

IWBF/LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY RESEARCH PROJECT REGARDING NEW MINIMUM IMPAIRMENT CRITERIA (MIC) FOR WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)

Q: What is the Minimum Impairment Criteria (MIC's)?

A: Every sport's classification rules describe how severe an Eligible Impairment must be for an athlete to be considered eligible to compete in that particular sport. These criteria are referred to as Minimum Impairment Criteria. Minimum Impairment Criteria must ensure that an athlete's Eligible Impairment affects the extent to which the athlete is able to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport, in this case running basketball.

The Minimum impairment criteria should be defined on the basis of scientific research, which assesses the impact of impairments on the sport's activities. As sports require different activities, the Minimum Impairment Criteria are also specific for each sport. Consequently, an athlete may meet the criteria in one sport, but may not meet the criteria in another.

If an athlete is not eligible to compete in a sport, this does not question the presence of a genuine impairment. It is a sport ruling.

Q: Why are IWBF creating a new MIC?

A: The new minimum impairment criteria will be part of a revised set of IWBF Classification Rules, which are being implemented to ensure compliance with the International Paralympic Committee's (IPC) Athlete Classification Code.

Q: What is a Delphi study?

A: The Delphi technique is an approach used to answer a research question, in this instance 'what are the minimum impairment criteria for wheelchair basketball?' The process will involve Loughborough University's research team working with a panel of subject matter experts in order to reach a consensus – this will then form the basis of the minimum eligibility criteria.

Q: Did Loughborough University get ethical approval to conduct the research on behalf of IWBF?

A: Loughborough University is an internationally recognised centre of excellence for Sport, and a world leader in para sport research. The University has been given Independent ethical approval for the study to conduct the research

How was the Expert Panel chosen?

A: Members of the Research steering group, including the Loughborough University team, IWBF members and Athlete representative put forward names of individuals from a variety of fields, that they thought would be suitable (see also **Who is taking part?**). Care was taken to ensure that the Expert Panel reflected the demographics involved in wheelchair basketball, for example in terms of the nationality of members. These names were discussed as a group to confirm their suitability.

How do I become part of the Delphi Study?

A: Members who were identified for the Expert Panel will receive an email from the lead researcher, Dr Michael Hutchinson (M.J.Hutchinson@lboro.ac.uk) on Friday 4th December. This will contain a link to an online questionnaire, which will contain all the information required to complete it. When developing the Expert Panel the Research team tried to capture as many people as possible from various stakeholder groups. However, not everybody could be included. If you did not receive an

email link to the Delphi Study, but feel that you want to take part, then please email Michael outlining your current role within wheelchair basketball or Paralympic sport.

Q: Who is taking part in the study?

A: The research project will draw upon the expertise and knowledge of over 80 individuals from the international wheelchair basketball, para-sport and sporting communities who have been specifically identified to join the MIC panel. These individuals include:

- Classifiers
- Coaches
- Physios
- Medical professionals e.g. Doctors
- Athletes
- Researchers specialising in para-sport

There are over 42 nationalities across all four zones represented within the expert panel.

Q: When will the study and its findings be completed?

A: The study will begin in December 2020 with a planned findings publication date of July 2021.

Q: Why have British Wheelchair Basketball provided funding support to IWBF to support the study?

A: As part of the IWBF's eligibility consultation with national federations, British Wheelchair Basketball (BWB) approached IWBF to look at how they could support IWBF to meet IPC Classification Code compliance.

IWBF identified the Minimum Impairment Criteria as a key area of focus. BWB introduced IWBF to Loughborough University in September, and have contributed 50% of the project cost to facilitate the delivery of the Minimum Impairment Criteria research. This UK Sport/National Lottery funding contribution was identified as critical investment, with regards to international relations activities, to ensure a secure Paralympic future for the sport.

Q: Are athletes involved in the study?

A: Yes, athletes involvement is hugely important to this research. The MIC project will involve a broad range of international wheelchair basketball athletes. In addition to this Erica Gavel from Canada is on the research study working group, as an IWBF athlete representative.

Q: Will the research finding be published?

A: Yes

Q: Will the new MIC's mean I am at risk of being unclassifiable? Will I have to be reassessed?

A: The new MIC's will not change what is considered an eligible impairment for wheelchair basketball at an international level, however all internationally classified athletes will be reassessed to ensure they meet the minimum impairment criteria.

Q: When will the new MIC's be implemented?

A: The new Classification Rules and minimum impairment criteria will be implemented in an appropriate transitional process following the conclusion of the research project and approval from IPC.