and it cannot be assumed that there is a linear, hierarchical, or comparable relationship between such Sport Classes.

2. Multi-class events: where, in certain circumstances, International Federations allow Athletes with different Sport Classes to compete against each other.

3. Multi-class Team Sports and team events: where Athletes with different Sport Classes compete as part of a team. For example, where each Sport Class is allocated a fixed number of 'points', and the team is comprised of Athletes whose total cumulative number of points must be below a certain number.]

39. Performance compensation mechanisms

- 39.1. A small number of International Federations currently apply performance compensation mechanisms within their Combined Class Events. Such performance compensation mechanisms are designed to try to account for, and moderate, Athletes' differing abilities to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the relevant sport, based on performance outcomes relative to their individual Sport Classes. Examples of performance

compensation mechanisms include so-called factor systems and staggered starts.

- 39.2. International Federations that are using performance compensation mechanisms within Covered Competitions as of 17 May 2024 may continue to use such mechanisms. However, no other International Federations may use performance compensation mechanisms within Combined Class Events at Covered Competitions.

[Comment to Article 39.2: The IPC considers that performance compensation mechanisms interfere with the purpose, principles, and scientific rationale of Classification. This is because performance compensation mechanisms use anticipated performance differences between Athletes to: (i) group Athletes with different Sport Classes together for competition; and (ii) inform the rules of that competition to try and neutralise the performance differences between Athletes of different Sport Classes. However, such mechanisms are not based on the impact of an Athlete's impairment(s) on the sport activity, but on performance differences. This conceptual difference also adds a further layer of complexity and risks stakeholder confidence in fair and meaningful competition outcomes that are not determined by the degree of impact of an Athlete's impairment(s). The IPC's current intention is therefore to prohibit the use of performance compensation mechanisms within Combined Class Events at Covered Competitions once a suitable alternative approach has been found and appropriate transition provisions are put in place. Accordingly, International Federations currently using performance compensation mechanisms are encouraged to consider alternative approaches that would be suitable for their sport.]

CHAPTER 3: PROTESTS AND APPEALS

PART I: OVERVIEW

40. Overview

40.1. International Federations must provide processes in their Classification rules that permit for challenges to the outcome of Classification, by way of Protest and Appeal.

40.1.1. A '**Protest**' is a challenge filed against the Sport Class allocated to an Athlete.

40.1.2. An '**Appeal**' is a challenge to any aspect of a Classification process on the grounds that:

40.1.2.1. there was a breach of the International Federation's rules during the Classification process; and

40.1.2.2. that breach could reasonably have caused the Athlete to be incorrectly designated as 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition', 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment', 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria', or allocated an incorrect Sport Class and/or Sport Class Status.

PART II: PROTESTS

41. Scope of Protests

41.1. A Protest may only be made in respect of the Sport Class allocated to an Athlete.

41.2. For the avoidance of doubt, a Protest cannot 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 Classification Code.

42. Parties permitted to make a Protest

42.1. A Protest may only be made by one of the following bodies:

42.1.1. a National Federation; or

42.1.2. an International Federation.

42.2. For the avoidance of doubt, an Athlete cannot make a Protest themselves. A Protest may only be made on behalf of the Athlete by one of the bodies listed under Article 42.1.

43. National Federation Protest

43.1. A National 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 National Federation. However, it can raise any such concerns about the Sport Class allocated to such Athletes with its International Federation, so that the International Federation can consider if it wishes to make an International Federation Protest.

[Comment to Article 43.1: This approach is intended to strike a balance between the rights of the various stakeholders (International Federations, National Federations, Athletes, and others), and forms part of a number of carefully balanced mechanisms in the Classification Code and International Standards that provide appropriate tools aimed at ensuring that Athletes are allocated the correct Sport Class.]

43.2. 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.

43.3. National Federation Protests will be upheld where the International Federation determines that the National Federation has complied with the requirements of Article 43.6 and the International Federation is satisfied that there is a reasonable basis to believe that the Athlete may have been allocated an incorrect Sport Class. If this test is not met, the National Federation Protest will be dismissed.

43.4. A National Federation Protest must be submitted in connection with an Evaluation Session. The International Federation must specify the time period during which National Federation Protests may be made.

43.5. If an Athlete is allocated a provisional Sport Class that is subject to confirmation at an Observation Assessment, the National Federation may:

- 43.5.1. 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
 - 43.5.2. 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).
- 43.6. To submit a Protest, a National Federation must:
- 43.6.1. complete a Protest form in the format prescribed by the International Federation, which must at a minimum require the following:
 - 43.6.1.1. the name and sport of the protested Athlete;
 - 43.6.1.2. the details of and/or a copy of the protested decision;
 - 43.6.1.3. a detailed explanation of the basis for the National Federation's belief that the Athlete may have been allocated an incorrect Sport Class, including (where applicable) (i) reference to any specific rule(s) alleged to have been breached or misapplied, and (ii) any supporting evidence for that belief;
 - 43.6.2. submit the completed Protest form by the deadline set by the International Federation; and
 - 43.6.3. pay the applicable Protest fee.

[Comment to Article 43.6.3: International Federations may specify in their rules whether (and if so, in what circumstances) the Protest fee will be refunded on the conclusion of the Protest.]
- 43.7. Upon receipt of the Protest form, the International Federation must conduct a review of the Protest in accordance with Article 43.3. If a Chief Classifier was a member of the Classification Panel whose decision is being protested, that Chief Classifier cannot have any involvement in the International Federation's review of the Protest.
- 43.8. The International Federation must notify the National Federation of the outcome of the Protest as soon as reasonably practicable, and (if the Protest is dismissed) must also provide a written explanation for the dismissal.

44. International Federation Protest

- 44.1. International Federation Protests may be made where the International Federation considers that the Athlete may have been allocated an incorrect Sport Class.

