

RYA Quick Guide to Classification in Disabled Sailing

The quick guide system is designed to assist sailors, coaches, event and program organizers, and national governing bodies to ESTIMATE eligibility for participation in disabled sailing, based on the 2005 Functional Classification System of the International Foundation for Disabled Sailing. Functional classification provides a more equitable means of quantifying a disabled person's ability to participate in a particular sport. The only way to actually receive a valid "Classification" is to be evaluated and classified by an official national or international classifier. For these guidelines, please see the [IFDS FCS](#). The quick guide attempts to aid sailors and coaches with an estimate of eligibility, and is not intended to replace formal classification.

Determination of Eligibility

The goals of Classification and impairment rating systems for Sailing are to enable fair and equitable competition at all levels, for mildly, moderately and severely disabled sailors. Sailors are eligible to complete in an ISAF/IFDS "sanctioned" event if they have a physical disability that causes or ought to cause a noticeable impairment of function while sailing.

The IFDS Classification Systems are based entirely on the functions required to compete in sailing events and as such may differ from those functions required for other sports, or daily living. The main functions of sailing have been identified as:

- a) Operating the control lines and the tiller (Hand function);
- b) Ability to see whilst racing (Vision);
- c) Compensation for the movement of the boat (Stability);
- d) Ability to move about the boat (Mobility).

These functions are further refined to test:

- a) Tiller
- b) Sheeting
- c) Cleating
- d) Transferring
- e) Hiking

Based on the information below, an estimate of eligibility for disabled sailing should be possible for most sailors.

It is a three-part evaluation process consisting of the following steps:

- a) Physical examination by nominated national or international classifier (functional anatomical test) .This test takes place in physiotherapy a room;
- b) Observation of standardized simulated sailing functions (functional Dock Test). A dock test takes place on a Sonar keelboat, tied to a pontoon, where the sailor is asked to perform each position in the boat and assessed in the above;
- c) Observation of the sailor during competition and/or training and/or out of competition (functional sailing test).

General Guidance

A) Classification by impairment

Benchmarks

- 1 Quadriplegic, complete.
Double (both sides) through Shoulder Amputation.
- 2 Double Above Elbow Amputation (and most High Paraplegics above T4).
Single (one side) Above Elbow Amputation & Single Below Elbow Amputation.
- 3 Single Above Knee Amputation & Single Above Elbow Amputation.
Double below Elbow Amputation (and most Low Paraplegics).
- 4 Single Through Shoulder Amputation.
Double Above Knee Amputation.
Double Below Knee Amputation without prostheses.
Single Above Knee and Single Below Knee Amputation without prostheses.
- 5 Single Above Elbow Amputation.
Single Above Knee Amputation & Single Below Knee Amputation, with prostheses.
- 6 Double Below Knee Amputation, with prostheses.
Single Below Elbow Amputation.
- 7 Single Above Knee Amputation.
Single Below Knee Amputation without prostheses.

If you did not find your diagnosis in the above “benchmarks”, you can work through the questions below in the Assessment of Sailing Tasks and Skills, which will guide you to what your classification may be. You will need to be officially classified in order to get a rating. However, this will give you guidance in the meantime.

B) Assessment of Sailing Tasks and Skills:

You may also use the following simple sailing test to estimate your eligibility and your classification number. Circle one number, and total them at the end. Please note that the following questions assume that you are on a keelboat (i.e. Sonar, SKUD or 2.4mR).

- A. When helming a sailboat with a tiller...

Do you require assistive devices to helm (mechanical or electrical devices)?	1
Do you control the tiller only with your feet or teeth?	2
Do you let go of the tiller to transfer while changing sides in a tack?	3
Do you need one hand for support while tacking the boat?	4
Do you tack or gybe normally?	5

- B. When trimming the sails...

