



## Handicapping Operational Matters & Preparing for the new GA Handicap System – CHECK-LIST FOR CLUB ADMINISTRATORS (version 23/9/13)

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**THIS PDF VERSION OF THE CHECK-LIST DOCUMENT SETS OUT WHETHER THE SUPPORT GUIDANCE FOR AN ITEM IS:**

- **PROVIDED AS A DOWNLOAD/S, or**
- **PROVIDED AS BRIEF EXPLANATORY NOTES (and if so, what these notes are).**

**(NOTE: THE SUPPORT GUIDANCE IS ALL AVAILABLE FROM THE INTERACTIVE RESOURCE ON THE G.A. WEBSITE; GO TO [www.golf.org.au/default.aspx?s=form-checklistlogin](http://www.golf.org.au/default.aspx?s=form-checklistlogin))**

1. **Has my club put processes in place to make available to our members information around the regulations of the new handicap system? Further to this, is my club aware of the following resources GA has developed to assist with this process?**

- **Flyer for distribution to each member on “Slope and my Handicap”**
- **Poster for members providing a summary of each component of the new handicap system.**
- **GA website – Summary of each component of the new handicap system**
- **[Further resources as they are made available]**

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2. **Does my club know how to operate the changed functionality in our handicapping and competition management system that has been brought about by the handicapping changes?**

*Clubs Serviced by Tier 3 Third-Party Software Providers (note: these will generally be the larger clubs):*

- **If your club’s handicapping software is provided by a Tier 3 third-party software provider, then your software provider will communicate directly with you to provide guidance around your new and changed screens. This communication will occur once the software development work has reached the appropriate phase. GO TO THE ‘THIRD-PARTY SOFTWARE PROVIDER’ SECTION OF THE G.A. WEBSITE FOR CONTACT DETAILS FOR EACH SOFTWARE PROVIDER.**

*Clubs Serviced by the GOLF Link Tier 1 System (note: these will generally be the smaller clubs):*

- **If your club is serviced by the Tier 1 GOLF Link system, then GOLF Link will communicate directly with you to provide guidance around your new and changed screens. This communication will occur once the software development work has reached the appropriate phase.**

3. **My club is considering upgrading from Tier 1 to Tier 3 OR my club is considering changing Tier 3 software providers. Have we established contact with the appropriate Tier 3 provider as yet? (We need to be mindful that software providers will be unusually busy in the upcoming period and that they may find it more challenging than usual to ensure any new software is operational in our club in line with the go live dates of the new handicap system.)**

**GO TO THE 'THIRD-PARTY SOFTWARE PROVIDER' SECTION OF THE G.A. WEBSITE FOR SUPPORT INFORMATION AROUND THIS ITEM.**

4. **Has my club clearly identified a committee or group or individual who is charged with carrying out the club's handicapping responsibilities?**

- An essential element of the GA Handicap System is that each affiliated club will ensure it is properly administered in accordance with the interpretations of Golf Australia. It is for each club to establish and maintain its own procedures for ensuring it properly administers the GA Handicap System.
- Effective handicapping can not just be "left to GOLF Link".
- Each club should identify an individual, committee or group that is permitted by the club to exercise the authority granted by the system. The official term for this entity with the handicap system is 'Handicapping Authority'.
- It is up to each club to decide the structure and membership of the Handicapping Authority; eg Captain, handicapper, Pro, a committee (for some clubs it could be the General Committee, for others it could be the Match Committee), etc.
- The reality is that many clubs will have effectively already done this, but, as with any operational role, it is important that the Handicapping Authority be clearly identified and understood.

