

WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM

**Official reference guide for
Australian administrators.**

OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE & SUPPORTING REGULATIONS

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION & OBLIGATIONS ON USERS

(A) GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM AND ITS ADMINISTRATION IN AUSTRALIA

- (i) This publication is titled: **“World Handicap System. Official reference guide for Australian administrators. OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE & SUPPORTING REGULATIONS”**. This publication is sometimes referred to as the *“WHS Reference Guide”*.
- (ii) The abbreviation for World Handicap System is ‘WHS’.
- (iii) ‘GOLF Link’ is Golf Australia’s national computerised handicapping service. The GA Handicap and handicap record for every Australian golfer is available for public view on www.golf.org.au.
- (iii) The World Handicap System (WHS) is the official GA regulatory code governing women’s handicapping in Australia AND men’s handicapping in Australia. Whilst it provides a single methodology for both women’s handicapping and men’s handicapping, it does not provide for single-gender handicaps. The WHS requires that women’s handicaps determined under this System be determined in accordance with women’s scores and standards, and that men’s handicaps determined under this System be determined in accordance with men’s scores and standards.
- (iv) Due to data protection laws, Australia’s national computerised handicapping service (GOLF Link) is not configured under the World Handicap System to integrate with a computerised handicapping service in any other country. It is entirely the responsibility of a visiting international player to ensure their scores are returned to their home club as soon as the PCC is available.
- (v) GA’s principal objective in issuing handicaps is to provide all competitors in a net competition with an equal chance of achieving success. Net competitions by their nature should see a mix of all players enjoying various levels of success – specific players should not regularly perform at a level that is clearly superior to average net performance levels. The GA website provides expected performance standards for players of each level of handicap – www.golf.org.au/handicapping-reports. Should a club identify that one of its members is exhibiting regularity of performances in official net stroke play competitions (including Stableford, Par, and Maximum Score) or in net match play competitions that are clearly superior (either in terms of wins, or in terms of other very good results) to the performances of a typical player, then GA will consider that the standard handicap system algorithms are failing to determine a handicap that meets the principal objective of the WHS. In such cases the club will be obliged by the WHS to review the player’s GA Handicap. The *WHS Reference Guide* includes a section which sets out the steps a club needs to follow to make a decision to amend a member’s GA Handicap – see the Section titled **“MANUAL OVERRIDE BY CLUB OF NORMAL HANDICAP CALCULATION PROCESS”**.

(B) LEGAL & PERMISSIONS TO USE HANDICAPS ISSUED UNDER THE WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM

- (i) GA delegates to its Member Associations the power to administer on its behalf the handicapping of all players who are members of clubs affiliated with such Associations. Any disputes shall be referred to GA whose decision shall be final and binding. An interpretation of a regulation contained within the WHS, or a decision in relation to the WHS, which is supplied in writing by GA will be deemed to have full authority under the WHS and will supersede any alternate position which may exist on the same point.
- (ii) Any handicap administered by an affiliated Australian golf club, and calculated in accordance with the World Handicap System, is owned by GA. All handicaps displayed on www.golf.org.au and that are calculated in accordance (or fundamentally in accordance) with the World Handicap System are owned by GA. Use by a golfer of a handicap that is owned by GA is only permitted under licence granted by GA to the player as an extension of their golf club’s affiliation privileges, or as otherwise permitted by GA. Such licence may be revoked or suspended by GA in accordance with the provisions of the World Handicap System, and otherwise in circumstances considered by GA to be exceptional.
- (iii) Use of the World Handicap System in Australia by a club or entity that is not affiliated to Golf Australia, or that has not otherwise been explicitly authorised by Golf Australia, is prohibited by The R&A and the United States Golf Association.

(C) OBLIGATIONS ON PLAYERS UNDER THE WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM

- (i) The WHS is based on the assumption that every player will endeavour to make the best score they can at each hole in every round they play and that they will report every eligible score to their Home Club’s Handicapping Authority, regardless of where the round was played. Players who fail to meet this requirement are effectively operating outside the WHS and, at the discretion of their club’s Handicapping Authority, may have their GA Handicap re-assessed or withdrawn.

- (ii) By using a handicap allocated under the WHS, the player acknowledges that certain information may be made publicly available on a GA authorised webpage (including a club, Member Association, or GOLF Link webpage) for the purposes of administering the WHS. Player information that may be displayed (at the discretion of GA) includes:

- Name.
- GOLF Link number.
- Club name.
- Information relevant to their scoring and handicapping history.
- Any determination made by a club, Member Association or GA (or made under a review of such decision) to adjust, freeze or suspend a GA Handicap, or to suspend or terminate a player's membership of any golf club.

Note: GA will be bound by all relevant privacy legislation. Any request to remove such information from a GA authorised website must be made in writing and will be considered by the website owner or GA.

- (iii) By using a handicap allocated under the World Handicap System, the player agrees to be bound by the World Handicap System together with the provisions set out in this WHS Reference Guide.
- (iv) Players awaiting reinstatement to Amateur Status (or players who are not Amateur Golfers) after having lost their Amateur Status by virtue of accepting a prize of excessive value for performance in a net element of a handicap competition are not eligible to hold a GA Handicap.

(D) CLUB 'HANDICAPPING AUTHORITY'

A club's 'Handicapping Authority' is an individual or committee or group that is permitted by a club or other appropriate entity to exercise the authority granted to that club or entity by the WHS.

(E) HOME CLUB

(i) Designating a Home Club

If a player is a member of multiple golf clubs, they must designate one club as their Home Club, to be responsible for maintaining their GA Handicap. A player should decide which golf club to designate as their home club based on one or more of the following criteria:

- Proximity to primary residence,
- Frequency of play, and/or
- The golf club where they submit most of their scores.

Should a player's primary residence change on a regular basis such that different clubs satisfy the above criteria at different times of the year, the player should consider changing their Home Club accordingly. Players must not designate a Home Club for the purpose of obtaining a GA Handicap that could give them an unfair advantage.

If a player is a member of only one club, that club is automatically their Home Club.

Note: Any club of which a player is a member, or a Member Association, or GA has the authority to adjust, freeze, or suspend that player's GA Handicap.

(ii) Player Who Belongs to an Australian Golf Club or Clubs and to Golf Club/s Outside of Australia

- Where a player is a member of an Australian club/s, and is also a member of a club located in a jurisdiction outside of Australia, the player is required by Golf Australia to have an Australian Home Club that is responsible for administering a GA Handicap through GOLF Link.
- In addition to their GA Handicap, the player may be required by the other jurisdiction to hold a separate Handicap under that other jurisdiction. If this occurs, it is the player's responsibility to ensure all scores are entered into GOLF Link, and that they are also posted in accordance with the requirements of the other jurisdiction.
- Should there ever be a discrepancy between a player's GA Handicap and their Handicap as issued by a different Authorized Association, the Handicap within the jurisdiction where the round is being played should be used. When playing outside of either jurisdiction, the lowest Handicap should be used.

2. HANDICAP INFORMATION DISCLOSURE

No Australian affiliated club, association or other affiliated or non-affiliated body may make handicaps or records of handicaps calculated under the WHS available outside the environs of its golf facility, clubhouse or office. This prohibits the unauthorised display of handicap information on the internet and other forms of public media. For the purpose of

viewing members' handicap information outside the club environs, the club, association or other body may include a link on its internet site to www.golf.org.au, and/or other GOLF Link media facilities as advised from time to time.

3. CALCULATION OF HANDICAPS & HANDICAP STATUS

(A) TYPES OF OFFICIAL G.A. HANDICAP & TYPES OF HANDICAP STATUS

(i) GA Handicaps and Daily Handicaps

There are two types of official handicap allocated in Australia under the WHS; a GA Handicap and a Daily Handicap. The GA Handicap is not designed for use in handicap competition play; rather it is GA's assessment of the relative golfing ability of a player on a course with a neutral Slope Rating. The Daily Handicap is the handicap to be used in handicap competition play. The GA Handicap is one of the factors used in the calculation of the Daily Handicap.

(ii) Handicaps for Men and Handicaps for Women

Only a female may hold a Women's GA Handicap or a Women's Daily Handicap. Only a male may hold a Men's GA Handicap or a Men's Daily Handicap. Where the term 'GA Handicap' is used in the context of the WHS, it is deemed to mean either 'Women's GA Handicap' or 'Men's GA Handicap' or both, as the appropriate context determines. Where the term 'Daily Handicap' is used in the context of the WHS, it is deemed to mean either 'Women's Daily Handicap' or 'Men's Daily Handicap' or both, as the appropriate context determines.

Note: The WHS requires that women's handicaps determined under the WHS be determined in accordance with women's scores and standards, and that men's handicaps determined under the WHS be determined in accordance with men's scores and standards.

(iii) Professional Golfers

Whilst a professional golfer, or a player awaiting reinstatement to Amateur Status, may hold a GA Handicap, the WHS does not restrict a committee from operating a condition limiting entry to any (or all) event(s) it controls to Amateurs only (or to Professionals only). (Exception: Players awaiting reinstatement to Amateur Status (or players who are not Amateur Golfers) after having lost their Amateur Status by virtue of accepting a prize of excessive value for performance in a net element of a handicap competition are not eligible to hold a GA Handicap.)

(iv) Types of Handicap Status

There are six different types of status that may apply to a GA Handicap. Only one status will apply to a GA Handicap at any given time. The six different types of status are as follows:

- **Unallocated.** A player's GA Handicap status is "Unallocated" when they have a GOLF Link record which contains less than three 18-hole 'Score Differentials', and when none of the other five handicap status options apply (an 18-hole 'Score Differential' created from the combination of two 9-hole 'Score Differentials' will be considered to be an 18-hole 'Score Differential' for this purpose).
- **Normal.** This is the default status for a GA Handicap. It applies when the player's GOLF Link record contains more than two 18-hole 'Score Differentials', and when none of the other five handicap status options apply (an 18-hole 'Score Differential' created from the combination of two 9-hole 'Score Differentials' will be considered to be an 18-hole 'Score Differential' for this purpose).
- **Frozen.** A Frozen GA Handicap is a GA Handicap that is not permitted to increase beyond a specific value for a stipulated period of time as outlined within this *WHS Reference Guide*.
- **Provisional.** A handicap will lose its full status in the event that a player should accrue in their most recent 20 rounds five or more entries with a status of 'No Score – Not Approved' (note: full status is automatically regained upon the number of 'No Score – Not Approved' entries in the player's most recent 20 rounds decreasing to four or less). Such a handicap will be known as a "Provisional GA Handicap". GA recommends that players with Provisional GA Handicaps will not be eligible to win prizes in competitions which have as a condition of entry a requirement that competitors hold GA Handicaps.
- **Suspended.** A Suspended GA Handicap is a GA Handicap that has been rendered completely inactive for a stipulated period of time (or a stipulated minimum period of time) as outlined within this *WHS Reference Guide*.
- **Lapsed.** A player's GA Handicap is considered to be "Lapsed" if they are not a current member of an affiliated body and if they have a GOLF Link record which contains more than two 18-hole 'Score Differentials', and when none of the other five handicap status options apply (an 18-hole 'Score Differential' created from the combination of two 9-hole 'Score Differentials' will be considered to be an 18-hole 'Score Differential' for this purpose).

(B) WHAT IS A 'SCORE DIFFERENTIAL'?

