

What is Para Equestrian Classification?

Classification is at the centre of Para Sport. It determines the eligibility and groupings of para athletes for competition, based on their impairments. As each para sport requires athletes to use their bodies differently, classification systems are different in each sport, which is critical to ensure that the best athlete or team is ultimately victorious.

01 When do I need to get classified?

- Classification is required for official Equestrian Australia competition, not for social sport or recreation.
- Event entry information will list what level of Equestrian Australia membership (and therefore classification) is required.
- Equestrian Australia does not currently offer provisional level classification for athletes.

02 How do I get classified?

1. Visit the Equestrian Australia website (<https://www.equestrian.org.au>) to download the required forms to apply for classification.
2. Make an appointment with your GP or relevant medical specialist to arrange for the medical paperwork to be completed.
3. Your medical doctor or relevant specialist must complete the Medical Diagnostic Form prior to submission.
4. Submit the completed forms to Equestrian Australia.
5. Equestrian Australia Classifiers will check the application forms to ensure you have a condition that leads to an eligible impairment for Para Equestrian competition.
6. Equestrian Australia will notify the athlete, or their representative, whether you are eligible for assessment and the next available classification date. Upcoming classification days are listed on the Equestrian Australia website.

03 What do I bring to classification?

Athletes will need to:

- Wear appropriate clothing for a physical assessment (similar to that of a physiotherapy assessment).
- You are encouraged to bring a support person or representative.
- Be prepared for a riding assessment, unless previously agreed. This includes appropriate riding attire and ensuring your horse is prepared.
- Bring any compensating aids that are used in competition.
- Bring any glasses, sunglasses or contact lenses if you have a vision impairment.
- Bring any additional medical documentation if requested.

04 What happens during classification?

The classifiers will test athletes in two steps:

- 1) Physical Assessment: including medical tests such as measuring of strength, joint movement and coordination.
- 2) Observation Assessment: the classifiers will observe the athlete whilst riding to see how their condition affects

their riding ability and which compensating aids may be used.

Classifiers will:

- Record and keep information on a Classification Assessment Form.
- Take video or photographs if required.

Assessments usually take 30-60 minutes. Athletes and their representative must be honest and try their best in all tests throughout classification. There are consequences and it is considered cheating if they do not.

05 Allocation of Grade and Grade status

- Classifiers will give each athlete a grade such as Grade I, II III, IV or V for competition.
- Athletes will also be given a Grade status:
 - o Athletes with Review (R) or Fixed Review Date (FRD) will need to be seen again for classification either at the next available opportunity or after the review date.
 - o Athletes with a Confirmed (C) status will not need to be re-assessed.
- Most athletes will have to be classified more than once throughout their sporting career.

06 Classification Results

It may take up to four weeks for an athlete to receive their classification result. The result will be sent to the athlete via email and will be published on the Equestrian Australia Masterlist.

07 What if I do not agree with my classification?

If an athlete disagrees with their Classification, they may submit a protest. Please contact Equestrian Australia in this instance for further information.

08 What if I am found not eligible for Para-Equestrian Classification?

There are still ways to be involved in Equestrian sport. Athletes can apply for exemptions for the use of compensating aids in able body dressage classes, or they may be eligible for Virtus competition. Further information can be found at Sport Inclusion Australia (<https://sportinclusionaustralia.org.au/>).

For more information:

Contact Equestrian Australia at
paraequestrian_pathways@equestrian.org.au
www.equestrian.org.au