

## CONGU® Handicaps – Frequently Asked Questions

<b>1.Retirement of Club and Disability Handicaps</b>	
What happens to existing Club Handicaps?	The CONGU handicap limit of 28[36] has been removed and replaced with 54 for both men and women thus aligning with other handicapping systems around the world. Handicapping software will automatically adjust handicaps past the current limits into Category 5 for men and Category 6 for men and women when scores are outside the Buffer Zone as of 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2018.
Will players who had a Club Handicap have a CONGU competition handicap?	Players with a CONGU® Club Handicap will automatically have an official CONGU® handicap from 1st January 2018 and this will be a Competition Handicap provided they meet the minimum requirement of 3 qualifying scores. Players who submitted scores in 2017 and were awarded a CONGU® Club Handicap will have a Competition Handicap on 1st January 2018. Players who were awarded a CONGU® Club Handicap in 2016 will have a Competition Handicap providing they have submitted a minimum of 3 qualifying scores in 2017. Otherwise Clause 26.3 applies.
Some of our members refused a Club Handicap due to competition restrictions. Can they refuse an increase in handicap now?	Players cannot refuse an increase in handicap from scores returned in qualifying competitions and are subject to the process outlined in the Annual Review.
Should we review all handicaps that are 28/36?	It is recommend that all players currently at the maximum handicap are reviewed with a view to increasing their handicap to a level that reflects their playing ability. The software will allow such adjustments from 1st January 2018. These players will have been identified in the computer-generated Annual Review Report, especially the new 'All Members' report.
What are the guidelines for adjusting those whose handicaps are at the 28[36] limits at year end 2017 and who have not had any reductions in the year?	Review the Performance Against Target (PAT) for those players from the Annual Review documentation. The following adjustments are recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PAT &gt; 3 but &lt; 5 1 shot increase</li> <li>• PAT &gt;=5 but &lt; 12 2 shot increase</li> <li>• PAT 12+ 3 shot increase</li> </ul> Note: these are the recommended increases – the Committee are best placed to review their players and should ensure any adjustments are appropriate.
Does a club have to award an Initial Handicap Allotment over 28/36?	When considering scores for handicap purposes, the procedure in Clause 16 must be followed and this may result in a handicap of over 28[36]. However, the Handicap Committee should always take all information available into account when allocating an initial handicap – the system suggested value is a guide to this and may be overridden.

<p>We have handicap limits on our main trophy competitions. Do we have to increase these limits?</p>	<p>Clubs may include any entry requirement in their Conditions of Competitions they consider appropriate, including handicap limits. Clubs may wish to review any limits to include players who may otherwise be excluded due to the change in handicap limits</p>
<p>We run a Mixed 4BBB Open with handicap limits of 18 for a man and 24 for a woman off <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> handicap. Do we have to change these limits and allowances?</p>	<p>Open competitions, like internal competitions, can have any entry requirement the organisers consider appropriate. However, where CONGU® Handicaps are used they are subject to the mandatory Handicap Allowances shown in Appendix F. For a 4BBB competition, 90% allowance must be used for competitions of this format.</p>
<p>Currently, our junior boys play from the red tees until they reach a handicap of 28 and then they immediately start playing off the men's tees. What happens now?</p>	<p>A junior boy should continue playing from the tees best suited to his standard and awarded a CONGU® Handicap when he demonstrates that he has reached the level of competency required when playing on a course rated for men.</p> <p><b>Note1:</b> Tees may be rated for both genders and in the situation described in this question, the red tee would need to be rated for men in order for any score to be qualifying for handicap.</p> <p><b>Note2:</b> As from 1 January 2018 the handicapping regulations make no distinction between the genders, nor between adults and juniors, nor between the disabled and able-bodied golfers. For handicapping purposes all players must, however, play from tees that have been rated for their gender and any score returned that does not meet this requirement cannot be used for handicapping even though it may be valid under the Conditions of Competition on the day.</p>
<p>What will the boundaries be for the new handicap categories?</p>	<p>Categories 1, 2 and 3 will remain the same for all players.            Category 4 will be 20.5 to 28.4            Category 5 will be 28.5 to 36.4            Category 6 will be 36.5 to 54</p>
<p><b>2. Supplementary Scores</b></p>	
<p>Surely, by removing the restriction of one score per week, the system is open to abuse and manipulation?</p>	<p>There is more potential for manipulation and abuse by removing the limit on submitting Supplementary Scores and it is recommended that clubs remind players that 'Supplementary Score returns may be subject to action under CONGU® Clause 21.11/23B if malpractice is suspected.'</p>
<p>Removing the restriction of one supplementary score per week could cause clubs a considerable amount of extra work. Do we have to record these scores on the player's record?</p>	<p>These scores must be recorded on the player's record. In preparation for the new World Handicap System, it is essential that all players have sufficient scores on their record so that a reasonable determination of their handicap can be made. Relaxing the rules regarding Supplementary Scores provides all players with greater opportunity to return more scores than they would otherwise do.</p>
<p><b>3. Mixed/Multi Tee Competitions</b></p>	
<p>Do all our competitions played on the same day have to be combined so that we produce a single CSS?</p>	<p>This is not a mandatory requirement. However, having a single CSS for two or more competitions on the same day provides for a more equitable value in situations where one of the competitions may have a small field size. For a multi-tee competition run for players of the same gender or of mixed genders it is very strongly recommended that the single CSS Adjustment is adopted.</p>