5. **Has the Handicapping Authority in my club got a copy of the GA reference resource titled: "Handicapping Duties, Authorities, and Responsibilities of the Home Club"?**

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6. **Is my club satisfying the requirements around maintaining the overall distance of a rated course? (Where this is not happening, the scores are not eligible to be processed through GOLF Link.)**

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7. **Is my club applying the correct GOLF Link score status options in all cases to our members' scores (for example, when players withdraw due to bad weather)? (If we are not, we will be distorting the handicaps of our members.)**

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8. **Has my club resolved the various handicapping policy questions on which the new handicap system provides flexibility to clubs?**

- Are we going to handicap the Conforming Social Scores of our Members? [GA Recommendation: SHOULD HANDICAP]
- Are we going to handicap good Four-ball scores? [GA Recommendation: SHOULD HANDICAP]
- Are we going to handicap 9-hole scores (and any other scores made over 8-17 holes)? [GA Recommendation: SHOULD HANDICAP]

- Are we going to handicap scores returned in Aggregate Teams Events? [GA Recommendation: SHOULD HANDICAP]
- Are we going to handicap scores returned in Pro-Am Events? [GA Recommendation: SHOULD HANDICAP]
- Are we going to handicap good scores returned in Corporate/Trade Days that have been conducted by an entity that is not affiliated with GA? [GA Recommendation: SHOULD HANDICAP]
- Are we going to handicap a score returned in a Competition that has been Declared Null and Void (where the conditions have not notably compromised the proper playing of the game for that player)? [GA Recommendation: SHOULD HANDICAP]
- Are we going to handicap scores returned in Novelty Events such as Bisque Par and Three-Ball Competitions? [GA Recommendation: SHOULD HANDICAP]
- Are we going to handicap the Score of a Player who has Played Within a Competition Field but who Hasn't Entered the Competition? [GA Recommendation: SHOULD HANDICAP]
- Are we going to handicap good scores from a Competition that has as a Playing Condition That Players are Limited to a Number of Clubs that is Less than 14? [GA Recommendation: SHOULD HANDICAP]

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9. Has my club determined how we will go about calculating and communicating *Daily Handicaps* to our members?

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10. Has my club worked through the process of re-designing our score cards to cater for the requirements of the handicap system changes?

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11. Has my club established a process for complying with the GOLF Link data provision requirements around the new Stableford Handicap Adjustment (SHA) regulation?

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12. Has my club worked through the process of considering whether to conduct Stableford competitions in conjunction with Stroke competitions?

- One direct outcome from the introduction of the Stableford Handicapping Adjustment (SHA) regulation is that it will lead to an increase in the incidence of Stableford competitions being conducted in conjunction with Stroke competitions.
- GA encourages all clubs to consider conducting Stableford competitions in conjunction with some Stroke competitions. That said, GA is mindful that whilst this will add value to some clubs, it will not necessarily align with the culture of some other clubs.
- Some Australian clubs have for a number of years conducted Stableford competitions in conjunction with some Stroke competitions. This has already proved to reduce the intimidation factor that some higher markers attach to Stroke events (especially on more challenging golf courses).
- This in turn leads to greater engagement in Stroke competitions.
- It provides an extra member service option to the player.
- It creates an additional revenue stream option for clubs.
- It is permitted by the Rules of Golf (see Decision 32-1/1).

13. Has my club worked through the process of determining what policies we will operate around the linking of different groups of scores for DSR calculation purposes? And will we calculate separate AM & PM DSRs?

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14. My club is intending to handicap 9-hole competitions (or competitions played over 8-17 holes) under the new handicapping regulations. Has my club familiarised itself with the relevant GA Q&A resource, including around the process for determining 9-hole *Daily Handicaps*?

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15. Is my club aware of how we will need to go about managing the process of creating Initial handicaps for our members under the new handicap system?

- Three 18-hole scores will be required before a handicap is calculated and allocated.
- Clubs may allow players to use 9-hole rounds for this purpose but they are under no obligation to do so. For this purpose, two 9-hole rounds = one 18-hole round.
- Clubs should enter scores immediately into GOLF Link upon receipt (ie don't wait for all 3).
- For the purpose of returning one of the initial 3 rounds, players are allocated a Temporary Daily Handicap of 45 for women and 36 for men.
- The Temporary Daily Handicap is not intended to enable the player to win prizes in a club competition.
- The Temporary Daily Handicap enables the player to know how many strokes they receive on each hole.
- The GOLF Link record will not display the temporary handicap for a player's initial rounds, nor will it display the number of Stableford points that the player made off the Temporary Daily Handicap. The GOLF Link record will only display the 'Played To' value for a player's initial rounds.

