



# NATIONAL ELIGIBILITY GUIDANCE NOTES

[FOR USE BY ATHLETICS NZ, SWIMMING NZ AND TABLE TENNIS NZ]

## INTRODUCTION

Paralympics New Zealand (PNZ) is the National Sport Organisation affiliated to Virtus (International Federation for Sports for athletes with an Intellectual Impairment). PNZ is responsible for managing and overseeing the eligibility process for athletes with Intellectual Impairment or Autism wishing to compete in the Para sports of Para swimming, Para athletics and Para table tennis or Virtus sports.

## DEFINING INTELLECTUAL IMPAIRMENT

The Primary Eligibility Criteria used by Virtus/PNZ is based upon the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disability (AAIDD, 2010) definition of intellectual Impairment which is consistent with that of the World Health Organisation (WHO, ICD-10 and ICF, 2001), and states:

“Intellectual Disability is a disability characterized by significant limitation both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behaviour as expressed in conceptual, social and practical adaptive skills. This disability originates before the age of 22.”

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Based upon the AAIDD definition for intellectual impairment, the PNZ Minimal Impairment Criteria for Eligibility to compete in Para sport, and Virtus competitions are:

- Significant impairment in intellectual functioning
- Significant limitations in adaptive behaviour as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills
- Significant impairment in intellectual functioning and significant additional impairment (Virtus competitions)
- Intellectual impairment must be evident during the developmental period, which is from conception to 22 years of age
- Evidence of Autism (Virtus competitions).

## EVIDENCE

Evidence needs to be submitted to support a diagnosis of intellectual impairment, or intellectual impairment and significant additional impairment, or autism. Where possible, evidence will be the results of a formal psychological assessment and/or formal diagnosis. If this is not available, then the following will be accepted:

- A signed statement by a psychologist, medical doctor or pediatrician confirming the athlete has an intellectual impairment, autism or intellectual impairment and significant additional impairment
- Evidence that the student is on ORS (Ongoing Resourcing Scheme) because of an intellectual impairment or autism. Please include the criteria under which this has been granted
- Evidence (a copy of a recent individual education plan) that the student may attend a special school, a special unit at a mainstream school, or be included in a mainstream class through the support of an adapted curriculum as and/or proof of currently receiving one or more of the following services due to a diagnosis of intellectual impairment or autism: accommodation, employment, financial support
- Intellectual impairment must be evident during the developmental period which is from conception to 22 years of age.

## COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

- Page 1 and 2 should be completed by the athlete's representative and athlete
- Page 3 and 4 should be completed by a medical doctor, pediatrician, or psychologist
- Page 5 should be completed by the National Eligibility Officer (NEO)
- The form, together with relevant documents supporting evidence of intellectual impairment, any additional physical impairment or autism should then be sent to Paralympics New Zealand

## SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

Applications should be submitted by email to [classification@paralympics.org.nz](mailto:classification@paralympics.org.nz)

## STORING AND USING INFORMATION

PNZ will use the information submitted within the application for the purpose of determining the Sports Class and Sports Class Status of the athlete.

## INTERNATIONAL ELIGIBILITY AND CLASSIFICATION

### Level 1 Full Primary Eligibility

Athletes with an intellectual impairment, intellectual impairment and significant additional impairment or athletes with autism who are identified by their sport as having talent and looking to progress on an international **Virtus sport pathway** will need to go through the formal Virtus Eligibility Process and be on the Virtus master list as a prerequisite to attend Virtus competitions.

### Level 2: Full Primary Eligibility

Para athletes with an Intellectual Impairment who are identified by their sport as having talent and looking to progress on an international **Para sport pathway**, will need to go through the formal Virtus Eligibility Process and be on the Virtus master list as a prerequisite of Paralympic sports classification.

If you wish to be considered for full Primary Eligibility for International competitions, please contact PNZ: [classification@paralympics.org.nz](mailto:classification@paralympics.org.nz)