Do you require mechanical or electrical assistance to pull the sheets?	1
Do you pull the sheets with severe difficulty, and are unable to fully trim?	2
Do you pull the sheets with moderate difficulty?	3
Do you pull the sheets with slight difficulty?	4
Do you pull the sheets normally?	5

- C. When trimming the sails...
- Do you require assistance to cleat/uncleat the sheets? 1
 - Do you cleat/uncleat the sheets with severe difficulty, and frequently miss? 2
 - Do you cleat/uncleat the sheets with moderate difficulty? 3
 - Do you cleat/uncleat the sheets with slight difficulty? 4
 - Do you cleat/uncleat the sheets normally? 5
- D. When changing sides of the boat during a tack...
- Do you require a mechanical device to transfer from side to side? 1
 - Do you require a “transfer bench/board” to move side to side?
 - If so, do you move with severe difficulty? 2
 - Moderate difficulty? 3
 - Slight difficulty? 4
 - Do you change side to side normally? 5
- E. When you are hiking out...
- Do you get up on the side deck? 1
 - Do you hike past the vertical sheer line? 2
 - Do you have to hold on with 2 hands so that you cannot trim the sheets? 3
 - Do you have some difficulty but can adjust the sheets while hiking? 4
 - Do you hike normally? 5

Sum total _____

Sailing Estimate of Eligibility

If your sum total points are 24 or less, then you are most likely eligible for disabled sailing events, and your **estimated classification** number for Sonars is listed below. However – national and international classification is based on ability to perform tasks and skills in response to individual anatomical restrictions – not as a result of lack of agility/skills/confidence. You may find greater ability to perform the tasks with suitable adaptations therefore this is a guide only.

Some conditions/illnesses may not be classifiable due to their nature – even though you may not be able to perform these tasks.

Classification	Sail Tasks
1	1-10
2	11-15
3	16-19
4	20-21
5	22
6	23
7	24

C) Visual Impairment Eligibility Estimate

If you are visually impaired, the following determines your eligibility. The determinations are based on the International Blind Sports Association (IBSA) ratings. For International events, all forms must be taken that have been signed by the ophthalmologist and you will be reassessed by IBSA Classifiers at your first major event.

Visual Impairment - DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE CLASSES

To be eligible to compete in Paralympic Sport, the Athlete with visual impairment must be affected by at least one of the following impairments, resulting from disease/disorder:

- Impairment of the eye structure;
- Impairment of the optical nerve/optic pathways;
- Impairment of the visual cortex of the central brain.

All Athlete Evaluation and Sport Class allocation will be based on the assessment of visual acuity in the eye with better visual acuity whilst wearing best optical correction using spectacles or contact lenses.

Sport Class B1 – Totally Blind

Visual acuity poorer than LogMAR = 2.60.

Sport Class B2 – Partially Blind

Visual acuity ranging from LogMAR = 1.50 to 2.60 (inclusive)
and/or Visual field constricted to a diameter of less than 10 degrees.

Sport Class B3 – Partially Blind

Visual acuity ranging from LogMAR = 1.40 to 1 (inclusive) and/or Visual field constricted to a diameter of less than 40 degrees.

	SONAR	ACCESS
Totally Blind – B1	Classification – 3	Single Person not recommended.
Partly Blind – B2	Classification – 5	Single Person SP3
Partly Blind – B3	Classification – 7	Single Person SP3

You will need to take the [IFDS Vision Test form](#) to your Ophthalmologist and a copy of the Vision Field Diagram results, and send it to paralympicpathway@rya.org.uk.

D) Ability to Compete in each Paralympic Class

The following criteria must be met to be eligible to compete in Paralympic classes at closed events are:

- 2.4mR – Single-person boat;
 - The crew member must meet the minimum disability (MD) criteria.
- SKUD – Two-person boat;
 - That one member of the crew classifies as a 1 or 2 (IFDS FCS) and one crew meets the minimum disability criteria and of those, one member must be female.
- Sonar – Three-person boat;
 - Between all 3 members, their points added together must not be greater than 14 points in total.

If you are still uncertain of your eligibility for disabled sailing, you will need to undergo a National Classification by IFDS certified classifiers. If there is difficulty with classification, it may be necessary to undergo a further International Classification including a functional anatomical test, functional dock test, and functional sail test, according to the [IFDS FCS](#).

Any further questions should be directed to the RYA (National Governing Body) at Paralympicpathway@rya.org.uk or via telephone at 02380 604201.