[Comment to Article 44.1: As indicated in Article 43.1 above, if a National Federation (or any other third party) has concerns that an Athlete from another National Federation has been allocated an incorrect Sport Class, it can raise such concerns with its International Federation so that the International Federation can consider if it wishes to make an International Federation Protest.]

- 44.2. An International Federation may make a Protest at any time.

- 44.3. If an International Federation submits a Protest, it must:

44.3.1. notify the relevant National Federation of the Protest as soon as reasonably practicable; and

44.3.2. provide a written explanation as to why the Protest has been made.

45. Protest Panel procedures

- 45.1. If a National Federation Protest is accepted or if an International Federation Protest is made:

45.1.1. the protested Athlete's Sport Class must remain unchanged pending the outcome of the Protest, and their Sport Class Status must immediately be changed to 'Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)', unless that is already their Sport Class Status;

45.1.2. if an Athlete is required to undergo Observation Assessment and a National Federation Protest is accepted before the Athlete's First Appearance, the Athlete cannot compete at that Competition until the National Federation Protest has been resolved;

45.1.3. the International Federation must appoint a Protest Panel in accordance with Article 45.2 to conduct a new Evaluation Session as soon as reasonably practicable, and notify all relevant parties of the time and date that the new Evaluation Session will be conducted; and

45.1.4. if the Protest was made In-Competition, the new Evaluation Session should be conducted at that Competition if reasonably practicable.

- 45.2. The International Federation must appoint a Protest Panel in a manner consistent with the provisions for appointing a Classification Panel in Article 7. A Protest Panel must not include any Classifier who:
- 45.2.1. was a member of the Classification Panel that made the protested decision;
 - 45.2.2. in the case of a National Federation Protest, was involved in the International Federation's review of that Protest;
 - 45.2.3. in the case of an International Federation Protest, was involved in the International Federation's decision to make such a Protest; or
 - 45.2.4. was involved in any assessment or evaluation of the protested Athlete for Classification purposes (whether at the national or international level) within a period of 12 months prior to the date of the protested decision, except where both the National Federation and International Federation agree to this.
- 45.3. The Protest Panel must conduct the new Evaluation Session in accordance with Chapter 2 Part IV.B. For these purposes, any reference to the Classification Panel in Chapter 2 Part IV.B will be deemed to include the Protest Panel. Before reaching a final decision, the Protest Panel must review the protested decision and any document submitted as part of the Protest.
- 45.4. All relevant parties must be notified of the Protest Panel's final decision as soon as reasonably practicable.
- 45.5. Subject to Articles 45.6 and 45.7, the decision of a Protest Panel is final, and not subject to further Protest by the National Federation or the International Federation. However, the decision of a Protest Panel may be Appealed by the National Federation if the requirements in Article 47 are satisfied.
- 45.6. If an International Federation makes a Protest after the expiry of the deadline for National Federation Protests to be made under the International Federation's rules, the decision of a Protest Panel in relation to the Protest is not final and may be subject to further Protest by the National Federation or the International Federation. In these circumstances, the decision of a Protest Panel will be treated as if it were a decision of a first instance Classification Panel. The decision of a Protest Panel may also be Appealed by the National Federation if the requirements in Article 47 are satisfied.
- 45.7. If a Protest Panel designates an Athlete as 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment' or 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria' the Athlete will be entitled to undergo a further Eligible Impairment Assessment in accordance with Article

14.7, or a further MIC Assessment in accordance with Article 16.5 (as applicable) by a new Classification Panel. In such circumstances the decision of the Protest Panel will be treated as if it were a decision of a first instance Classification Panel and '(Re-evaluation)' will be added to the Athlete's designation.

- 45.8. International Federations must specify in their rules the consequences to any results and prizes where an Athlete's Sport Class is changed following a Protest.

46. Circumstances where a Protest Panel is not available

- 46.1. If a Protest is made In-Competition but there is no opportunity for the Protest to be resolved at that Competition:

46.1.1. the protested Athlete must be permitted to compete in that Competition with the Sport Class that is the subject of the Protest (subject to any other eligibility criteria for that Competition), pending resolution of the Protest; and

46.1.2. all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that the Protest is resolved as soon as reasonably practicable after that Competition.

[Comment to Article 46.1: This Article reflects the reality that it might not be possible to resolve a Protest made In-Competition at that same Competition. For example, this might happen where there are a limited number of Classifiers or Evaluation Session slots available, or the Classifiers who are available are precluded from participating in a Protest Panel due to a conflict of interest.]

PART III: APPEALS

47. Scope of Appeals

- 47.1. An Appeal will be upheld if a National Federation establishes that:

47.1.1. there was a breach of an International Federation's rules during the Classification process; and

47.1.2. that breach could reasonably have caused the Athlete to be incorrectly designated as 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition', 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment', 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria', or allocated an incorrect Sport Class and/or Sport Class Status.

[Comment to Article 47: The limited scope of review available to the Appeal Body is a fundamental aspect of an Appeal. The allocation of a Sport Class and Sport Class Status or designation as not eligible is a specialist sport decision and must be made by persons who are authorised and certified by an International Federation to do so. Those decisions must not be changed except by other persons who are similarly authorised and certified. In particular, the right to submit an Appeal must not be seen as an opportunity to simply dispute the opinion of the relevant experts. The Appeal Body will only review the process by which the decisions have been arrived at to ensure that such process has been conducted in accordance with the International Federation's rules.]

48. Making an Appeal

- 48.1. An Appeal cannot be submitted whilst a Protest is ongoing. However, for the avoidance of doubt, in order to submit an Appeal it is not necessary for the National Federation to have first made a Protest.

[Comment to Article 48.1: As stated, it is not necessary for a National Federation to have first made a Protest in order to submit an Appeal. This reflects the fact that Protests and Appeals are distinct concepts, with different tests.]