Your 'Score Differentials' are the most important element in the calculation of your GA Handicap. The 'Score Differentials' are what your GA Handicap is based on.

The 'Score Differential' for a round is our calculation of the handicap you actually played to in that round. To generate a 'Score Differential' we use the global method to standardise your score to what it would have been had you played from a set of tees with neutral difficulty. (A set of tees with neutral difficulty has a Slope Rating of 113.) What this means is that a score on a difficult course will be made a little better by the standardisation process. And a score on a less-challenging course will be made a little higher. Because of this standardisation process, your 'Score Differential' for a round can be directly compared with a 'Score Differential' for any other player on any other golf course. But the most important outcome of the standardisation process is that your GA Handicap can be directly compared with any other person's GA Handicap (and anyone else who has a handicap calculated under the World Handicap System), regardless of the course and tees where they play most of their golf. This is what makes handicaps portable around the world and handicap competitions fair.

The WHS formula for 'Score Differential' is:

$$((36 - \text{Stableford Score}) + \text{Daily Handicap} + \text{Par} - (\text{Scratch Rating} + \text{PCC})) \times (113 \div \text{Slope Rating})$$

- 'Score Differentials' are calculated to one decimal place. The result of the calculation is rounded to the nearest tenth.)
- 0.35 rounds to 0.4, 0.3501 rounds to 0.4, 0.3499 rounds to 0.3, 0.55 rounds to 0.6, 0.5501 rounds to 0.6, 5.35 rounds to 5.4, 5.3501 rounds to 5.4, 5.55 rounds to 5.6, 5.5501 rounds to 5.6, etc.
- +0.35 rounds to +0.3, +0.3501 rounds to +0.4, +0.55 rounds to +0.5, +0.5501 rounds to +0.6, +5.35 rounds to +5.3, +5.3501 rounds to +5.4, +5.55 rounds to +5.5, +5.5501 rounds to +5.6, etc.
- There is no upper limit or lower limit for the calculation of a 'Score Differential'.
- When two 9-hole scores are combined to form an 18-hole score (in accordance with the process described in the Section of this *WHS Reference Guide* titled 'SCORES RETURNED FROM PLAY OF ANYWHERE BETWEEN 8 AND 17 HOLES'), the 18-hole 'Score Differential' is achieved by adding together both 9-hole 'Score Differentials', and then rounding to one decimal place.

(C) G.A. HANDICAP CALCULATION PROCESS – PLAYER WITH 20 OR MORE SCORES IN HANDICAP RECORD

- For people who have at least 20 scores in their handicap record, their GA Handicap will be calculated simply by averaging the best 8 of their most recent 20 'Score Differentials'. Unless the Cap Regulation applies.
- The Cap regulation eliminates the capacity for extreme outward movements of a GA Handicap within short spaces of time. As a result, a temporary loss of form will not cause a GA Handicap to move too far from a level which is consistent with the player's underlying ability.
- The Cap regulation permits a player's GA Handicap to increase at 100% of the '8 of 20 scores' calculation UNTIL it reaches 3 strokes above their 'Low GA Handicap'. (The 'Low GA Handicap' is defined as being the best GA Handicap the player has achieved during the 12-month period that preceded their most recent round.)
- Once in this Soft Cap zone, GOLF Link only allows the player's GA Handicap to increase by 50% of the calculated amount – unless it reaches the Hard Cap.
- The Hard Cap is an absolute limit on the upward movement of a GA Handicap. When the player's NEXT round is processed through GOLF Link, the GA Handicap that will be calculated for them can not be any more than 5 strokes above their current 'Low GA Handicap'.
- The Cap Regulation is only permitted to impact a player's handicap once they have more than 20 scores in their handicap record.

(D) G.A. HANDICAP CALCULATION PROCESS – PLAYER WITH FEWER THAN 20 SCORES IN HANDICAP RECORD

For people who have fewer than 20 rounds in their handicap record, the table below is used to calculate their GA Handicap. The table determines the number of 'Score Differentials' from the player's handicap record on www.golf.org.au that are to be included in the calculation, as well as any adjustment that needs to be automatically applied.

Number of rounds in handicap record	Number of 'SCORE DIFFERENTIALS' (as shown on a player's handicap record on www.golf.org.au) to be used in GA Handicap calculation	Adjustment
3	Lowest 1	-2.0
4	Lowest 1	-1.0
5	Lowest 1	0
6	Average of lowest 2	-1.0
7 or 8	Average of lowest 2	0
9 to 11	Average of lowest 3	0
12 to 14	Average of lowest 4	0
15 or 16	Average of lowest 5	0
17 or 18	Average of lowest 6	0
19	Average of lowest 7	0
20	Average of lowest 8	0

(E) OTHER POINTS TO NOTE IN THE CALCULATION OF A G.A. HANDICAP

- GA Handicaps are calculated to one decimal place. The result of the calculation is rounded to the nearest tenth.
- 0.35 rounds to 0.4, 0.3501 rounds to 0.4, 0.55 rounds to 0.6, 0.5501 rounds to 0.6, 5.35 rounds to 5.4, 5.3501 rounds to 5.4, 5.55 rounds to 5.6, 5.5501 rounds to 5.6, etc.
- +0.35 rounds to +0.3, +0.3501 rounds to +0.4, +0.55 rounds to +0.5, +0.5501 rounds to +0.6, +5.35 rounds to +5.3, +5.3501 rounds to +5.4, +5.55 rounds to +5.5, +5.5501 rounds to +5.6, etc.
- The upper limit for the calculation of a GA Handicap is 54.0.

(F) EXCEPTIONAL SCORE REDUCTION REGULATION

When an exceptional score is processed through GOLF Link, the player's GA Handicap will be automatically reduced in accordance with the following adjustment table:

Number of strokes the 'Score Differential' is lower than a player's GA Handicap in effect when the round was played	Exceptional score reduction
7.0 – 9.9	-1.0
10.0 or more	-2.0

- A single exceptional score will trigger a reduction.
- Reductions for multiple exceptional scores are applied cumulatively.
- A reduction is automatically applied within the calculation of a player's updated GA Handicap following the submission of an exceptional score.
- A reduction for an exceptional score is applied by adjusting each of the most recent 20 'Score Differentials' in the player's handicap record, which includes the 'Score Differential' for the exceptional score round. As a result, the impact of the reduction will remain after the next score is submitted, but it will dilute over time as new scores are submitted.
- Where there are fewer than 20 scores in a player's handicap record at the time an exceptional score is submitted, the reduction is applied by adjusting all of the 'Score Differentials' recorded in the player's handicap record, which includes the exceptional score.
- A club is permitted to override any adjustment for an exceptional score if it considers that the adjustment would result in a player's GA Handicap not being a fair reflection of their demonstrated ability.

(G) STABLEFORD HANDICAPPING ADJUSTMENT – HANDICAPPING STROKE & MAXIMUM SCORE EVENTS

- For handicapping, all scores from Stroke competitions and Maximum Score competitions must be converted to (and processed as) Stableford scores. (Where the competition is Stroke or Maximum Score, the Stroke or Maximum Score result is the Competition Score; and the Stableford Score is the Handicapping Score.)
- Players and clubs do not need to record Stableford scores in Par competitions. Any round played under the Par scoring system is automatically converted by GOLF Link into a Stableford score by adding 36 points to the player's final result. For example, GOLF Link will convert a score of 4 down into 32 points; the score of 32 points is the player's Handicapping Score.
- If a player is competing in a Stroke, Par, or Maximum Score competition, their Stableford score is disregarded when assessing Competition placings.

(i) What is the purpose of the Stableford Handicapping Adjustment regulation?

- To reduce the impact of high hole scores in order to make handicaps more representative of a player's potential ability.
- To make all handicaps as equitable as possible by using a uniform score type for handicapping. (Note: 78% of handicapping scores across Australia are Stableford or Par. This regulation enables us to use the small proportion of handicapping scores that are from Stroke or Maximum Score competitions in a way that is consistent with the dominant score type of Stableford and Par.) The SHA regulation ensures there is a uniform score type used for handicapping and that all Australian handicaps are 'Stableford handicaps'. Without SHA, some players would have 'Stableford handicaps' and other players would have hybrid handicaps based on a mix of Stableford and Stroke.

(ii) In Stroke competitions and Maximum Score competitions, how does my club comply with the GOLF Link data provision requirements of the SHA regulation?

- Members of clubs with hole-by-hole computerised scoring systems have their Stableford scores automatically calculated for them by their club computer system.
- Members of clubs without hole-by-hole computerised scoring systems need to list on their scorecard a total stroke score and a total Stableford score. As a result, the exact same work is required of players in a Stroke or Maximum Score competition as for a Stableford competition (except they also have to add up their hole-by-hole stroke scores to get an 18-hole stroke total). Whilst the Rules of Golf do not require a player to record Stableford scores, club sanctions should be applied to players who refuse to assist their Committee (eg player not eligible to enter the NEXT competition – GA will support clubs in writing on this). It is fundamental to the culture of Australian golf that players assist their club committees by recording Stableford scores on their scorecards when required.

(H) HOW TO CALCULATE A DAILY HANDICAP UNDER THE W.H.S.

❖ **THE W.H.S. FORMULA FOR AN 18-HOLE DAILY HANDICAP =**
 $((GA \text{ Handicap} \times \text{Slope Rating} \div 113) + (\text{Scratch Rating minus Par})) \times 0.93.$

❖ **THE W.H.S. FORMULA FOR A 9-HOLE DAILY HANDICAP =**
 $((GA \text{ Handicap} \times \text{Slope Rating} \div 113) + ((\text{Scratch Rating minus Par}) \times 2)) \times 0.93.$

- The result of the calculation is rounded to the nearest whole number.
- 0.5 rounds to 1, 0.501 rounds to 1, 10.5 rounds to 11, 10.501 rounds to 11, 20.5 rounds to 21, 20.501 rounds to 21, etc.
- +0.5 rounds to Scratch, +0.501 rounds to +1, +1.5 rounds to +1, +1.501 rounds to +2, +2.5 rounds to +2, +2.501 rounds to +3, etc.
- There is no upper limit or lower limit on the calculation of a Daily Handicap.
- **Why do we include a 0.93 multiplication in the calculation of a Daily Handicap?** The 0.93 factor is called 'the Multiplier'. The Multiplier is a balancing factor designed to offset the impact of players on different handicap levels having different levels of consistency. In general, skilled players are more consistent than less-skilled players, so if we didn't have the Multiplier there would be a strong advantage for high-handicap players in handicap competitions.
- **USE OF DAILY HANDICAPS FOR 9-HOLE ROUNDS:** Committees should use the 18-hole stroke index to determine how many handicap strokes each player will receive for the 9 holes being played. Consider the following example: Michelle has a Daily Handicap of 3 on a course with the following stroke index: the number 1 stroke index hole is the 4th, the number 2 stroke index hole is the 13th, and the number 3 stroke index hole is the 6th. When Michelle plays holes 1-9, she will receive strokes on the 4th and the 6th in Stableford or Par,

and in Stroke Play she will receive 2 strokes for that 9. When Michelle plays holes 10-18, she will receive a stroke on the 13th in Stableford or Par, and in Stroke Play she will receive 1 stroke for that 9.