<b>4. Initial Handicap Allotment</b>	
Is it correct that players who have been given an Initial Handicap Allotment (IHA) could potentially retain this until the end of the next golfing year, without playing in a single qualifying competition?	The scores used to obtain an IHA entered into the player's record are qualifying scores. As such, as with any other handicapped player, the handicap status will be valid until the end of the next golfing year providing the player is a member of an Affiliated Club.
Has the Handicap Allocation Process changed due to the higher handicaps?	Yes, Handicap Committees are now required to adjust any score of more than double par at any hole to a score of double par (i.e. 6 on a Par 3, 8 on a Par 4 and 10 on a Par 5). All other elements of Clause 16 remain the same. Note: The adjusting algorithm in Clause 16.3 (b) now applies throughout the handicap range whereas previously it was not used in a Club/Disability Handicap calculation.
<b>5. Nine-Hole Competitions</b>	
Does my club have to schedule 9-Hole qualifying Medal competitions as well as 9-Hole Stableford competitions?	It is not mandatory to schedule 9-Hole Medal competitions. CONGU strongly recommends that clubs provide 9-Hole qualifying competitions (Stableford or Medal) to encourage players with limited time or physical restraints to return qualifying scores for handicap under competition conditions. Note: From a time-constraint point of view, the recommended format would be Stableford.
Do I need a 9-Hole SSS to run a medal competition?	Yes, to run any qualifying competition, an appropriate SSS must be obtained from your National Union.
On what basis is my handicap adjusted when competing in a 9-Hole Medal competition?	The competition will simply display the Medal result, whilst the underlying score will be recorded as Stableford. Thus the handicap adjustment will be on the basis of the equivalent Stableford score and your handicap record will show that Stableford score.
<b>6. Non Qualifying Scores</b>	
Why are England Golf invoking Clause 4.5/8.12?	England Golf has made this decision in order to promote the integrity of the system, and maintain player confidence in handicapping. Every player should have confidence that they hold an equal opportunity to achieve success in a competition. A number of incidents in the last few years have highlighted that players must hold the responsibility with regards to notifying their home club as to their performance away from home in Non-Qualifying competitions where the results would not otherwise be known to the committee. Players must make every effort to maintain a handicap which reflects their current playing ability.
Who is responsible for reporting 'away' scores?	The individual player has an obligation to report away scores from competitions, and each Club should establish a process to enable this to be done. In addition, where a Club arranges/administers an event, England Golf requests that Club to advise players' home clubs of the top five. (optional)

What responsibility falls on the club?	The responsibility is with the player, the club are only required to give the players a facility to record the scores returned. It is then up to the club to decide what action they are going to take following the return.
How should scores returned be used?	4BBB and Team competitions are not suitable for handicapping purposes: but if the same individuals or teams keeping winning or coming near the top of leader boards at events away from home, that should at least indicate to their Club Handicapping Officials that further investigations are required – and the only way to achieve that is by asking for all such scores to be reported.
What sanction does a Club have if it learns that a player has been playing in competitions at away clubs, but not reporting scores?	A Club may suspend a member's handicap under CONGU rule 24.1 where that player does not comply with his or her obligations as imposed by CONGU. We would see that as a last resort; and clubs in the first instance should firmly remind players of their responsibilities under the CONGU UHS.
In a team event, an individual may not have holed out on every hole or contributed to the score, does this result still have to be reported?	<b>Yes.</b> The team score should be reported through the process established and be returned for consideration by the handicap committee at the annual review but cannot of itself be used to change a player's handicap.
Where a society plays an individual competition at a club, does the Club have any responsibility to return scores?	<b>No</b> – where the Club is not running the event, it does not have any obligation to make enquiries or return scores. <i>However, the individual club member has an obligation under the CONGU rules.</i>
Do scores played in society events have to be recorded?	If the player has played in the event using his/her CONGU handicap <b>UNDER COMPETITION PLAY CONDITIONS</b> , then the score must be reported.
A group from our club has an annual trip to Spain, when they play a variety of singles and team competitions. Should they return their scores?	<b>No.</b> As the scores are not over a course measured in accordance with CONGU requirements there is no obligation to return scores.
Do we need to make our Saturday swindle into a qualifying competition?	<b>No.</b> The intent is not to affect social golf. However, Clubs should be aware of performances in swindles such that, in the annual review, handicap committees can take into account circumstances where a member of a swindle regularly outplays their official handicap.
With a notification of an away score, do we have to ascertain a CSS?	<b>No.</b> For team competitions and individual events (such as society golf), it is not feasible to assess a CSS and, therefore, the requirement is that the SSS of the course played is recorded.
Do I need to provide results of a matchplay competition played at an away course?	<b>No.</b> it is very difficult to establish player performance from a match play result, as the player's performance may not be reflected in the result.
A player has reported 2 or 3 Better Ball Scores which are 40+ points, should I be adjusting their handicaps?	<b>No.</b> It is unlikely that any handicap need to be adjusted directly as a result of the submission of such scores, especially with such a low number. The Scores are only intended to be additional evidence for use at the annual review