- 48.2. An Appeal may only be submitted by a National Federation in respect of an Athlete under its jurisdiction. For the avoidance of doubt, an Athlete cannot submit an Appeal themselves; rather, an Appeal may only be submitted on behalf of the Athlete by their National Federation.
- 48.3. The International Federation must specify the time period within which an Appeal must be submitted.

49. Appeal Body

- 49.1. Each International Federation must designate an Appeal Body to hear and determine Appeals.
- 49.2. The parties to an Appeal must be provided with, at a minimum, a fair hearing (whether conducted orally or in writing) within a reasonable time by an Appeal Body that meets the criteria in Article 49.3.
- 49.3. Each International Federation must ensure that its Appeal Body:
- 49.3.1. is Operationally Independent from the International Federation; and
 - 49.3.2. is comprised of a pool of at least three members, each of whom must have the appropriate skills and experience to hear such Appeals.

49.4. An Appeal will be heard by a panel of either one or three members of the Appeal Body (where three members are appointed, one member will act as chair of the hearing panel). Members of the Appeal Body may not sit on a particular hearing panel if: (i) they are currently a Classifier for that International Federation; and/or (ii) they have had any prior involvement with the matter or any facts arising in the proceedings; and/or (iii) their impartiality or independence could otherwise be reasonably questioned.

49.5. To support International Federations, the IPC has established the Board of Appeal of Classification (**BAC**) as a specialist dispute resolution body to hear and determine Appeals. Subject to entering into an agreement with the IPC, International Federations may designate the BAC as their Appeal Body.

[Comment to Article 49.5: The IPC may make the BAC available to any International Federation that wishes to utilise it as its resolution body for Appeals, subject to an agreement between that International Federation and the IPC on the costs that are payable by the International Federation in respect of the BAC. Further information about the BAC can be found on the IPC's website.]

49.6. If the BAC is the Appeal Body, it will hear and determine the Appeal in accordance with its procedural rules. In all other instances, an Appeal must be made and resolved in accordance with the relevant rules (including procedural rules) of the International Federation.

49.7. International Federations may require National Federations to pay an Appeal fee.

[Comment to Article 49.7: International Federations may specify in their rules whether (and if so, in what circumstances) the Appeal fee will be refunded on the conclusion of the Appeal.]

50. Appeal decision

50.1. The Appeal Body must either affirm or set aside the decision under Appeal. The Appeal Body does not have the power to modify, alter, or otherwise change any Athlete Classification, Sport Class, and/or Sport Class Status decision (for example by allocating an Athlete a new Sport Class and/or Sport Class Status).

50.2. The Appeal Body must issue a written reasoned decision within the timeframe set by the International Federation after the hearing. The written decision must set out the reasons for the Appeal Body's decision and the actions that are required as a result. If the decision appealed against is set aside, the written decision must also specify the breach committed and how that breach could reasonably have caused the Athlete to be incorrectly

designated as 'Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition', 'Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment', 'Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria', or allocated an incorrect Sport Class and/or Sport Class Status.

- 50.3. The decision of the Appeal Body must be provided to the appellant and the respondent.
- 50.4. The decision of the Appeal Body is final and not subject to any further appeal or challenge.

CHAPTER 4: INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION

51. Intentional Misrepresentation

51.1. The following constitutes Intentional Misrepresentation:

51.1.1. a Participant, at any time, whether by act or omission, intentionally misleads or attempts to mislead an International Federation or any of its representatives (such as Classification Personnel) in relation to any aspect of Classification; or

51.1.2. a Participant, at any time, whether by act or omission, engages in any type of intentional complicity in respect of any violation or attempted violation of: (i) Article 51.1.1 above; or (ii) a period of ineligibility imposed on another Participant pursuant to Article 7.2.3 of the International Standard for Intentional Misrepresentation.

51.2. Examples of Intentional Misrepresentation falling under Article 51.1.1 include (without limitation) a Participant:

51.2.1. submitting forged medical documentation attesting to the existence, nature, and/or degree of an Underlying Health Condition or Eligible Impairment that the Athlete does not have;

51.2.2. deliberately underperforming during an Evaluation Session;

51.2.3. deliberately tiring themselves out (in the case of Athletes) or deliberately tiring the Athlete out (in the case of other Participants) prior to an Evaluation Session, with the intention of misleading the Classification Panel;

51.2.4. unless expressly provided otherwise in the International Federation's rules, intentionally undergoing an Evaluation Session without the sports attire or Adaptive Equipment that the Athlete intends to use in competition and/or intentionally failing to disclose the intended use of such sports attire and Adaptive Equipment to the Classification Panel;

51.2.5. intentionally failing to disclose the Athlete's use of any medication and/or medical device/implant (including any audio aids and/or refractive or optical correction such as eyeglasses or corrective lenses) and/or any medical procedure to the Classification Panel;

51.2.6. otherwise misrepresenting the Athlete's skills, abilities, and/or the existence, nature, and/or degree of the Athlete's impairment before, during, or after an Evaluation Session;

- 51.2.7. disrupting an Evaluation Session, or refusing to cooperate with a Classification Panel during an Evaluation Session, with the intention of misleading the Classification Panel;
 - 51.2.8. not providing accurate information as to the Athlete's identity or having another person attend an Evaluation Session in the Athlete's place; and/or
 - 51.2.9. deliberately failing to notify the relevant International Federation of any relevant Classification-related information, including that the Athlete has previously undergone Classification (for example, on an earlier occasion, or in the context of another Para sport) and/or that there has been a change in the nature or degree of the Athlete's Eligible Impairment that may necessitate a Medical Review.
- 51.3. Examples of Intentional Misrepresentation falling under Article 51.1.2 include (without limitation):
- 51.3.1. where a Participant induces, instructs, facilitates, assists, encourages, aids, abets, or conspires with another Participant to commit, or attempt to commit, Intentional Misrepresentation;
 - 51.3.2. where, having discovered that a Participant has committed or intends to commit Intentional Misrepresentation, they conceal or cover up the offence, or any information that would assist an International Federation in the investigation or prosecution of that offence;
 - 51.3.3. where a Participant induces, instructs, facilitates, assists, encourages, aids, abets, or conspires with another Participant for that other Participant to violate, or attempt to violate, any period of ineligibility imposed on them pursuant to Article 7.2.3 of the International Standard for Intentional Misrepresentation; and/or
 - 51.3.4. where, having discovered that another Participant has violated or intends to violate any period of ineligibility imposed on them pursuant to Article 7.2.3 of the International Standard for Intentional Misrepresentation, they conceal or cover up the offence, or any information that would assist an International Federation in the investigation or prosecution of that offence.
- 51.4. For the avoidance of doubt:
- 51.4.1. A Participant does not need to know that their conduct will constitute a violation of Article 51.1 for their conduct to be intentional.