(I) DAILY HANDICAPS AND RESULTS OF MULTI-TEE & MIXED-GENDER COMPETITIONS

The World Handicap System calculation for a Daily Handicap includes an adjustment for the difference between the Scratch Rating and the Par of the set of tees being played.

- This makes playing to par the universal measure of whether a player has played to their handicap, regardless of the course or set of tees.
- As a result, in a handicap competition played from two or more sets of tees (such as in mixed-gender or mixed-ability events), the appropriate comparison of two players who have played from different sets of tees is their net scores in relation to par.
- It is not appropriate to use any other comparison (such as just their net scores).

(i) Match Play formats. The result of each hole should be determined by each side's score in relation to par.

- As a player's net (or gross) status versus par for the round is compared directly against that of every other player involved in the match, no additional strokes are added to the standard calculation of the Daily Handicap when the par is different between tees.
- For example in a handicap match, the 13th hole is a par 5 for women and a par 4 for men. Michelle has a net 6 and David has a net 5. Michelle and David both have 1-over par for the hole so the hole is tied.
- For gross competitions, it is a player's gross score in relation to par that should be used. After taking this into consideration, the Committee should set the tee markers in positions that it believes are most likely to achieve equitable outcomes.

(ii) Medal Play formats. Under the WHS in Australia, all results should be determined by using a player's score relative to par.

- Each player's net (or gross) status versus par for the round is compared directly against that of every other player – no adjustment applies when par is different between tees.
- For example in a handicap medal competition, a course is par 74 for women and par 72 for men. Michelle has net 76 which is 2 over par, and David has net 75 which is 3 over par. 2 over is better than 3 over so Michelle finishes ahead of David.
- Within your competition management software, a column is included in the WHS display of Stroke competition results which lists each player's net score versus par. It is this column that your software now uses to determine the finishing positions in a competition.
- For gross competitions, it is a player's gross score in relation to par that should be used. After taking this into consideration, the Committee should set the tee markers in positions that it believes are most likely to achieve equitable outcomes. Alternatively, the Committee may choose to adjust scores by the difference in Scratch Ratings if it feels this would be more practicable and equitable.

(iii) Stableford formats. Each player's total number of Stableford points for the round is compared directly against that of every other player – no adjustment applies when the par is different between tees.

(iv) Par formats. Each player's Par result for the round is compared directly against that of every other player – no adjustment applies when the par is different between tees.

Note: The R&A and the United States Golf Association have confirmed that the Rules of Golf permit a Committee to specify that a certain group of players in a competition may start a hole from a different teeing ground to other players in the same competition. This includes for all forms stroke play and match play.

(J) PLAYER FAILS TO RETURN SCORECARD

If a player fails (for a reason which is not approved by the committee in charge of the competition) to post an acceptable score as soon as practicable after completion of their round, the following process should be followed:

- The round is to be recorded in GOLF Link with the status of 'No Score – Not Approved' (provided the Stipulated Round was intended to be anywhere from 8 to 18 holes inclusive).
- However, if the committee considers the player is most likely to have had a 'good' score, it should NOT use the 'No Score – Not Approved' option. Instead it should enter a score for the player for that round equivalent to the best/lowest 'Score Differential' of the player's most recent previous 19 'Score Differentials' AND select the GOLF Link 'Non-Standard Entry' score status option.
- Where a committee records a player's score status for a round as either 'Non-Standard Entry' or 'No Score – Not Approved', but then subsequently becomes aware of the score the player actually had, it SHOULD replace the original entry with the score the player had.

Note i: See the sub-section of this *WHS Reference Guide* titled “GOLF Link Score Status Options – Operational Notes & Handicap Implications” for operational notes and handicapping implications of the above stipulated score statuses.

Note ii: A handicap will lose its full status in the event that a player should accrue in their most recent 20 rounds five or more entries with a status of ‘No Score – Not Approved’. Such a handicap will be known as a “Provisional GA Handicap”.

(K) MANUAL HANDICAP ADJUSTMENTS

When a club’s GOLF Link administrator uses the ‘Adjust Handicap’ function in GOLF Link, GOLF Link will automatically adjust the player’s most recent 20 ‘Score Differentials’ in their handicap record. This action will adjust the player’s GA Handicap to the desired figure. Note: Non-GOLF Link clubs will need to ensure their calculation processes replicate those performed by GOLF Link.

(L) RECALCULATION OF HANDICAP AFTER NEW SCORE PROCESSED

Eligible scores are to be processed through GOLF Link as soon as practicable. GOLF Link will re-calculate a player’s GA Handicap immediately upon the receipt of a new score for that player. Note: Non-GOLF Link clubs will need to ensure their calculation processes replicate those performed by GOLF Link.

(M) PLAYER COMPETES IN COMPETITION BEFORE PREVIOUS HANDICAP-ALTERING SCORE IS PROCESSED

- (i) In a situation where a player competes in a competition round before a previous handicap-altering score is processed, their correct GA Handicap will be that displayed on www.golf.org.au or (for clubs not operating within the GOLF Link system) such other display item as designated by their Home Club (even if they are aware of what their new GA Handicap will be).
- (ii) The committee in charge of a competition may require a player to play off the Daily Handicap appropriate to what their new GA Handicap will be, even if their GA Handicap is yet to be officially adjusted.
- (iii) A committee may also adjust a player’s Daily Handicap and net score after the player has submitted their scorecard in a stroke play competition. In such an instance, the listing of the incorrect Daily Handicap is considered to be a committee error and consequently the player is not penalised.
- (iv) In a match play competition, a player’s Daily Handicap may not be altered after their round has commenced. Any queries regarding a player’s handicap in match play must be raised with the committee in charge of the competition prior to the commencement of the player’s round.

(N) GOLF LINK SCORE STATUS OPTIONS – OPERATIONAL NOTES & HANDICAP IMPLICATIONS

The various GOLF Link score status options and their associated handicap implications are as follows (see the sub-section of this *WHS Reference Guide* titled “Common Handicapping Scenarios – Procedures for Pro Shops & Administrators” for examples of practical application):

(i) “Normal Score”

- This is a score from a round that was played and submitted in accordance with the Rules of Golf and the Rules of Handicapping.
- The player’s entire intended round has been played (whether 9 holes or 18 holes).
- If it is one of the player’s most recent 20 scores, its ‘Score Differential’ is eligible to be considered for use in the calculation of the player’s current GA Handicap.

(ii) “No Score – Not Approved”

- When a round has a status of “No Score – Not Approved”, the player’s ‘Score Differential’ for that round will be deemed to be the equivalent of the worst ‘Score Differential’ of the player’s 19 most-recent previous 18-hole ‘Score Differentials’ (an 18-hole ‘Score Differential’ created from the combination of two 9-hole ‘Score Differentials’ will be considered to be an 18-hole ‘Score Differential’ for this purpose). Provided the Stipulated Round was intended to be anywhere from 8-18 holes inclusive, an 18-hole “No Score – Not Approved” entry will be inserted into the player’s GOLF Link record as a result of this action. (Note: If the player’s handicap record contains less than 19 scores, the player’s ‘Score Differential’ for that round will be deemed to be the equivalent of the worst ‘Score Differential’ of all scores contained in the player’s handicap record.)
- If the entry falls within the timeframe of the player’s most recent 20 rounds, the ‘Score Differential’ for the “No Score – Not Approved” round is counted as one of the most-recent 20 rounds.

Note i: A GA Handicap will lose its full status in the event that a player accrues five or more entries with a status of “No Score – Not Approved” within their most recent 20 rounds. Such a GA Handicap will be known as a “Provisional GA Handicap”.

Note ii: The GOLF Link Tier 1 website provides a function which enables clubs to produce a report listing the quantity of “No Score – Not Approved” entries that each member has in their most recent rounds. (Ring the GOLF Link Customer Service Centre on 1300 650 750 with any queries.)

(iii) “No Score – Approved”

- The entry will be listed in the player’s handicap record as an historical record that the player started a round. However, the entry in the player’s handicap record for this round is disregarded by GOLF Link when identifying the player’s most recent 20 rounds for the purpose of calculating their GA Handicap.

(iv) “Illegitimate Score”

- The entry will be listed in the player’s handicap record as an historical record that the player started a round. However, the entry in the player’s handicap record for this round is disregarded by GOLF Link when identifying the player’s most recent 20 rounds for the purpose of calculating their GA Handicap.

(v) “Non-Standard Entry”

- This Score Status option is used when:
 - (a) A player competes in a Stableford, Par, or Maximum Score competition and does not complete the entire intended round (whether 9 holes or 18 holes) but returns a legitimate scorecard.
 - (b) A player (who has played at least 8 holes) has failed to complete all holes in a Stroke competition and where the Handicapping Authority wishes to use the score for handicapping purposes.
 - (c) A player in Stroke, Maximum Score, Par, or Stableford completes all holes, is disqualified, and the Handicapping Authority wishes to use the score for handicapping purposes (this should happen for example when the only breach is a technical one such as failure to sign scorecard, or failure to record handicap on scorecard).
- The club’s GOLF Link administrator will enter into GOLF Link the player’s handicapping score and also where applicable their competition score.
- Where applicable, the competition score will be included in the list of results for that competition and will be used in the determination of prizes.
- If for a ‘Non-Standard Entry’ there is a handicapping score entered but no competition score entered, on www.golf.org.au the player’s competition score entry for this round will be displayed as ‘-’.
- If it is one of the player’s most recent 20 scores, its ‘Score Differential’ is eligible to be considered for use in the calculation of the player’s current GA Handicap.

Note: Non-GOLF Link clubs will need to ensure their calculation processes replicate those performed by GOLF Link.

(O) LIFE OF SCORES & LAPSED HANDICAPS

- (i) There is no requirement for any of a player’s most recent 20 scores to have been returned within a specific timeframe in order to be used in the calculation of their GA Handicap.
- (ii) When a player changes from one Home Club to another, the ‘new’ Home Club MUST perform a ‘Home Club Transfer’. (Queries relating to this process should be directed to the GOLF Link Customer Service Centre on 1300 650 750.) A new GOLF Link record must not be created.
- (iii) If a player does not have current membership of an affiliated body, their GA Handicap will be considered to be Lapsed and will have no official status. All data in the player’s GOLF Link record will be retained in the GOLF Link database, awaiting complete reactivation in the event the player re-joins an affiliated body.

(P) MAXIMUM HANDICAPS, PROVISIONAL HANDICAPS, AND CLUB HANDICAPS

- (i) The maximum GA Handicap under the WHS is 54.0 (the same limit applies for both females and males). Neither GA nor any club has the capacity under the WHS to choose a lower GA Handicap limit than 54.0.
- (ii) Under the WHS, clubs have complete flexibility to set their own Daily Handicap limits for any (or all) of their competitions (for example 36 for men & 45 for women, or 54 for both, etc). Clubs should ensure that the values they want are set in the software system they use. The club’s software provider will be able to assist with guidance on this.
- (iii) Whilst The R&A and USGA have designed the WHS regulations to include an option for Committees to choose to have unlimited Daily Handicaps, GA has permitted some Tier 3 third-party software providers to initially not support Daily Handicaps above 54.
- (iv) A GA Handicap will lose its full status in the event that a player should accrue in their most recent 20 scores five or more entries with a status of ‘No Score – Not Approved’ (note: full status is automatically regained upon the number of ‘No Score – Not Approved’ entries in the player’s most recent 20 scores decreasing to four or less). Such a handicap will be known as a “Provisional GA Handicap”. GA recommends that players with Provisional

GA Handicaps not be eligible to win prizes in competitions which have as a condition of entry a requirement that competitors hold GA Handicaps.