16. Is my club complying with the GOLF Link administrative requirements around a member joining my club when they already have a GOLF Link record from another club?

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17. Our members will want to know if their handicaps will be recalculated to Slope handicaps on the day we switchover to the new system. Is my club aware of how the re-calculation will work?

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18. My club regularly operates the preferred lies local rule or the tee-up local rule. Is my club aware of how the new regulations around this will work?

- The 'preferred lies' / 'tee-up' box is to be completely removed from GOLF Link.
- In the vast majority of cases, the 'preferred lies' local rule only serves to NORMALISE conditions – (ie the impact is to cancel out the increase in difficulty caused by heavy conditions or of decreased turf quality). It does not make conditions notably easier than the average conditions the course raters assumed would occur at your club. So no adjustment to your ratings will be warranted in the vast majority of cases.

- However, if you are ever in a situation where your course clearly becomes easier than what it would normally be as a result of the operation of either of these local rules, you should contact your State Association.
- State Associations will adjust Scratch Ratings in GOLF Link where appropriate.

**19. My club from time to time experiences large increases or decreases in fairway roll. Has my club made arrangements around contacting our State Association to discuss a changed Scratch Rating for the period we will have large increases or decreases in fairway roll?**

- Clubs that from time to time experience large increases or decreases in fairway roll (eg due to summer dryness) should contact their State Association.
- State Associations will adjust Scratch Ratings in GOLF Link where appropriate.

**20. When Slope comes in, my club is looking at playing competitions from different tees. Has my club worked through the process of determining whether we will adjust net scores to cater for any differences in the Scratch Ratings (and total par) of the sets of tees that will be in operation?**

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**21. Is the Handicapping Authority at my club aware of how the following new regulation will work and when to apply it – “Manual Bonus Reduction for Exceptional Net Score”? (Note: A club should only effect a Manual Bonus Reduction if it considers that the normal calculation process has not produced an appropriate reduction. See Section 16 of the new handicap system.)**

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**22. Has the Handicapping Authority at my club worked with the committee in charge of each competition conducted by the club to determine whether or not to adopt the GA recommendation that any player whose *GA Handicap* has reverted to provisional status (as per Section 14(iii)) will not be eligible to win a prize in a competition or to win a competition?**

**Provisional GA Handicap**

- If a player accrues five or more ‘No Score – Not Approved’ entries in their most recent 20 actual scores, their handicap status will automatically be downgraded by GOLF Link to ‘Provisional’.
- It is a club decision as to whether or not it wants to allow Provisional Handicap holders to enter club events. GA recommends that players with Provisional GA Handicaps be eligible to play in competition fields but that they NOT be eligible to win any prizes.
- A player’s handicap status will automatically return to ‘Normal’ when they no longer have five or more ‘No Score – Not Approved’ entries in their most recent 20 actual scores. This can be achieved either by returning enough new scores to flush the ‘No Score – Not Approved’ entries out of the player’s most recent 20 scores. Should a club wish, it may amend a ‘No Score – Not Approved’ entry in GOLF Link if a player subsequently reports the score they actually had.
- GA will have little sympathy for players whose handicap status reverts to Provisional – it is a fundamental obligation of the player to return their score card to the committee. If the player is not returning scores, their handicap will become distorted as a result of it being based on incomplete information.

**23. Has the Handicapping Authority at my club established whether to set competition grades with reference to *GA Handicaps* or with reference to *Daily Handicaps*?**

The GA recommendation around this is provided at Section 6(ii)(K) of the new handicap system. The recommendation is as follows: “To enable comparisons and consistency from club to club and from one set of tees to another set of tees, it is recommended that handicap competition grades be determined on the basis of GA Handicaps (given that it is considered preferable by the club to split players into separate handicap grades for handicap competition purposes).”