- 51.4.2. A Participant can commit Intentional Misrepresentation irrespective of any designation, Sport Class, and/or Sport Class Status allocated to an Athlete.
- 51.5. Intentional Misrepresentation presents a major threat to the integrity of Classification and Para sport. It is a very serious offence because it constitutes an attempt to: (i) mislead an International Federation (and/or its representatives) in relation to any aspect of Classification; and/or (ii) achieve an unfair advantage that undermines fair and meaningful competition. Consequently, potential incidents of Intentional Misrepresentation must be properly investigated, and if evidence indicates that Intentional Misrepresentation has occurred, disciplinary action must be taken.
- 51.6. Each International Federation must include in its Classification rules procedures regarding the identification, investigation, and prosecution of alleged Intentional Misrepresentation that are at least equivalent to those in the Classification Code and the International Standard for Intentional Misrepresentation.

CHAPTER 5: CHANGES TO CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

52. Changes to Classification systems

52.1. Before making any substantive changes to their Classification systems and/or Classification processes, International Federations must:

52.1.1. carry out an appropriate assessment of what impact any changes will have on Athletes, National Federations, and NPCs, including consideration of the Paralympic Games cycle, their sport's competition cycle, and the qualification periods for the Paralympic Games;

[Comment to Article 52.1.1: In particular, International Federations should as part of their impact assessment carefully consider the appropriate timing for any changes that may affect the (in)eligibility, Sport Class, and/or Sport Class Status of Athletes (for example, changes to the Minimum Impairment Criteria, or to the assessment methodology). Ordinarily, such changes should not be made during the relevant International Federation's qualification period for the Paralympic Games.]

52.1.2. provide National Federations (with a copy to the IPC) with:

52.1.2.1. appropriate notice of the anticipated changes, along with a rationale for the changes, an explanation of which Athletes or groups of Athletes (if any) may need to be reassessed, the proposed timelines for implementation, and (if applicable) any proposed transition rules; and

52.1.2.2. an opportunity to submit feedback before such changes are adopted; and

52.1.3. provide the IPC with:

52.1.3.1. appropriate notice of the anticipated changes, along with a rationale for the changes, the proposed timelines for implementation, any proposed transition rules (if applicable), a copy of the International Federation's impact assessment, and an overview of the consultation undertaken as part of the review process; and

52.1.3.2. an opportunity to submit feedback before such changes are adopted.

- 52.2. If a National Federation is notified by an International Federation of anticipated changes pursuant to Article 52.1.2, the National Federation must ensure that Athletes under its jurisdiction are (i) notified about such changes, and (ii) invited to provide feedback. If a National Federation is then notified by an International Federation that changes will be implemented, the National Federation must ensure that Athletes under its jurisdiction are notified about such changes.
- 52.3. If an International Federation makes changes to its Classification rules that may affect the (in)eligibility, Sport Class, and/or Sport Class Status of Athletes (for example, changes to the Minimum Impairment Criteria, or to its assessment methodology), the International Federation must:
- 52.3.1. take reasonable steps to identify such Athletes and notify them (through their National Federation) that they are entitled to be reassessed; and
 - 52.3.2. where applicable, change each such Athlete's Sport Class Status to 'Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)' or 'Review with a Fixed Review Date (R-FRD)', as deemed appropriate by the International Federation.
- 52.4. If a National Federation considers that changes to an International Federation's Classification rules may affect the Classification of any Athlete under its jurisdiction who was previously found to be not eligible, it must notify the International Federation accordingly.

CHAPTER 6: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

53. Overview

- 53.1. The roles and responsibilities listed in this Chapter 6 apply in addition to the specific obligations imposed in the Classification Code and the International Standards.

54. IPC

- 54.1. The roles and responsibilities of the IPC include to:

54.1.1. develop, maintain, and monitor the implementation of the Classification Code and the International Standards;

54.1.2. develop and publish guidelines and models of best practice;

54.1.3. develop and deliver Classification education and awareness programmes for IPC Members, Athletes, Classifiers, and wider stakeholders;

54.1.4. increase awareness of the purpose, principles, and scientific rationale behind Classification amongst relevant stakeholders;

54.1.5. require, as a condition of membership, that all IPC Members are in Compliance with the Classification Code and the International Standards;

54.1.6. monitor IPC Member Compliance with the Classification Code and the International Standards; and

54.1.7. take appropriate action to ensure IPC Members comply with the Classification Code and the International Standards.