Note: The GOLF Link Tier 1 website provides a function which enables clubs to produce a report listing the quantity of 'No Score – Not Approved' entries each member has in their most recent 20 scores. (Ring the GOLF Link Customer Service Centre on 1300 650 750 with any queries.)

- (v) GOLF Link will not maintain or record "Club Handicaps". Should a committee consider it appropriate, it may allocate selected members with internal "Club Handicaps". It will be solely for the respective committee to determine how it calculates the "Club Handicaps" of its members. When entering a score into a player's GOLF Link handicap record (or when processing a competition for handicap purposes), it is the player's Daily Handicap that must be used to calculate a net score, NOT any Club Handicap that may have been used for the purposes of determining competition placings, allocation of prizes, or event winners or results.

4. HOW COURSE RATINGS ARE USED IN THE CALCULATION OF HANDICAPS

There are three types of course ratings that work in concert with each other to support effective handicapping: Scratch Ratings, Slope Ratings, and PCCs (PCC is an abbreviation for Playing Conditions Calculation).

(A) WHY DO WE NEED COURSE RATINGS?

- The objective of a course rating system is to enable us to standardise scores.
- A gross score must first be standardised before it can be used for handicapping.
- Standardisation enables us to meaningfully assess the value of a score, and to meaningfully compare it with all other scores. For example, is 78 a good score? In order to answer that question we need to know the difficulty of the course. (For example, 78 from the championship tees at The Australian Golf Club is a much better achievement than 78 on a par 3 course.)
- Course ratings are intended to precisely measure the difficulty a course presents to a golfer in the playing of their round.
- If the rating of a course is not a true reflection of the difficulty it presented to a golfer in the playing of a round, the player's standardised score for that round will be inaccurate. If the standardised score is inaccurate, the player's handicap will be distorted (ie if inputs are inaccurate, so must the output also be inaccurate).
- For this reason, every set of tees on every golf course has a Scratch Rating assessed for it by a group of State Association or GA experts.

(B) WHAT IS A SCRATCH RATING?

A Scratch Rating for women is the evaluation of how many strokes a woman with a GA Handicap of 0.0 (ie Scratch) would be expected to have when playing a course in normal playing conditions. A Scratch Rating for men is the evaluation of how many strokes a man with a GA Handicap of 0.0 (ie Scratch) would be expected to have when playing a course in normal playing conditions. Where the term 'Scratch Rating' is used within the GA Handicap System, it is deemed to mean either a women's 'Scratch Rating' or a men's 'Scratch Rating' as the appropriate context determines. Scratch Ratings are assessed to the nearest whole number based on distance and other obstacles to the extent they affect the scoring ability of the player with a handicap of zero (with .5 being rounded to the next higher whole number). Note: 9-hole Scratch Ratings will increase in increments of .5 (.3-.7 inclusive rounds to .5, .8-.2 inclusive rounds to .0).

(C) WHAT IS A SLOPE RATING?

Slope Rating is the designation that indicates the relative playing difficulty of a course for players who are not scratch golfers (ie players who do not have a GA Handicap of 0.0) relative to the Scratch Rating of a course. A golf course of neutral playing difficulty has a Slope Rating of 113. The maximum Slope Rating is 155. The minimum Slope Rating is 55.

(D) HOW DO SLOPE RATINGS AND SCRATCH RATINGS WORK TOGETHER IN HANDICAPPING?

(i) What does Slope do?

Slope adjusts a player's handicap to the course they are playing by using that course's Slope Rating.

(ii) What is the aim of Slope?

The aim of Slope is to increase the portability of handicaps and to create a more level playing field for golfers.

(iii) What does the Slope Rating provide that the Scratch Rating doesn't?

Scratch Ratings are based solely on the challenge a golf course poses to an elite player, whereas the Slope Rating has factored into it the challenge posed to the elite player AS WELL as the challenge posed to the non-elite player.

(iv) How does this make things more equitable?

We all know that on a difficult course a high-marker's score tends to deteriorate to a greater extent than the score of an elite player. Just how much more is what Slope measures. For example, if Course A is harder than Course B, a high-marker may play off 28 on Course A and 24 on Course B. The elite player finds it easier to adjust, so they may play off 4 on Course A and 3 on Course B.

(v) Is it important to have Scratch Ratings as well as Slope Ratings?

We need both types of ratings. The Slope Rating and the Scratch Rating work in concert with each other. The Slope Rating is telling us how many more shots a player will need at a course in order to play to the Scratch Rating.

(vi) What are the features of Slope?

- Every set of tees on every golf course around the country has a Slope Rating which has been determined in accordance with the course rating system. The maximum Slope Rating is 155 (most difficult) and the minimum is 55 (least difficult). The Neutral Slope Rating is 113. Every set of tees also has a Scratch Rating.
- GOLF Link calculates a nationally-standardised handicap index for every player. This is called the GA Handicap.
- A GA Handicap is calculated by averaging the best 8 of a player's most recent 20 'Score Differentials' (which are all displayed in a player's handicap record on www.golf.org.au). However, every score in every player's score history will first be standardised by GOLF Link against a Slope Rating of 113. As a result, the GA Handicap will reflect a golfer's ability on a course which has the neutral Slope Rating of 113.
- The GA Handicap is not intended for use as a playing handicap. It is used in conjunction with the Slope Rating of the set of tees being played to calculate a golfer's playing handicap for the day. This is called the Daily Handicap.
- It is the GA Handicap that is displayed in a player's handicap record on www.golf.org.au.
- The further the player's GA Handicap is from Scratch, the greater will be the impact of the Slope Rating on their Daily Handicap.
- The Scratch Rating is the number of strokes that a player with a Scratch handicap (ie a player with a GA Handicap of 0.0) is expected to have. The Slope Rating indicates how much harder or easier the course will play for a player who is not a Scratch Marker.
- $\text{Daily Handicap} = (\text{GA Handicap} \times (\text{Slope Rating} \div 113) + (\text{Scratch Rating} - \text{Par})) \times 0.93$
- If that sounds difficult to work out, don't worry because GOLF Link will calculate it all for you. GA also provides every club with easy-to-use Daily Handicap look-up posters.

(E) WHAT IS THE P.C.C. AND WHAT ROLE DOES IT PLAY?

- The WHS features a statistical daily rating system. It is called PCC (Playing Conditions Calculation).
- The WHS daily rating formulas and regulations have been in full effect in Australia since May 2019.
- The PCC is displayed on your handicap record as an adjustment value (eg '+2' or '-1') rather than a value such as '68' or '72' which happened pre-WHS under the Australian DSR system.
- PCCs are permitted to range anywhere between -1 (ie easier conditions) and +3 (harder conditions).

(i) How does the Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC) system work?

Under the PCC system, GOLF Link assesses a current course rating adjustment for you each day. This adjustment value is appropriate to the conditions you actually experienced. GOLF Link does all of the work and provides the PCC immediately after the scores are processed. Through GOLF Link, the PCC system establishes:

- The expected average Stableford score for each player in the competition, based on their Daily Handicap; and
- The actual Stableford score for each player in the competition.

Then GOLF Link establishes the proportion of players who scored below expectation by one, two, three, etc Stableford points and similarly for those who scored above expectations.

- Using statistical concepts, it is possible to determine from these proportions the likely level by which the conditions were different from what is normal.

- The greater the field size, the more likely it is that a given level of variation in scores will lead to the conclusion that the variation is beyond normal random movements.
- The PCC formulas are quite conservative – the PCC value will only be different to zero if the scores clearly suggest then an adjustment is warranted. (18-hole PCCs will always be whole numbers. 9-hole PCCs are permitted to range anywhere between -0.5 (ie easier conditions) and +1.5 (harder conditions); 9-hole PCCs can have decimal values of '.0' or '.5'.)
- When processing scores through GOLF Link, the Handicapping Authority should link different groups of scores returned at a single club if it considers that these different groups of players have not encountered conditions that are clearly different. When different groups are linked, GOLF Link combines the score data to determine a common PCC for all of the linked groups. (Contact GOLF Link or your software provider if operational assistance is required.)
- If in the opinion of the Handicapping Authority, there is a clear change during the day to the conditions experienced by players in a single group (or it is typical for there to be a clear change during the day to the conditions), GA recommends that the field be split and that two separate PCCs be calculated. This is done by splitting the group in GOLF Link into 2 sub-groups (eg AM sub-group and PM sub-group). When this action is performed, the scores all stay in the correct competition datasets for competition and prize allocation purposes, however GOLF Link will handicap the morning players against an AM PCC and will handicap the PM players against a PM PCC. (Contact GOLF Link or your software provider if operational assistance is required.)

(iii) What is the benefit of making an assessment each day on whether any adjustment of the Scratch Rating is warranted to account for abnormal playing conditions?

- We all know that the difficulty of a golf course can vary substantially from day to day. Daily fluctuation can be caused by changed hole placements, varying green speeds & green firmness, and changed weather.
- With the vast majority of Australia's golfers playing in coastal cities that are prone to variable weather conditions, it is particularly important for Australia to have a handicap system that is sufficiently flexible to cater for daily movements in playing conditions. If we don't, we end up processing scores against inaccurate ratings, and that makes handicaps inaccurate.
- PCC leads to more stable and comparable handicaps than if the vagaries of fluctuations in conditions from day to day and season to season prevail.

(iv) What role in the handicap system does PCC actually perform in the calculation of a handicap?

- A player's gross score is compared against the PCC-adjusted Scratch Rating value in order to determine a player's 'Raw Score Differential' value for that round. (The 'Raw Score Differential' value is displayed in a player's handicap record on www.golf.org.au).
- PCCs are NOT used to retrospectively adjust the results of a competition that has already been played. When reading out competition results, if a player had 40 points, the Captain would announce that the player had 40 points (irrespective of the PCC).
- PCCs are NOT used to retrospectively adjust the Daily Handicap that a golfer played off in a competition that has already been played. When reading out competition results, if a player played off a Daily Handicap of 23, the Captain would announce that the player played off a Daily Handicap of 23 (irrespective of the PCC).

(v) Can the PCC strategy be summarised in one paragraph?

PCC helps to provide golfers with a rating that is a reflection of the conditions they played under. The formulas determine whether the difficulty presented at the time by the playing conditions was normal or different to normal.

(F) TEE UP AND PREFERRED LIES

The operation at a club of the Preferred Lies local rule, or of the Tee Up local rule, does not automatically change a course rating. In most instances across Australia, the operation at a club of these local rules will essentially serve to 'normalise' course difficulty (ie the impact is to cancel out the increase in difficulty caused by heavy conditions or of decreased turf quality). However, where a club is operating either, or both, of these local rules, and it believes there is a resultant clear impact to the difficulty of the course, it should contact its State Association or GA to establish whether a change to a course rating would be appropriate.

5. SCORES FOR HANDICAPPING PURPOSES

(A) REGULAR SINGLES COMPETITIONS AND CONFORMING SOCIAL SCORES

Scores established in all 18-hole singles stroke (includes Par, Stableford, Maximum Score, and Medal) competition rounds, and all Conforming Social Scores, that have been played at courses with a Scratch Rating determined in accordance with a system which is officially recognised by GA will be used for handicapping purposes – regardless of the country in which the round was played.

