

Defining what is a category for entry to the 2019 Bowls WA All Ability State Championships:

Bowls WA is hosting the All Abilities State Championships on **Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 of March 2019** playing Singles and Pairs. This event is open to four categories: (1) Deaf, (2) Intellectual, (3) Physical, and (4) Vision Impaired. By participating in these games you are opening up the opportunity for a state title as well as the possibility of bowling at the following tournaments:

1. The Australian Open (all categories)
2. The Disability Sport Australia (DSA) National Multibowl Championships (physical disability)
3. The Commonwealth Games (physical and vision categories)
4. International Bowlers with Disability (IBD) tournaments (physical and vision categories)

Disability Sport Australia (DSA) performs the role of a National Coordinating Body, providing a single point of contact between the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), the Australian Paralympic Commission (APC), and National Sporting Organizations (NSO). In this case, the NSO is Bowls Australia.

It can be hard defining what a disability is and DSA follows the International Paralympic Commissions (IPC) definition of Athletes with a Disability using a Classification system. The eight levels for physical and visual impairment are listed below, followed by further definitions of Intellectual Disability and Deaf Impairment.

Each Lawn Bowls player is classified based on their disability. Athletes with a vision impairment undergo a vision test. Athletes with a physical impairment undergo a bench and functional skills test – a bowler must have lost at least 10 points in testing to be eligible for classification.

AUSTRALIAN IPC LAWN BOWL CLASSIFICATIONS:

B1: No light perception in either eye up to light perception but no recognition of hand movements at any distance or any direction.

B2: From the ability to recognise hand movements up to a visual acuity of 2/60 (Snellen).

B3: From a visual acuity of better than 2/60 (Snellen) up to a visual acuity of 6/60.

B4: A visual acuity of better than 6/60 (Snellen) up to a visual acuity of worse than 6.24 (Snellen) and/or a visual field of less than 20 degrees.

B5: Wheelchair bowlers who can only use a very small bowl (size 00) due to limitation of upper limb function. Ambulant and wheelchair bowlers with restricted grip and upper body limb function, poor balance and co-ordination, unable to bowl a full length end or needing a splinting device to do so (Not including the bowling arm as used in Australia).

B6: Ambulant and wheelchair bowlers with reduced balance function (loss of 5 points or more) but able to bowl a full length end.

B7: Ambulant and wheelchair bowlers with minor balance problems (loss of less than 5 points).

B8: Ambulant bowlers, who have a permanent and irreversible disability, have lost 10 points on the bench test, but have no noticeable impairment of function.

Athletes who participate in Paralympic sport are grouped into ten major categories, based on their type of disability:

(1-4) Visual Impairment - Athletes with [visual impairment](#) ranging from partial vision, sufficient to be judged [legally blind](#), to total [blindness](#). This includes impairment of one or more component of the visual system (eye structure, receptors, optic nerve pathway, and visual cortex).

(5-8) Physical Impairment - There are eight different types of physical impairment:

- **Impaired muscle power** - With impairments in this category, the force generated by muscles, such as the muscles of one limb, one side of the body or the lower half of the body is reduced, (e.g. due to spinal-cord injury, [spina-bifida](#) or [polio](#)).
- **Impaired passive range of movement** - Range of movement in one or more joints is reduced in a systematic way. Acute conditions such as [arthritis](#) are not included.

- **Loss of limb or limb deficiency** - A total or partial absence of bones or joints from [partial or total loss](#) due to illness, trauma, or congenital limb deficiency (e.g. [dysmelia](#)).
- **Leg-length difference** - Significant bone shortening occurs in one leg due to congenital deficiency or trauma.
- **Short stature** - Standing height is reduced due to shortened legs, arms and trunk, which are due to a musculoskeletal deficit of bone or cartilage structures.
- **Hypertonia** - Hypertonia is marked by an abnormal increase in muscle tension and reduced ability of a muscle to stretch. Hypertonia may result from injury, disease, or conditions which involve damage to the central nervous system (e.g. cerebral palsy).
- **Ataxia** - Ataxia is an impairment that consists of a lack of coordination of muscle movements (e.g. [cerebral palsy](#), [Friedreich's ataxia](#)).
- **Athetosis** - Athetosis is generally characterized by unbalanced, involuntary movements and a difficulty maintaining a symmetrical posture (e.g. [cerebral palsy](#), [choreoathetosis](#)).

(09) Intellectual Disability - Athletes with a significant [impairment in intellectual functioning](#) and associated limitations in adaptive behaviour. The IPC primarily serves athletes with physical disabilities, but the disability group Intellectual Disability has been added to some Paralympic Games.

(10) Deaf Impairment – People who are born deaf or became deaf at an early age (before language acquisition). Deaf people identify themselves as part of a Deaf Culture and Community and are likely to use Auslan (Australian Sign Language) as a first or preferred language.

(11) Arm Bowler – Bowlers may use a Bowls Australia approved bowling arm when difficulty has been found in delivering a bowl in the conventional manner because of ongoing ailments such as painful ankles, knees and hips; old sporting injuries; and neck and/or spinal inflexibility arthritis. All players using bowling arms need to submit a Bowling Aid Approval Form to Bowls WA with a doctor's letter of support. Approved Arm users will be supplied with a letter from Bowls WA.

If you have further questions contact Denise McMillan, Bowls WA Inclusive Practices Officer (email: denise@bowlswa.com.au mobile: 0449 619 841)