55. International Federations

- 55.1. The roles and responsibilities of International Federations include to:

55.1.1. increase awareness of the purpose, principles, and scientific rationale behind Classification amongst relevant stakeholders in their respective sports;

55.1.2. develop, implement, and regularly review and publish Classification rules in Compliance with the Classification Code and the International Standards;

- 55.1.3. require, as a condition of membership, that their National Federations and other members are in Compliance with the Classification Code and the International Standards (to the extent applicable), and to take appropriate action to ensure such Compliance;
- 55.1.4. develop and deliver (where appropriate with the involvement of Athletes) Classification education and awareness programmes for National Federations, Athletes, Athlete Support Personnel, and Classifiers which must, at a minimum, explain the International Federation's Classification rules and explain that those rules must comply with the Classification Code and the International Standards;
- 55.1.5. promote, initiate, and/or review Classification Research;
- 55.1.6. develop, implement, and maintain a clear Classifier recruitment, training, and development pathway;
- 55.1.7. cooperate fully, honestly, and in good faith with the IPC in connection with any investigations conducted by the IPC in relation to potential Intentional Misrepresentation or Compliance matters; and
- 55.1.8. ensure that their National Federations are subject to obligations in the International Federation's Classification rules to:
 - 55.1.8.1. provide the International Federation with all relevant Diagnostic Information required to enable the International Federation to assess the existence of an Underlying Health Condition and Eligible Impairment for an Athlete, and to ensure that all such information is complete, accurate, authentic, and relevant, and that the International Federation is informed of any changes to that information; and
 - 55.1.8.2. ensure that Athletes comply with the responsibilities applicable to them in relation to Evaluation Sessions (including taking reasonable steps to ensure their attendance at such sessions).

56. NPCs

- 56.1. The roles and responsibilities of NPCs include to:
 - 56.1.1. support their Athletes and Athlete Support Personnel to become aware of their roles and responsibilities under this Classification Code and the Classification rules of their International Federation,

prior to the Athlete submitting Diagnostic Information and/or attending an Evaluation Session;

- 56.1.2. disseminate Classification information and education resources to their National Federations, Athletes, and Athlete Support Personnel;
- 56.1.3. increase awareness of the purpose, principles, and scientific rationale behind Classification amongst relevant stakeholders in their respective nations;
- 56.1.4. promote the development of a national Classification strategy, including in relation to national Classification systems and national classifiers;
- 56.1.5. act as a liaison to the IPC on behalf of its National Federations, Athletes, and Athlete Support Personnel; and
- 56.1.6. cooperate fully, honestly, and in good faith with the IPC in connection with any investigations conducted by the IPC in relation to potential Intentional Misrepresentation or Compliance matters.

57. Classification Personnel

- 57.1. An International Federation must appoint a number of Classification Personnel, each of whom will have a key role in the organisation, implementation, and administration of Classification for the International Federation, in accordance with the International Standard for Classification Personnel and Training.
- 57.2. International Federations must have within their rules a clear set of professional conduct standards that all Classification Personnel must comply with. These standards are referred to as a '**Classification Personnel Code of Conduct**' in accordance with the International Standard for Classification Personnel and Training.
- 57.3. International Federations must have within their rules procedures for reporting and investigating complaints of non-compliance with the Classification Personnel Code of Conduct and procedures for taking appropriate action against Classification Personnel in respect of any violation of the Classification Personnel Code of Conduct.

58. Athletes

- 58.1. An International Federation must specify the roles and responsibilities of Athletes in its Classification Rules, which must at a minimum include to:

- 58.1.1. be knowledgeable of and comply with all applicable regulations, policies, rules, and processes adopted pursuant to the Classification Code and the International Standards;
- 58.1.2. participate in, and cooperate fully, honestly, and in good faith with any Classification process and/or related procedure;
- 58.1.3. ensure that the International Federation is provided (through their National Federation) with all relevant Diagnostic Information required to enable it to assess the existence of an Underlying Health Condition and Eligible Impairment, and to ensure that all such information is complete, accurate, authentic, and relevant, and that the International Federation is informed of any changes to that information;
- 58.1.4. as set out in Article 25.2.2, give their best efforts during an Evaluation Session and comply with all reasonable instructions given to them by a Classification Panel;
- 58.1.5. cooperate fully, honestly, and in good faith with any investigations concerning potential Intentional Misrepresentation; and
- 58.1.6. support and facilitate Classification education and research, and the development and implementation of Classification systems.

59. Athlete Support Personnel

- 59.1. An International Federation must specify the roles and responsibilities of Athlete Support Personnel in its Classification Rules, which must at a minimum include to:
 - 59.1.1. be knowledgeable of and comply with all applicable regulations, policies, rules, and processes adopted pursuant to the Classification Code and the International Standards;
 - 59.1.2. use their influence on Athlete values and behaviour to foster a positive and collaborative attitude regarding the Classification process and those involved in the Classification of Athletes (e.g. Classifiers);
 - 59.1.3. where applicable, participate in, and cooperate fully, honestly, and in good faith with any Classification process and/or related procedure;
 - 59.1.4. cooperate fully, honestly, and in good faith with any investigations concerning potential Intentional Misrepresentation; and

59.1.5. facilitate and encourage Athletes to participate in Classification education and research, and the development and implementation of Classification systems.

60. Other Participants

60.1. An International Federation must specify the roles and responsibilities of other Participants in its Classification Rules, which must at a minimum include to:

60.1.1. be knowledgeable of and comply with all applicable regulations, policies, rules, and processes adopted pursuant to the Classification Code and the International Standards; and

60.1.2. cooperate fully, honestly, and in good faith with any investigations concerning potential Intentional Misrepresentation.

CHAPTER 7: DATA, BEST PRACTICE CLASSIFICATION, AND RESEARCH

61. Data

- 61.1. IPC Members must process personal information in connection with Classification in accordance with the International Standard for Classification Data Protection.