(B) CONFORMING SOCIAL SCORE

A Conforming Social Score will be deemed to have been made when the following has occurred:

- The player's Home Club has determined to accept Conforming Social Scores for handicapping. (Note: GA encourages the handicapping of these scores, provided it does not place an undue administrative burden on the golf club.) **The club's Handicapping Authority should have in place a policy stipulating whether or not such scores will be processed for handicapping (see Sub-Section T below).**
- The round has been played in accordance with the current Rules of Golf as approved by R&A Rules Limited.
- An attested scorecard has been submitted to the club's Handicapping Authority or its representative. The Marker must have accompanied the player for all of the holes for which they are attesting scores.
- The score format must be singles Stableford.
- The player has nominated prior to playing a stroke on their first hole to be played that the score is to count for handicapping purposes and the number of holes they will play. If the round is played at the player's Home Club, or is being controlled by the player's Home Club, such nomination must be in accordance with the requirements of the Handicapping Authority of the player's Home Club.
- If the round is not played at the player's Home Club (whether in Australia or overseas) and is not being controlled by the player's Home Club, such nomination must be in accordance with a procedure that is acceptable to the player's Home Club.

Note i: There is nothing in the WHS, or in any other GA regulatory code, which prevents a Handicapping Authority from deeming specific individuals, or specific groups of individuals, or individuals who hold specific categories of membership, ineligible to return Conforming Social Scores.

Note ii: There is nothing in the WHS, or in any other GA regulatory code, which prevents a Handicapping Authority from limiting the number of Conforming Social Scores a member (or specific members) may return within a given period of time, or from making rounds played away from the Home Club ineligible for consideration as Conforming Social Scores.

Note iii: There is nothing in the WHS, or in any other GA regulatory code, to prevent a club from requiring the payment of a fee as an additional eligibility criteria for a Conforming Social Score.

Note iv: Conforming Social Scores will be processed for handicapping and will be treated by the WHS in the same manner as scores returned in Competitions (this includes instances where a player has pre-nominated that their score is to count for handicapping purposes and where the player does not return a scorecard in accordance with the requirements of the Rules of Golf, or plays less than the pre-nominated number of holes – see the sub-section of this *WHS Reference Guide* titled "Common Handicapping Scenarios – Procedures for Pro Shops & Administrators" for examples of practical application).

Note v: A round of less than 18 holes is eligible to serve as a Conforming Social Score at the discretion of the Handicapping Authority of the player's Home Club.

(C) ONE PLAYER IN COMPETITION, & OTHER VERY SMALL COMPETITION FIELDS – HANDICAPPING & PRIZES

- (i) If there is only one player in a competition otherwise deemed eligible for handicapping, the competition must still be processed for handicapping purposes provided the player has been accompanied throughout the round by an eligible marker.
- (ii) Where a competition has only a very small number of entrants, GA encourages committees to consider establishing a structure for the award of prizes that is based solely on the score the player returns, and not their finishing position within the competition. For example, 34 points wins a ball, 36 points wins 3 balls, 40 points wins 12 balls, etc. (For the purpose of the award of prizes, scores can be adjusted by the PCC if desired by the committee in charge of the competition.) Under this method, a low number of entrants does not impact the capacity of a player to be rewarded for a very good score.

(D) COMPETITION CONDITION LIMITS NUMBER OF CLUBS TO LESS THAN 14

When a competition limits the number of clubs that may be used to less than 14, scores are not eligible to be used for handicapping purposes.

(E) FOUR-BALL SCORES**(i) WHEN TO USE SCORE OBTAINED IN FOUR-BALL COMPETITION FOR HANDICAPPING PURPOSES**

Four-ball scores (including from mixed events) SHOULD be used for handicapping an individual player but only if the following requirements are met:

- The pair that the relevant player played in has a net score of at least 6 better than par (ie 42 points or better in Stableford, +6 or better in Par, etc).
- The individual player's score appears at least 9 times on the four-ball scorecard.
- The adjusted score (after the method described in (ii) below has been followed to create an individual scorecard) is equal to or better than 36 points.

(ii) PROCEDURE FOR CREATING INDIVIDUAL SCORECARD FROM FOUR-BALL SCORECARD FOR HANDICAPPING PURPOSES:

- Where an individual player's score is to be handicapped (irrespective of whether the competition is played as Par, Stroke, Maximum Score, or Stableford), it must be processed as a Stableford score in accordance with the procedures contained within this regulation.
 - When a player's score is not recorded on the four-ball card, they are given 1½ Stableford points. (Exception: When a player's score is not recorded on the four-ball card, and their partner's score is 1 Stableford point, the player is given 1 Stableford point.)
 - When a player's score counts on the four-ball card for a hole, they are given the appropriate number of Stableford points for that hole. (When both players have 0 Stableford points on a hole, they are both considered to have their score listed on the scorecard, including for the purposes of 'being on the card 9 times or more'. For the purposes of creating an adjusted individual scorecard, each player will have 0 points listed on the individual card for this hole.)
 - If two identical net scores are recorded by partners on a hole, both scores are eligible to be used on an adjusted individual scorecard. However, if the first player to hole out can be readily identified, the second player is deemed to have not recorded a score for that hole.
 - Clubs are to strongly discourage players from recording the scores of both partners on a hole or holes unless a concurrent singles event is being played. (If a concurrent singles event is being played, all scores must be handicapped as singles scores and the 'Four-ball Scores' handicapping regulation must not be used.) Players who regularly return four-ball scorecards featuring identical net scores for both players on the same hole will not be eligible to have these rounds handicapped – clubs should consider suspending the GA Handicaps of such players.
 - When all the gaps in the card have been filled in, the points are totalled, and where a half appears in the total, the points total is rounded to the next lower whole number.
- (iii) If an extended 18-hole individual score obtained via this method is processed through GOLF Link, the score type option to be chosen in GOLF Link by the administrator MUST be 'Four-ball' OR the score MUST be processed as an Ad Hoc score.
- (iv) The course rating value that GOLF Link will use for this purpose is the Scratch Rating (unadjusted by any PCC). These scores must not be used in any PCC calculation. In all other respects regarding the inclusion of the score in the player's handicap record, the score will be treated as a regular 18-hole singles competition score.
- (v) The club's Handicapping Authority should have in place a policy stipulating whether or not such scores will be processed for handicapping (see Sub-Section T below). Exceptions to the policy may be made to cater for events that have a character which is not typical to the club (such exceptions should be announced prior to the relevant day's play).

(F) SCORES RETURNED FROM PLAY OF ANYWHERE BETWEEN 8 AND 17 HOLES

Scores returned from 8-17 holes of play may be used for handicapping purposes at the discretion of the Handicapping Authority. The club's Handicapping Authority should have in place a policy stipulating whether or not 9-hole scores will be processed for handicapping (see Sub-Section T below). Exceptions to the policy may be made to cater for events that have a character which is not typical to the club (such exceptions should be announced prior to the relevant day's play). (Note: GA encourages the handicapping of these scores, provided it does not place an undue administrative burden on the golf club, and provided there is not a clear novelty nature to the play.)

See the sub-section of this *WHS Reference Guide* titled "Common Handicapping Scenarios – Procedures for Pro Shops & Administrators" for GOLF Link score entry instructions.

The following conditions will apply to 8-17 hole scores:

- (i) Where 16-17 holes inclusive have been played, the player will be deemed to have had net par for the remaining holes (unless it is considered the player has discontinued play with a view to achieving a specific score for handicap purposes). The score will be processed as an 18-hole score.
- (ii) Scores returned over 8-15 holes will not be doubled or extended. They will be entered into GOLF Link as 9-hole scores.
- (iii) Where only 8 holes have been played, the player will be deemed to have had net par on the 9th hole. The score will be entered into GOLF Link as a 9-hole score.
- (iv) Any score of less than 8 holes will be disregarded.
- (v) Where 10-15 holes inclusive have been played, the first 9 holes played will be used and the remaining holes will be disregarded.
 - Should the player not have started from the 1st or 10th holes (as per the order on the scorecard), it is holes 1-9 or 10-18 that will be used, with the remainder being disregarded.
 - If the player has not played the complete 1st nine holes on the scorecard OR the complete 2nd nine holes on the scorecard, but has played as many as 8 holes of either of the two nines, it is those 8 holes that will be used, with all others being disregarded. In such a case, the player will be deemed to have had net par on the unplayed hole on the nine to be used.
 - The scores must not be used for handicapping if the player has not played as many as 8 holes of either the 1st nine holes OR the 2nd nine holes on the scorecard. Exception: If a club is regularly conducting events on an 8-14 hole configuration that does not include as many as 8 holes of either the 1st nine holes OR the 2nd nine holes on the scorecard, and where the club wishes to be able to use such scores for handicapping, it should contact its State Association or GA. The State Association or GA will provide a Scratch Rating that will enable the use of such scores.
- (vi) Determination of Daily Handicap for score returned over 8-17 holes
 - For a score returned over 16-17 holes on a course, a player's Daily Handicap is their 18-hole Daily Handicap for that course (note: the player is deemed to have net par for the hole not played, or for the two holes not played (see Clause i above)).
 - A player's Daily Handicap for a 9-hole score on a course is determined firstly by establishing what the player's 18-hole Daily Handicap would be for that course. The 18-hole Daily Handicap is then applied to the course's ordinary 18-hole Stroke Index to determine the number of strokes the player will receive on the specific holes being played.
 - Even if the player plays 8 holes, or plays anywhere between 10-15 holes inclusive, the player is still handicapped only on a 9-hole score (see Clause v above). As a result, if the player has played anywhere between 10-15 holes inclusive, the only interest for handicapping purposes is in what their handicap is and what their score is for the 9-holes being handicapped.
- (vii) The step-by-step process for determining how many handicap strokes a player receives for a 9-hole round is:
 - The 9-hole course option being used will have a Slope Rating number that looks like an 18-hole Slope Rating number.
 - The 18-hole Daily Handicap the player would play off for that Slope Rating number is assessed.
 - The 18-hole Daily Handicap number is then applied to the Stroke Index on the scorecard to determine how many handicap strokes the player receives for the 9 holes being played.
 - EXAMPLE 1: If Stroke Index holes 1 and 3 are on the front nine and the 9-hole round is being played over the front 9, then a player whose 18-hole Daily Handicap came out at 3 (after following the above process) would receive 2 handicap strokes for that nine. (The same player would receive 1 handicap stroke if the round was being played on the back nine.)
 - EXAMPLE 2: If Stroke Index holes 1,3,5,7,9,11,13,15,17,19, and 21 are on the front nine and the 9-hole round is being played over the front 9, then a player whose 18-hole Daily Handicap came out at 21 (after following the above process) would receive 11 handicap strokes for that nine. (The same player would receive 10 handicap strokes if the round was being played on the back nine.)
 - When entering a 9-hole score into GOLF Link, it is important that the above process be followed, and that what is entered is the 9-hole 'played off' value that has been calculated for the player as a result. This is because part of the process GOLF Link will automatically perform when it combines two 9-hole scores is to add together the two 9-hole 'played off' values from the two 9-hole score entries. (If an 18-hole Daily Handicap value is wrongly entered with a 9-hole score entry, GOLF Link will think that the player played off a handicap which was twice as large as what it actually was – and that will credit the player with a score that is twice as good as what it actually was.)