7. Competition Handicaps	
What is a Competition/Non Competition Handicap?	A Competition handicap a player has returned at least 3 qualifying scores per annum. A Non-Competition handicap identifies that less than 3 qualifying scores have been returned.
What do I need to do to have a Competition Handicap?	In order to have a Competition handicap, a member is required to return 3 qualifying scores in the previous calendar year. These can include scores returned in qualifying competitions (both home and away), Supplementary Scores played over 9 or 18 holes at any club within GB&I which you are a member and 9 hole qualifying competitions. Scores returned in non-qualifying events and in social golf are not acceptable.
Does a Non Competition handicap mean my handicap has lapsed?	Absolutely not. A Non-Competition handicap is still an official CONGU handicap. You will still be entitled to receive a handicap certificate and enter events that do not require a Competition handicap as an entry requirement.
When I submit three cards will I get a new handicap?	No, having a Non-Competition handicap does not mean you have lost your handicap. Each qualifying score will adjust your current handicap accordingly. The Club is not permitted to issue a new handicap on the return of the 3 qualifying scores.
I only have two qualifying scores from last year. Do these carry over?	It is a requirement that 3 qualifying scores are returned per calendar year (between 1st January and 31st December). If you did not submit three qualifying scores in a calendar year you will need to submit three qualifying scores to regain your competition status.
Why are three scores required for a Competition Handicap?	A Club does not <i>have</i> to impose restrictions regarding non-competition handicaps and entry into club competitions. <i>If</i> a Club wishes to include restrictions on non-competition handicaps it may do one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prohibit entry into the competition. This should be adopted for match play knockout competitions. This condition can also be adopted for qualifying competitions although it is not permissible to adopt this as a blanket condition for all Club competitions. The CONGU UHS stipulates anyone with a CONGU handicap is entitled to compete in a reasonable number of qualifying competitions per year (see CONGU definition of Member).</li><li>• Allow entry into all competitions (including Open days) but restrict them from winning prizes. Entry fees may be charged and any subsidiary prizes (2s sweeps) may still be won. This is considered to be the favoured option amongst affiliated Clubs and of England Golf.</li></ul>



<p>What restrictions can be imposed on Non Competition handicaps?</p>	<p>A player will only be exempt from receiving a Non-Competition handicap under the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Injury/Illness over a lengthy period of time that has given the member insufficient time to return 3 qualifying scores</li><li>• Golfers new to the game who are being issued with their first CONGU handicap. The scores returned to gain a handicap are deemed to be qualifying scores.</li><li>• • Members who do not wish to return qualifying scores or are unable to compete at weekends will not be exempt from receiving a Non Competition handicap</li></ul>
<p>How is the status of my handicap changed?</p>	<p>Once the Handicapping Committee have agreed to make the change under one of the aforementioned situations, a manual override of the Non-Competition status can be made. All handicapping software has this written into their software.</p>
<p>Do NR's count towards my three qualifying scores?</p>	<p>As all medal scores are transferred into Stableford points (Clause 19.8) it lessens the damage imposed on the player's scores because of one or two bad holes. If the Committee believes that the NR is a genuine score then this may be accepted. If however, the Committee are of the opinion a player has deliberately returned an NR or bad score, then they may refuse to accept this score and keep the player's handicap as Non-Competition until they are satisfied genuine scores have been returned.</p>
<p>I have just changed clubs? Do my qualifying scores returned at my old club count towards a competition handicap?</p>	<p>Yes. Qualifying scores returned at any Club in the UK shall count towards a Competition handicap. It is not permissible for a Club to stipulate that only home qualifying scores are permitted for a Competition handicap.</p>
<p>How will an away club be able to identify whether someone has a Non Competition handicap?</p>	<p>Handicapping certificates, master handicapping lists, results sheets, the English Central Database of Handicaps (CDH) and ISV websites will all show a Non Competition handicap.</p>
<p>Can someone build a handicap by returning three bad scores to gain a Competition Handicap?</p>	<p>The returning of the 3 qualifying scores will not allocate a new handicap. They adjust the existing handicap and therefore can only increase the handicap by 0.3 (3 bad rounds x 0.1). The Handicapping Committee are also permitted to refuse a score if they are of the opinion that the player walked off the course or returned a bad score deliberately in an attempt to 'build a handicap'. If this is found to be the case disciplinary action may be taken against the player in accordance with Clause 24 of the CONGU UHS.</p>