62. Best Practice Classification

- 62.1. International Federations must have sport-specific Classification systems that reflect **Best Practice Classification**. Best Practice Classification means that the Classification system:

62.1.1. adopts the four stages of Classification set out in Article 5.1 and describes the methods used in each of the four stages;

62.1.2. uses the best available evidence at each stage, in particular by:

62.1.2.1. focusing on the relationship between the impairment and key performance determinants, where the impairment is the unit of classification and impairments are classified based on the extent to which they impact the Athlete's ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to their specific sport;

62.1.2.2. drawing on reliable assessment results from a range of domains (for example, Athlete training history, impairment(s), performance of novel and practised motor tasks, and sport-specific/sports technical performance);

62.1.2.3. using assessments that are, as a minimum, evidence-informed (i.e., scientific evidence indicates that the individual assessments that make up the Classification system will provide information that is accurate and reliable); and

62.1.2.4. relying on as few assumptions as possible (and, where assumptions are relied on, ensuring that those assumptions are defensible);

62.1.3. applies principles of clinical reasoning and critical thinking to enable balanced consideration of the assessments conducted at each stage of Classification;

- 62.1.4. is consistent with established principles of human movement science, low vision science, cognitive science, and sports performance; and
- 62.1.5. is consistent with current knowledge of (i) each Eligible Impairment catered for by the sport in question, and (ii) the Underlying Health Conditions that are consistent with those Eligible Impairments.

[Comment to Article 62: Best Practice Classification represents the full utilisation of the scientific evidence available today, where evidence-informed assessments are used along with clinical reasoning to draw conclusions from assessment results from a range of domains. Best Practice Classification will evolve over time, with the goal for it to reach the standard of evidence-based Classification, as referred to in Article 63.2.]

63. Classification Research

- 63.1. International Federations must conduct multidisciplinary Classification Research to:
 - 63.1.1. ensure that their Classification systems meet (and continue to meet) the requirements for Best Practice Classification; and
 - 63.1.2. monitor the quality of their assessment systems and improve their evidence base.
- 63.2. International Federations should also invest in Classification Research that is designed to assist in developing evidence-based Classification systems (i.e., systems that are supported by scientific evidence that indicates that the methods used for assigning Athletes a Sport Class will result in Sport Classes that each comprise Athletes who have Eligible Impairments causing approximately the same degree of activity limitation in that sport). Evidence-based Classification is the gold standard, to which all Classification systems should aspire.

[Comment to Article 63.2: Classification Research aiming to develop evidence-based systems of Classification should be informed by the conceptual framework for Classification Research as presented in David L. Mann, Sean M. Tweedy, Robin C. Jackson & Yves C. Vanlandewijck (2021), Classifying the evidence for evidence-based classification in Paralympic sport, Journal of Sports Sciences, 39:sup1, 1-6.]

- 63.3. International Federations must ensure that, where appropriate, stakeholders (including Athletes and Classifiers) have an opportunity to provide input as part of the International Federation's plans to conduct Classification Research.
- 63.4. All Classification Research must comply with internationally recognised ethical standards and research practices.

CHAPTER 8: COMPLIANCE WITH THE CLASSIFICATION CODE

64. Compliance by IPC Members

- 64.1. Pursuant to Article 13.1.6 of the Constitution, each IPC Member must be in compliance with the Classification Code and the International Standards. In implementing the Classification Code and International Standards, IPC Members are encouraged to use the models of best practice recommended by the IPC.
- 64.2. The IPC, with the support of the Classification Compliance and Oversight Committee, will monitor the Compliance of IPC Members. To facilitate such monitoring, each IPC Member must, at the request of the IPC:
- 64.2.1. report on its Compliance and accurately provide all of the information requested by the IPC; and
 - 64.2.2. explain the reasons for any non-Compliance and submit an action plan detailing the specific steps to be taken, and the timeframe within which those steps will be taken, to achieve Compliance.
- 64.3. The Governing Board will consider any explanation and proposed action plan for non-Compliance and, in exceptional circumstances, may grant the IPC Member a temporary extension to remedy the non-Compliance.
- 64.4. The Governing Board may impose sanctions on IPC Members for non-Compliance with the Classification Code and/or the International Standards pursuant to Article 15 of the Constitution.
- 64.5. The decision to sanction an IPC Member may be challenged by that IPC Member exclusively by appeal to the Appeals Tribunal pursuant to Article 18.2 of the Constitution.

65. Compliance by RIFs

- 65.1. Pursuant to the RIF Regulations, each RIF is required to undertake to be bound by and to comply with the Classification Code and the International Standards in relation to at least one discipline that it administers.
- 65.2. The IPC, with the support of the Classification Compliance and Oversight Committee, may monitor the Compliance of RIFs on an ad hoc basis but is under no obligation to do so. To facilitate any such monitoring, each RIF must, at the request of the IPC:
- 65.2.1. report on its Compliance and accurately provide all of the information requested by the IPC; and

- 65.2.2. explain the reasons for any non-Compliance and submit an action plan detailing the specific steps to be taken, and the timeframe within which those steps will be taken, to achieve Compliance.
- 65.3. Pursuant to Article 20 of the Constitution, the Governing Board has absolute discretion to remove RIF status at any time with or without reasons.
- 66. Compliance monitoring and enforcement**
- 66.1. The IPC may issue supplementary regulations or guidelines from time to time to facilitate Compliance monitoring and enforcement.

CHAPTER 9: CLASSIFICATION CODE EFFECTIVE DATE, AMENDMENTS, AND INTERPRETATION

67. Effective Date of the Classification Code

67.1. This Classification Code will come into force on 1 January 2025, with the exception that, for winter sports on the Paralympic Games Sport Programme, it will come into force on 1 July 2026 (**Effective Date**).

68. Amendments to the Classification Code

68.1. The Governing Board is responsible for overseeing the evolution and improvement of the Classification Code.

68.2. The Governing Board will initiate proposed amendments to the Classification Code and ensure a consultative process is established to receive recommendations and to facilitate review and feedback from Athletes, IPC Members, and other stakeholders on proposed amendments.

68.3. Subject to Article 68.4, amendments to the Classification Code must, after appropriate consultation, be approved by the General Assembly. Unless specified otherwise, amendments will take effect three months after such approval.

68.4. The Governing Board may amend the Classification Code to correct typographical or clerical errors or for reasons of grammar or clarification, provided that the amendments do not materially contradict the Classification Code as approved by the General Assembly.