- (viii) The first time a player returns an eligible 9-hole score, it should be entered into GOLF Link on the day of play; it will not immediately be used in the calculation of the player's GA Handicap. It will be automatically held by GOLF Link in the player's handicap record until another 9-hole score is entered. The two 9-hole scores will be combined automatically by GOLF Link to create a single 18-hole score.
- The rating for each 9 holes is retained in the GOLF Link database, so it does not matter whether the two 9-hole scores to be combined come from the same course or different courses.
 - GOLF Link will automatically add the two 9-hole scores together to form an 18-hole score.
 - When two 9-hole scores are combined to form an 18-hole score, the 18-hole 'Score Differential' is achieved by adding together both 9-hole 'Score Differentials', and then rounding to one decimal place.
- (ix) A 9-hole score will be retained for combination with another 9-hole score until it is older than the 20th oldest 18-hole score.
- (x) An 18-hole score created by the combination of two 9-hole scores will display the date and course name of both 9-hole scores.

(G) PLAYER PLAYS WITHIN COMPETITION FIELD BUT DOESN'T ENTER COMPETITION

When a person plays within a competition field, but does not actually enter the competition, their score, if attested by a marker, should be used for handicapping purposes at the discretion of the Handicapping Authority.

The club's Handicapping Authority should have in place a policy stipulating whether or not such scores will be processed for handicapping (see Sub-Section T below). Exceptions to the policy may be made to cater for events that have a character which is not typical to the club (such exceptions should be announced prior to the relevant day's play).

If the Handicapping Authority determines to use such scores, they will be deemed to be Conforming Social Scores.

(H) SCORES RETURNED IN A COMPETITION THAT HAS BEEN DECLARED NULL AND VOID

A score returned by a player in a competition declared null and void should be used for handicapping purposes provided course or weather conditions have not notably compromised the proper playing of the game for that player.

The club's Handicapping Authority should have in place a policy stipulating whether or not such scores will be processed for handicapping (see Sub-Section T below).

(I) SCORES RETURNED IN OPEN OR PROFESSIONAL COMPETITIONS

Scores returned in Open or Professional competitions by players with GA Handicaps will be used for handicapping purposes. All such players to have played in a given round will be entered into GOLF Link in a single batch.

(J) REQUIREMENT TO MAINTAIN THE OVERALL DISTANCE OF A RATED COURSE

- (i) Whilst a course should generally be played at its rated length, a club does have a large degree of flexibility around the movement of tee markers from day to day provided overall course distance remains substantially the same. Where unusual weather or course conditions are in evidence, a club may wish to set the daily tee markers such that overall course distance is altered provided the overall change is no more than 100 metres.

When the position of the daily tee markers on the course played are more than 100 metres overall from the permanent rating markers for that course for an 18-hole round, the scores must not be handicapped.

- If on one hole the tee markers are 15 metres forward and on another hole they are 10 metres back, the overall difference for these two holes is considered to be 5 metres from the rated length.
 - For a round of less than 18 holes, a pro rata length must be calculated; eg for a 9-hole round, the distance is 50 metres.
- (ii) Unless determined otherwise by the State Association or GA, handicap conditions do not prevail when the tee markers, under normal circumstances, are placed more than 20 metres in front or 20 metres behind the relevant set of permanent rating markers on more than three holes for rounds of 14-18 holes, or on more than two holes for rounds of 8-13 holes. (An exception applies for courses with cyclical permanent rating marker placements which have been approved by a State Association or GA.)
- (iii) Where average tee marker placement over time on a course results in an effective average total course distance that is considered by the State Association or GA to be materially different to the rated course, the State Association or GA should amend the official Scratch Rating accordingly.
- (iv) Hole placements are not taken into consideration in determining whether or not a club has satisfied the requirements around maintaining the overall distance of a rated course.

(K) SCORES RETURNED IN NOVELTY EVENTS SUCH AS BISQUE PAR AND THREE-BALL COMPETITIONS

Scores returned in novelty events such as Bisque Par and Three-Ball competitions are not eligible to be used for handicapping purposes.

(L) SCORES RETURNED IN AGGREGATE TEAMS EVENTS

Scores returned in Aggregate Teams Events (eg Two-ball Aggregate and Two-Ball Multiplier competitions) should be used for handicapping.

- (i) To be used for handicapping, these events must require each player to play their own ball on each hole until it is no longer reasonable for them to record at least 1 Stableford point. It is each player's individual score that is used for handicapping.
- (ii) The club's Handicapping Authority should have in place a policy stipulating whether or not such scores will be processed for handicapping (see Sub-Section T below). Exceptions to the policy may be made to cater for events that have a character which is not typical to the club (such exceptions should be announced prior to the relevant day's play).
- (iii) The Handicapping Authority should advise all players prior to the commencement of the competition that the Rules of singles stroke play will apply – with specific attention being drawn to the Advice Rule and also to the Rule regarding Order of Play.
- (iv) From time to time a committee may be concerned that the Rules of singles play may not have been strictly adhered to. In such a case, the competition should only be disqualified from being processed for handicapping if the committee makes the determination that the results have been clearly impacted by widespread non-adherence to the Rules of singles play.

(M) SCORES RETURNED IN PRO-AM EVENTS

Scores returned in Pro-Am events may, at the discretion of the committee, be used for handicapping provided one of the following requirements is met:

- The Rules of singles stroke play are adhered to and each player's hole-by-hole scores are recorded on the submitted scorecard.
- The Rules of four-ball stroke play are adhered to.

Further points to note:

- The club's Handicapping Authority should have in place a policy stipulating whether or not such scores will be processed for handicapping (see Sub-Section T below). Exceptions to the policy may be made to cater for events that are unusual in character (such exceptions should be announced prior to the relevant day's play).
- GA encourages the handicapping of these scores, provided it does not place an undue administrative burden on the golf club.

(N) SCORES RETURNED IN CORPORATE/TRADE DAYS

A score returned in a corporate/trade day (or the like) competition round played in accordance with the Rules of Golf, may be used for handicapping – including when the competition has been conducted by an unaffiliated entity.

- The club's Handicapping Authority should have in place a policy stipulating whether or not such scores will be processed for handicapping (see Sub-Section T below). Exceptions to the policy may be made to cater for events that are unusual in character (such exceptions should be announced prior to the relevant day's play).
- GA encourages the handicapping of these scores, provided it does not place an undue administrative burden on the golf club.
- These scores must be entered into GOLF Link as Ad Hoc scores. They must not be used in any PCC calculation. The Scratch Rating will be used in the 'Score Differential' calculation.

(O) SCORE FOR PLAYER WHO IS DISQUALIFIED

A round must be played under the Rules of Golf to be acceptable for handicap purposes, subject to the following:

- (i) **Organized Competitions.** In a situation where a player is disqualified from a competition for a breach of the Rules of Golf, but no significant scoring advantage has been gained, the score should remain acceptable for handicap purposes. If a player is disqualified from a competition for any other breach of the Rules of Golf, the score is not acceptable for handicap purposes. The final determination is at the discretion of the Home Club's Handicapping Authority, based on the circumstances.
- (ii) **General Play.** When an organized competition is not being contested, a score is not acceptable for handicap purposes if the player:
 - Breaches the Rules of Golf and the correct penalty is not applied under the Rules of Golf, or
 - Deliberately ignores a Rule of Golf.
- (iii) Where a player follows the provisions set down in a Model Local Rule, even when the Committee in charge of the course has not adopted that Model Local Rule, the score may still be acceptable for handicap purposes. The same situation applies where a player is in breach of a Model Local Rule that has been adopted by the

Committee. Examples of situations relating to Model Local Rules where a score might be acceptable for handicap purposes include:

- A player has proceeded under the alternative option to the stroke and distance relief procedure, despite this Model Local Rule not being in effect, or
 - The player has used a distance-measuring device despite the Model Local Rule prohibiting their use being in effect.
- (iv) The final determination is at the discretion of the Home Club's Handicapping Authority, based on the circumstances.
- (v) **Examples of when player has been disqualified from a competition, but gained no significant scoring advantage.** The Home Club's Handicapping Authority has the discretion to accept a score for handicap purposes if a player is disqualified from a competition, but no significant scoring advantage has been gained. Examples of situations where a Home Club's Handicapping Authority may consider that no significant scoring advantage has been gained include:

Rule of Golf	Nature of Disqualification	Recommended Action for Handicap Purposes
3.3b(1)/(2)	Scorecard not signed	Accept score
3.3b(2)	Scorecard not returned promptly	Accept score
3.3b(3)	Hole score entered on scorecard is lower than actual score	Accept adjusted score
3.3b(4)	Handicap on scorecard is missing or too high	Add or adjust handicap and accept score

- (vi) **Examples of when player has been disqualified from a competition for an action that would have provided a significant scoring advantage.** Examples of situations where a Committee may determine that a player has gained a significant scoring advantage include:

Rule of Golf	Nature of Disqualification	Recommended Action for Handicap Purposes
1.3b	Players deliberately agree to ignore a Rule or penalty they know applies	Score not acceptable
4.1a	Making a stroke with a non-conforming club	Score not acceptable
4.3a(1)	Using a distance-measuring device that measures elevation changes	Score not acceptable

- (vii) **Hole not played by the Rules of Golf for Conforming Social Score.** Where a player has breached the Rules of Golf during the play of a Conforming Social Score and knowingly failed to apply the correct penalty, the score should not be accepted for handicap purposes. However, in some circumstances, individual hole score(s) may be adjusted to 0 Stableford Points to produce an acceptable score. If the Handicapping Authority of a club of which the player is a member determines that the player is using the 0 Stableford Points adjustment to gain an unfair scoring advantage, it may suspend the player's handicap, or otherwise take action under the Rules of Handicapping.

(P) GUIDANCE ON 'SWINGERS'

- (i) A 'swinger' is a player who is a member of two separate pairs of a four-ball competition (and where both pairs play in the same group). The specific objective of this practice is to avoid having somebody being left without a partner. The R&A has determined that such a practice would breach the Rules of Golf for the play of the four-ball competition due to the player being a fellow-competitor and a partner simultaneously in that competition.
- (ii) Where a Committee decides to allow 'swingers' in a four-ball competition, it may choose from two options regarding the four-ball results. It may clarify that all pairs involved will be ineligible to win prizes in the four-ball competition and that their scores are ineligible for four-ball handicapping; OR it may consider the four-ball event to be a 'novelty event' where no four-ball handicapping will take place at all. However, any 'swinger' competing in a concurrent singles competition will not be breaching the Rules of singles stroke play by being a 'swinger'; and their singles score must be processed for handicapping purposes.