69. Amendments to the International Standards

69.1. The Governing Board is responsible for approving any amendments to the International Standards, following any such consultation deemed appropriate by the Governing Board. The International Standards and any amendments thereto will be published on the IPC website and will take effect on the date specified in the relevant International Standard.

70. Supplementary regulations

70.1. The IPC may issue supplementary regulations applicable in relation to the Paralympic Games and/or any other competition organised by or on behalf of the IPC to supplement the Classification Code.

71. Interpretation

- 71.1. The official text of the Classification Code and International Standards will be maintained by the IPC and published in English.
- 71.2. The comments annotating various provisions of the Classification Code and the International Standards must be used to interpret the Classification Code and the International Standards.
- 71.3. The Classification Code and International Standards must be interpreted as an independent and autonomous text and not by reference to the existing law or statutes of IPC Members, RIFs, or governments.
- 71.4. Defined terms (denoted by initial capital letters) in the Classification Code have the meaning given to them in Appendix 1. The rules of interpretation set out in Appendix 1 to the Constitution apply to the Classification Code and the International Standards.
- 71.5. Except for Article 39.2 which will have retrospective effect, this Classification Code does not apply retrospectively to matters pending before the Effective Date.

APPENDIX 1: DEFINITIONS

Terms used in the Classification Code that begin with capital letters have the meanings set out below. Defined terms from the Constitution are shown in underline. In the event of any inconsistency between a definition in underline below and a definition in the Constitution, the version in the Constitution will prevail.

Adaptive Equipment means any implement, apparatus, and/or technical aid adapted to the special needs of an Athlete to reduce the impact of their impairment(s) and that is permitted by the International Federation's rules, except that refractive or optical correction (such as eyeglasses or corrective lenses) are not considered to be Adaptive Equipment.

Appeal has the meaning given to that term in Article 40.1.2.

Appeal Body means a body designated by an International Federation for hearing and determining Appeals.

Appeals Tribunal means the tribunal described in Article 66 of the Constitution.

Athlete means any athlete who has participated in any way in the Classification process, who has taken any step to engage in that process (for example by providing Diagnostic Information to their National Federation for the purposes of undergoing Classification), and/or who has entered or participated in any Covered Competition.

Athlete Support Person means any coach, trainer, manager, agent, team staff, official, medical, paramedical personnel, parent, or any other person working with, treating, and/or assisting an Athlete.

BAC means the Board of Appeal of Classification, defined below.

Best Practice Classification has the meaning given to that term in Article 62.

Board of Appeal of Classification means the body established by the IPC to hear and determine classification appeals.

Chief Classifier means a Classifier appointed by an International Federation to direct, administer, co-ordinate, and implement Classification matters for a specific Classification opportunity according to the Classification rules of that International Federation.

Classification means (i) the determination of which athletes are eligible to compete in Para sport; and (ii) 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 the relevant sport, further to the process set out in Part IV of Chapter 2.

Classification Master List has the meaning given to that term in Article 36.1.

Classification Panel means a specified number of Classifiers, appointed by an International Federation to conduct Evaluation Sessions and determine an Athlete's Sport Class and Sport Class Status in accordance with the Classification rules of that International Federation.

Classification Personnel means Persons acting with the authority of a Classification organisation in relation to Classification, for example Classifiers and administrative officers.

Classification Personnel Code of Conduct means the behavioural and ethical standards for Classification Personnel specified by an International Federation, as further detailed in Article 57.2.

Classification Research means any systematic scientific evaluation, analysis, or investigation, which aims to enhance or understand a Para sport classification system or systems.

Classifier means a person authorised as an official and certified by an International Federation to evaluate Athletes as a member of a Classification Panel.

Combined Class Events means events where Athletes with different Sport Classes compete against each other, in accordance with Article 38.

Competition means a series of individual events conducted together under one ruling body.

Compliance means the implementation of rules, regulations, policies, and processes that adhere to the text, spirit, and intent of the Classification Code and International Standards.

Constitution means the Constitution of the IPC, as amended from time to time.

Coordination Impairment has the meaning given to that term in Article 8.1.1.5.

Covered Competition has the meaning given to that term in Article 3.2.

Diagnostic Information means medical records and/or any other documentation that enables the International Federation to assess the existence or otherwise of an Underlying Health Condition or Eligible Impairment.

Dyskinesia has the meaning given to that term in Article 8.1.1.5.3.

Effective Date has the meaning given to that term in Article 67.1, i.e. 1 January 2025 or, for winter sports on the Paralympic Games Sport Programme, 1 July 2026.

Eligible Impairment means an impairment that is Permanent and that falls within one of the categories recognised by the Paralympic Movement and approved by the General Assembly, as listed in Article 8.

Eligible Impairment Assessment has the meaning given to that term in Article 5.1.

Evaluation Session means stages 2, 3 and 4 of the Classification process, i.e., the Eligible Impairment Assessment, MIC Assessment, and allocation of Sport Class and Sport Class Status, as further defined in Article 5.1.

First Appearance has the meaning given to that term in Article 18.7.3.2.

Fixed Review Date has the meaning given to that term in Article 21.1.3.

General Assembly is the general meeting of the IPC members, represented by their respective delegates.

Governing Board means the body described in Part VI of the Constitution.

Health Condition means a disease (acute or chronic), disorder, injury, or trauma.

Hypertonia has the meaning given to that term in Article 8.1.1.5.1.

Impaired Muscle Power has the meaning given to that term in Article 8.1.1.1.

Impaired Passive Range of Movement has the meaning given to that term in Article 8.1.1.2.

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

Intellectual Impairment has the meaning given to that term in Article 8.1.3.

Intentional Misrepresentation has the meaning given to that term in Article 51.1.

International Federation means an international sport federation recognised by the IPC as the sole worldwide representative of a specific Para sport that is on the Paralympic Games Sport Programme.

International Federation Protest means a Protest made by an International Federation pursuant to Article 44.