- (iii) An option available to clubs wishing to cater for single players on a four-ball competition day is to operate the following procedure:
- All players playing on the day without a partner shall be issued a scorecard upon which their score for each hole shall be recorded by one of the other members of the group. The player shall be responsible for the return of the card in accordance with the Rules of Golf.
 - By lot, draw players who are without partners to form a side/s in the competition even though they are playing in different groups.
 - Compile four-ball scorecards for each side formed in this manner, from the scores recorded on the individual scorecards.
 - In the event of a further player still not having been allocated a partner under the above procedure, the Committee should form a side for this player by randomly drawing another player from within the competition field and compiling a four-ball card from the appropriate scorecards. In such a case, only the previously un-partnered player is eligible to receive a prize won by this pair.
- (iv) It is also worth noting that many Australian clubs will play a singles event in conjunction with a pairs event (the pairs event is essentially a four-ball event). This provides an additional revenue stream opportunity as well as providing members with an additional option to engage in the play of the day (and to remain engaged should they start playing poorly in one or the other of the competitions). It is the singles cards that are handicapped and all play is in accordance with the Rules of singles stroke play. However, the players also play in a pairs competition which is technically a novelty event but which still effectively provides the same value for the players as if it were technically a proper four-ball. And swingers in the pairs event would be fine if the committee in charge of the competition wishes to have this as a condition.
- (v) The ‘Swingers’ options described above are provided to assist clubs to cater for members in club events that are not considered to be significant. GA recommends that where a club conducts a four-ball event of significance that it do so strictly in accordance with the conventions of four-ball play.

(Q) WHO MAY ACT AS A MARKER

A Marker is appointed to mark the scorecard in accordance with the Rules of Golf of a player who is returning a score for handicapping purposes. A Marker must be a member of any golf club or golf association recognised by GA, or a person otherwise approved by the club’s Handicapping Authority.

(R) GENERAL ADVICE ON DIGITAL SCORECARDS

On 1 January 2019, the Rules of Golf changed to permit committees to allow players to officially submit their scores for competition purposes either via the traditional paper method, or digitally. (Note: It has always been permissible to submit scores digitally for handicapping purposes – provided that, if the score was made in a competition, it had been separately submitted in a way that met the requirements of the Rules of Golf.)

The R&A provides the following guidance on digital scoring requirements under the current Rules of Golf:

- The principles in the Rules that apply to paper scorecards need to apply equally to digital methods of scoring.
- These principles include the requirement for each player to have an independent marker who is responsible for their scorecard during the round.
- This principle is established in Rule 3.3b, which states that “the player’s score is kept on their scorecard by the marker” and again in Rule 3.3b(1), which states that “after each hole during the round, the marker should confirm with the player the number of strokes on that hole (including strokes made and penalty strokes) and enter that gross score on the scorecard”.
- As a result, committees should be aware that it is not permissible for a player to enter their own score into an electronic device for scorecard purposes – the entry of a player’s scores must be performed by a marker who is someone other than the player.
- There needs to be a mechanism whereby the lodgement of the scores at the end of the round is supported by certification from both the player and the marker of the scores submitted (note: on a paper scorecard this is achieved by both players signing the scorecard).

From a handicapping perspective, these scores are not submitted directly to GOLF Link. For clubs who use accredited third-party software systems, the scores would need to be submitted to the accredited third-party system, and then separately processed through GOLF Link in the same way that any other scores are submitted to GOLF Link.

(S) AUTOSCORE SCORECARDS – DISCREPANCY BETWEEN WRITTEN SCORE AND MARKED SCORE

The R&A considers the use of ‘autoscore scorecards’ to conform with the Rules of Golf. However, The R&A does not currently consider the Rules to stipulate which recorded individual hole score should count in the instance of a discrepancy between a written score and an entry in the autoscore section of the card. It is The R&A’s view that each individual Committee has the authority to make its own determination in this respect.

To assist Committees in making such a determination, Golf Australia recommends that the following policy be adopted by those Committees using autoscore scorecards:

“If two different scores are recorded for the same hole (eg the number ‘5’ autoscore box is selected but a ‘4’ has been written down) the higher score will count. (If only a number is recorded, or only an autoscore box is selected, that number or autoscore selection will be the score to count.)”

Note: This is only a recommendation. Each Committee is free to develop its own policy in this regard after taking into consideration all local circumstances. (For example, it is permissible for a Committee to adopt a policy deeming that only a recording in the autoscore section of the card will be accepted.)”

(T) POLICY DECISION REQUIREMENTS FOR CLUBS – ITEMS WHERE CLUB SHOULD HAVE ITS OWN POLICY

The WHS has been designed to be flexible enough to cater for the vast array of different club cultures, environments, and local experiences throughout the world. To help to achieve this, there is a small number of scenarios and event types where the WHS enables a club to operate its own policy on whether or not they should be handicapped.

A specimen policy statement is offered below to help clubs with the administration of these items. A complete list of the points where clubs have flexibility is included in the specimen policy statement. (Note: A detailed explanation on each item is provided within this *WHS Reference Guide* – for ease of reference, each relevant item in the *WHS Reference Guide* is highlighted in yellow.):

[Specify as appropriate, eg XXXXXX Golf Club] Policy on Scores to be Handicapped Under the World Handicap System

[Specify as appropriate, eg XXXXXX Golf Club] has decided that the relevant GA recommendation on each of these items will apply for play that is under our jurisdiction. As a result, a score in any of the following categories will be handicapped (unless the round is deemed by the [specify as appropriate, eg committee, Match Committee, Pro, Director of Golf, etc] to have been played in a manner that is clearly out of character with the culture of [specify as appropriate, eg XXXXXX Golf Club], or unless the [specify as appropriate, eg committee, Match Committee, Pro, Director of Golf, etc] has otherwise exempted the score from being handicapped). (The regulatory details on each item are contained within the publication titled: ‘World Handicap System. Official reference guide for Australian administrators. OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE & SUPPORTING REGULATIONS’, which is available for download via www.golf.org.au/whs.)

- Conforming Social Scores of Members of [specify as appropriate, eg XXXXXX Golf Club] when the round is played at [specify as appropriate, eg XXXXXX Golf Club / any club that accepts Conforming Social Scores / etc].
- Good Four-ball scores.
- 9-hole scores (and any other scores made over 8-17 holes).
- Scores returned in Aggregate Teams Events.
- Scores returned in Pro-Am Events.
- Good scores returned in Corporate/Trade Days that have been conducted by an entity that is not affiliated with GA.
- Scores returned in a Competition that has been Declared Null and Void.
- The score of a Player who has Played Within a Competition Field but who Hasn’t Entered the Competition.

6. ALLOCATION OF G.A. HANDICAP & REACTIVATION OF PREVIOUS GOLF Link RECORD

(A) ALLOCATION OF G.A. HANDICAP TO PLAYER WHO HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY HELD AN OFFICIAL HANDICAP

In order for a player who has NOT previously held an official handicap in any country to obtain a GA Handicap, the following process must be followed:

- (i) Have the player clarify in writing that they have not previously held an official handicap in any country.
- (ii) Stableford Handicapping Adjustment will apply to a player’s Initial rounds. When returning an Initial score for the purpose of attaining a GA Handicap, a player is granted a Temporary Daily Handicap of 54.
 - The Temporary Daily Handicap enables the player to know how many handicap strokes they receive on each hole. It applies solely for handicap calculation purposes and has no standing for the purposes of calculating any competition results.

- The Temporary Daily Handicap shall not be altered until the player has returned the requisite number of initial scores. Once the player has returned such number of scores, the Temporary Daily Handicap shall be completely disregarded.
 - www.golf.org.au will not display the Temporary Daily Handicap values for a player's Initial rounds. www.golf.org.au will display the 'Score Differential' values for each of a player's Initial rounds.
- (iii) A player will not be eligible to receive a GA Handicap until their handicap record in GOLF Link includes at least three 18-hole rounds. (9-hole scores may be used for this purpose at the discretion of the Home Club; two 9-hole scores will be the equivalent of one 18-hole round.)
- Where a player's GOLF Link handicap record does not include three 18-hole rounds but it is clear that the maximum GA Handicap is warranted, the Home Club should take immediate action to enable the player to receive a GA Handicap which is the maximum value. This immediate action will include adding into the player's GOLF Link handicap record enough Estimate Scores with high values that will enable the player to immediately receive the maximum handicap.
- (iv) Each Initial score the player returns should be entered into GOLF Link as soon as possible. The only GOLF Link Score Status options available for these scores are "Normal Score" or "Non-Standard Entry" (the score must be disregarded if it is not appropriate to either of these two options).
- Should the club's Handicapping Authority have good reason to believe a lesser or higher GA Handicap is more appropriate than that which is indicated by the Initial scores, it should amend in GOLF Link the values of the Initial scores to the extent needed to produce the appropriate GA Handicap.
 - The club's Handicapping Authority should immediately effect a handicap adjustment if it has good reason (other than that provided by any previously-held handicap) to consider that a lower or higher handicap is more appropriate to the player's ability than that which results from this process. In such a case, the Handicapping Authority is not required to act in accordance with the Section in this *WHS Reference Guide* titled "MANUAL OVERRIDE BY CLUB OF NORMAL HANDICAP CALCULATION PROCESS".
 - Any previously-held official Australian handicap and handicap record (or recognised overseas handicap) must be reactivated.

(B) REACTIVATING HANDICAP FOR PLAYER WHO HAS PREVIOUSLY HELD AN OFFICIAL HANDICAP

- (i) When a player (who has previously been a member of an affiliated club) joins a club after a period away from handicap golf, the Handicapping Authority of the 'new' club must reactivate the status of the player's last-recorded handicap (using the player's archived GOLF Link handicap record if applicable) even if there is good reason to consider that a lower or higher GA Handicap is more appropriate to the player's current ability (but see (B)(iv) and (B)(v) below). If the player's handicap record is not available, the player's handicap must be reactivated by the Home Club entering three 18-hole Estimate Scores (using the player's last-known handicap as a guide) into GOLF Link.
- (ii) Where both the previous Home Club and the 'new' Home Club are on GOLF Link, the 'new' Home Club MUST perform a 'Home Club Transfer'. (Queries regarding this process should be directed to the GOLF Link Customer Service Centre on 1300 650 750.) A new handicap record must not be created.
- (iii) The generic process for transferring non-Australian handicap records into an Australian record is:
- If the Australian club has the player's scores from the past 20 competition rounds, it is preferred that all of these scores be entered into the player's GOLF Link handicap record. Note: This is not a requirement, but it is recommended. If the club prefers not to enter as many as the most recent 20 scores, it is strongly recommended that as many scores as possible be entered.
 - The more data that appears in a player's handicap record in GOLF Link, the more accurate and robust their GA Handicap will be.
 - However, if the Australian club is not reasonably able to obtain the player's recent scoring history, the most recent non-Australian handicap value for the player should be used as the player's initial GA Handicap (unless there is good reason to use a different value).
- (iv) If the Handicapping Authority of the 'new' club quickly considers there is good reason for the player to hold a GA Handicap that is higher than their last recorded handicap, a handicap adjustment should be effected. In such a case, the Handicapping Authority is not required to act in accordance with the Section in this *WHS Reference Guide* titled "MANUAL OVERRIDE BY CLUB OF NORMAL HANDICAP CALCULATION PROCESS". However, the State Association or GA Handicap Manager must be consulted if the determined figure would fall into any of the following categories:
- More than two strokes higher than the most recent previous figure for players whose last recorded handicap was 4.4 or less.
 - More than 3 strokes higher than the previous handicap for players whose last recorded handicap was 4.5-10.4.

- More than 4 strokes higher than any previous handicap for players whose last recorded handicap was greater than 10.4.
- (v) If the Handicapping Authority of the 'new' club considers there is good reason for the player to hold a GA Handicap that is lower than their last recorded handicap, a handicap adjustment should be given due consideration. Any ensuing handicap adjustment must be effected in accordance with the Section in this *WHS Reference Guide* titled "MANUAL OVERRIDE BY CLUB OF NORMAL HANDICAP CALCULATION PROCESS".
- 'Last recorded handicap' may include, at the discretion of the Member Association, an official handicap issued by a recognised overseas handicapping authority.