International Standard means a document adopted by the IPC to supplement the Classification Code, as amended from time to time.

IPC means the International Paralympic Committee e.V.

IPC Member means the members of the IPC pursuant to Part II of the Constitution.

Limb Deficiency and/or Limb Length Difference has the meaning given to that term in Article 8.1.1.3.

Medical Review has the meaning given to that term in Article 37.

MIC Assessment has the meaning given to that term in Article 5.1.

Minimum Impairment Criteria means the minimum level of impairment resulting from an Eligible Impairment that is required in order for an Athlete to be eligible to participate in a Para sport, as determined by the International Federation in its Classification rules.

Minor means a natural Person who has not reached the age of eighteen years.

Motor Ataxia has the meaning given to that term in Article 8.1.1.5.2.

National Federation means a national member of an International Federation (including NPCs when acting in their role as a national federation in a sport for which the IPC currently acts as the international federation).

National Federation Protest means a Protest made by a National Federation pursuant to Article 43.

National Paralympic Committee (NPC) means a national organisation recognised by the IPC in accordance with the Constitution.

National Representative means any person who is an office-holder or member of staff of, or who otherwise represents and/or works on behalf of a National Federation.

Next Available Opportunity means the next available opportunity at which the Athlete can attend a new Evaluation Session, as determined by the International Federation.

Non-Eligible Impairment has the meaning given to that term in Article 9.

Observation Assessment means the observation of an Athlete in Competition by a Classification Panel as part of the Sport Class Assessment so that the Classification Panel can complete its determination regarding the extent to which an Athlete's Eligible Impairment(s) impact(s) their ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport.

Operational Independence (or Operationally Independent) means that (a) board members, staff members, commission members, consultants, and officials of the International Federation, as well as any Person involved in the investigation and pre-adjudication of the matter, cannot be appointed as members and/or clerks (to the extent that such clerk is involved in the deliberation process and/or drafting of any decision) of the relevant body, and (b) the relevant body must be in a position to conduct the hearing and decision-making process without interference from the International Federation or any third party. The objective is to ensure that members of the relevant body, or individuals otherwise involved in the decision of the relevant body, are not involved in the investigation of, or decisions to proceed with, the case.

Out-of-Competition means any period that is not In-Competition.

Para athlete means any athlete competing in a Para sport.

Para sport means any sport in which persons with a disability participate in accordance with classification rules that are compliant with the IPC Classification Code and the related International Standards.

Paralympic Games means the major international event owned and sanctioned by the IPC comprising summer and winter editions usually held in alternating biennial cycles where Para athletes compete in Para sports that are on the Paralympic Games Sport Programme.

Paralympic Games Sport Programme means the Para sports on the programme for the Paralympic Games.

Paralympic Movement has the meaning given to that term in Article 2.1 of the Constitution: 'The Paralympic Movement comprises the IPC, the IPC Members, the Recognised International Federations, and any other Persons that participate in Para sport or are involved in the promotion, organisation, and/or delivery of Para sport'.

Participant means:

- (i) Athletes;
- (ii) Athlete Support Personnel;
- (iii) National Representatives; and
- (iv) any other persons under the jurisdiction of an International Federation who participate in any aspect of Classification.

Permanent means an impairment that is unlikely to be resolved, meaning that the principal effects are lifelong.

Person means natural persons, corporate bodies, and unincorporated bodies (whether or not having separate legal personality), and also includes the legal personal representatives, successors, and permitted assigns of such person, as the context so requires. For the avoidance of doubt, the term Person does not include the IPC.

Physical Impairment means the Eligible Impairments listed in Articles 8.1.1.1 to 8.1.1.5, i.e. (i) Impaired Muscle Power; (ii) Impaired Passive Range of Movement; (iii) Limb Deficiency and/or Limb Length Difference; (iv) Short Stature; and (v) Coordination Impairments arising from one or more of the following: (a) Hypertonia/Spasticity; (b) Motor Ataxia; and/or (c) Dyskinesia (athetosis, dystonia, chorea).

Protest has the meaning given to that term in Article 40.1.1.

Protest Panel means a Classification Panel appointed by the International Federation to conduct an Evaluation Session as a result of a Protest.

Recognised International Federation (RIF) has the meaning given to that term in Article 20.1 of the Constitution: 'The IPC recognises the importance of creating a Paralympic family network of recognised international federations that are not eligible to become IPC Members but contribute to the development of the Paralympic Movement. Accordingly, the Governing Board may, in its absolute discretion, grant the status of 'Recognised International Federation' (RIF) to an international federation that is not part of the Paralympic Games Sport Programme and so is not eligible to become an IPC Member as an International Federation, but still contributes to the development of the Paralympic Movement. For the avoidance of doubt, RIFs are not IPC Members'.

RIF Regulations means the regulations of the IPC setting out the procedure for the granting and removal of RIF status, as amended from time to time.

Short Stature has the meaning given to that term in Article 8.1.1.4.

Spasticity has the meaning given to that term in Article 8.1.1.5.1.

Sport Class means a category for competition defined by each International Federation in their Classification rules, in which Athletes are categorised by reference to the extent to which their Eligible Impairment(s) impact(s) their ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport.

Sport Class Assessment has the meaning given to that term in Article 5.1.

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

Team Sport means a sport in which the substitution of players is permitted during a competition.

Trainee Classifier means a person who is in the process of formal training to become a Classifier for that International Federation.

UHC Assessment means stage 1 of the Classification process, i.e., the assessment described in Article 5.1.

UHC Assessor means any person or body responsible for conducting UHC Assessments in accordance with Article 6.1.

Underlying Health Condition means a verifiable Health Condition that may lead to an Eligible Impairment catered for by the relevant sport.

Vision Impairment has the meaning given to that term in Article 8.1.2.

World Championships means the highest-level international Competition(s) or event(s) owned or sanctioned by an International Federation or RIF.