7. MANUAL OVERRIDE BY CLUB OF NORMAL HANDICAP CALCULATION PROCESS

Note: It is recommended that clubs consult their State Association or GA if they feel it may be appropriate to effect a '*Manual Override of the Normal Handicap Calculation Process*'.

(A) GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE MANUAL OVERRIDE REGULATION

- GA's principal objective in issuing handicaps is to provide all competitors in a net competition with an equal chance of achieving success. Net competitions by their nature should see a mix of all players enjoying various levels of success – specific players should not regularly perform at a level that is clearly superior to average net performance levels.
- The GA website provides expected performance standards for players of each level of handicap – www.golf.org.au/handicapping-reports.
- By using a GA Handicap, a player accepts that from time to time any club of which they are a member, a Member Association, or GA may adjust, freeze, or suspend that GA Handicap. Such adjustment may be other than in accordance with the formulas applied by this System. An adjustment may be a reduction or increase in a player's GA Handicap. A '*Manual Override of the Normal Handicap Calculation Process*' may be implemented at any time. Any club of which a player is a member has equal authority to adjust, freeze, or suspend the relevant GA Handicap.
- Should a club identify that one of its members is exhibiting regularity of performances in official net stroke play competitions (including Stableford, Par, and Maximum Score) or net match play competitions that are clearly superior (either in terms of wins, or in terms of other very good results) to the performances of a typical player, then GA will consider that the standard handicap system algorithms are failing to determine a handicap that meets the principal objective of the WHS. In such cases the club will be obliged by the WHS to review the player's GA Handicap.
- It is not reasonable to expect the WHS algorithms to produce equitable handicaps in 100% of cases. In less than 1% of cases nationwide, the WHS algorithms (for whatever reason) will produce a handicap for one player that is unfair either to the player or players they are competing against, or to the player themselves.
 - a. Where a club deems superior net performances to be the outcome of natural scoring patterns beyond what the WHS algorithms can reasonably be expected to accommodate, the courses of action the club should consider are a handicap 'Freeze' and/or a handicap adjustment.
 - b. Where a club deems that a member has demonstrated a degree of intent to manipulate the WHS, the first course of action the club should consider is to suspend the player's GA Handicap – for a first offence, this may be for a period of a month or less; any inappropriate scores in the player's GOLF Link record should be deleted or amended, and a handicap adjustment may also be warranted.
- The body of competitions being considered may comprise all club events; or it may be more limited to a specific type of competition, such as those that are significant to the culture of a club, or net events (sponsored or otherwise) conducted by National/State golf bodies and/or entities other than the club; and it may include only singles events, or only team events (such as four-ball or ambrose, etc), or a combination of singles and team events.
- A player's competition results will be reflective of a combination of factors such as their mental strength, practice/playing frequency, event preparation, course knowledge and 'expertise' in certain forms of play. The player's club is obliged to ensure that their GA Handicap is reasonably reflective of their competition results; or, should their club deem it appropriate, of their results in a specific type (or types) of competition.
- The General Committee (Board of Directors) must accumulate data and/or cards and/or scores and/or competition results that would indicate it is necessary to adjust, freeze, or suspend the player's GA Handicap in order to maintain uniformity in handicapping among all who play handicap golf.

- When weighing up the available relevant information, a club does not require an accumulation of information that is compelling to the point that it is virtually certain that the player's GA Handicap warrants refinement. The primary consideration for the club should be to determine a GA Handicap value that promotes equity for all other players. Once a GA Handicap has been amended, the club should closely monitor the player's ongoing performance and further refine the amendment (either up or down) if the club believes any further change is appropriate.
- It is entirely at the discretion of a committee in charge of a competition as to whether or not the determination of net results is made with reference to Daily Handicaps.
- GA does not seek to limit members of an Australian club to compete only in those net competitions the results of which are determined with reference to Daily Handicaps.
- A GA Handicap is GA's assessment of the relative golfing ability of a player. Players are not obliged to utilise this assessment. It shall always be the player's decision as to whether or not they make use of a GA Handicap.

(B) CONSIDERATION OF WHETHER TO FREEZE OR REDUCE A G.A. HANDICAP

- Examples of scenarios which may warrant the reduction or freezing of a player's GA Handicap include but are not limited to:
 - Where a player is showing better form than their GA Handicap.
 - Where a player is showing an increased interest in playing better golf but is not returning cards which lead to an automatic reduction in their GA Handicap and the improvement, current ability, or some other justifiable circumstances make it apparent to the Handicapping Authority of any club of which the player is a member that the player is over-handicapped.
- Where following investigation of a player's performance, a player's returns give rise to suspicion they may be attempting to "manipulate a handicap", or are in serious breach of the WHS or the Rules of Golf, the Member Association or GA should not look to reduce or freeze the GA Handicap, they should consider suspending it.
- Analysis of a GA Handicap may result in a decision to freeze it at a given figure.

(C) HOW THE 'FREEZE' REGULATION WORKS

- The figure at which the handicap is frozen may not necessarily reflect the figure the normal calculation method would produce.
- Where the WHS's normal GA Handicap calculation method determines a lower value than the freeze value, the normal GA Handicap calculation method will over-ride the freeze.
- If within the stipulated freeze period, the WHS's normal GA Handicap calculation method determines a higher value than the freeze value, the freeze will over-ride the normal GA Handicap calculation method.
- A freeze may be effected for a stipulated period of either one month, two months, or three months only.
- Upon the expiration of the initial freeze period, where the reason to freeze a GA Handicap continues to apply, the body that took the initial decision to freeze a GA Handicap may extend the freeze period.
- A Frozen GA Handicap may still be used by a player in exactly the same fashion as a Normal GA Handicap.

(D) SUSPENSION OF A G.A. HANDICAP

Should any club of which the player is a member, a Member Association, or GA be satisfied that a GA Handicap has not been determined in accordance with the WHS or that the player has acted in serious breach of the WHS or the Rules of Golf or otherwise detrimentally to the best interests of the game, it may suspend the GA Handicap for a stipulated period of time or for a stipulated minimum period of time.

(E) INCREASING A G.A. HANDICAP

Although the primary calculation performed by the WHS in order to determine a GA Handicap is to average a player's current form, the basic premise of any handicap system is that a handicap should not be inconsistent with a player's underlying ability. (That underlying ability is considered to be reflected by the player's better performances. Although any player may lose form, it is not in the interests of equity for a GA Handicap to increase substantially due to such a loss of form.) Being mindful of this fundamental premise, Handicapping Authorities are encouraged to consider increasing the GA Handicap of a player whose circumstances reflect any of the following:

- Where a player is in the process of experiencing, or recovering from, a significant long-term injury or illness.
- Where a player has changed clubs and finds the new course to be far more challenging for them for whatever reason than the previous course.
- Where a player has been Capped due to them reaching a GA Handicap that is clearly better than any other GA Handicap they have achieved for at least two years AND that the Handicapping Authority believes was clearly better than their underlying ability.

- Where the Handicapping Authority firmly believes the player's GA Handicap for whatever reason is not commensurate with the player's underlying ability. (Note: GA encourages clubs to be especially sympathetic to the plight of a player who due to advancing age experiences a rapid deterioration of their underlying ability. It is recommended that a Handicapping Authority will move quickly to adjust a player's GA Handicap when it has clearly established that a player is in this situation.)
- (i) A *'Manual Override of the Normal Handicap Calculation Process'* should not be effected to reward or punish a player for a one-off score. It is in the nature of golf performance that the scoring of some players is not consistent with normal distribution patterns, and also that a player will on occasion display extraordinary form.
- (ii) Where a club of which a player is a member decides to effect a *'Manual Override of the Normal Handicap Calculation Process'*, approval from the Member Association is not required. However, the club must provide notification in accordance with the administration requirements set out in (G) below.

(F) DECISION TO ADJUST, FREEZE, OR SUSPEND A G.A. HANDICAP

- (i) The General Committee (Board of Directors) must as a body, make a decision to adjust, freeze, or suspend a GA Handicap. It is not a requirement that this decision occur at a formal meeting. It may occur for example via email. Any decision should be recorded in writing (eg email, minutes of meeting etc).
- (ii) No one person or group of persons at a club, other than the General Committee (Board of Directors) has the power to adjust, freeze, or suspend a GA Handicap under the Section in this *WHS Reference Guide* titled "MANUAL OVERRIDE BY CLUB OF NORMAL HANDICAP CALCULATION PROCESS".

(G) ADMINISTRATION

- (i) Notification of a decision to adjust, freeze, or suspend a GA Handicap under the Section in this *WHS Reference Guide* titled "MANUAL OVERRIDE BY CLUB OF NORMAL HANDICAP CALCULATION PROCESS" must be forwarded by the club taking such action to the relevant State Association or GA (and, if the club taking such action is not the player's Home Club, the club taking such action must also immediately ensure the player's Home Club is notified). Such notification must include copies of the accumulated information on which the decision was based.
- (ii) In all cases of decisions to adjust a player's GA Handicap, it is the Home Club that is responsible for making the adjustment to GOLF Link (or other handicap record system maintained by the Home Club).
- (iii) A handicap adjustment is effected by changing each of the most recent 20 'Score Differentials' in the player's handicap record. As a result, the impact of the reduction will remain after the next score is submitted, but it will dilute over time as new scores are submitted.
- (iv) In the event that it is not the Home Club that has made the decision to adjust a player's GA Handicap, the Home Club will be obligated to immediately adjust the player's GOLF Link record in accordance with the direction of the club that has made the decision. The Home Club may seek a review of the decision in accordance with (H) below, however any such review must not delay the amendment of the player's GOLF Link record to have it reflect the determination of the other club. Once such advice has been forwarded to the Home Club, any Competition committee must consider the figure contained in this advice to be the player's current GA Handicap.
- (v) Only GA will have physical access to the GOLF Link freezing functionality and to the GOLF Link suspension functionality (note: this does not alter the authority of any club of which the player is a member, or Member Association, or GA to take a decision to freeze or suspend a GA Handicap). The process to follow in order to effect the decision of a club to freeze or suspend a GA Handicap on GOLF Link is for the club to notify its State Association or GA of the decision to freeze (note: such notice must include stipulation of the figure at which the GA Handicap is to be frozen) or to suspend the GA Handicap; the Member Association will then notify GA. GA will only effect the decision of a club to freeze or to suspend a player's GA Handicap when such decision has been communicated in writing to the relevant Member Association or to GA. Any Competition committee must consider a GA Handicap to be frozen or suspended upon the earlier of either:
 - it becoming aware that notification of the determining club's decision has been received by the Member Association or GA, or
 - the player's GOLF Link handicap display being accordingly amended.
- (vi) Appropriate letters for use by clubs wishing to implement the Section in this *WHS Reference Guide* titled "MANUAL OVERRIDE BY CLUB OF NORMAL HANDICAP CALCULATION PROCESS" are available from State Associations or GA. The first letter advises the member that the GA Handicap is to be reviewed due to better than reflected, or otherwise, performances. The second letter advises of the newly-approved GA Handicap.

(H) REVIEW OF DECISIONS

- (i) Where a club of which the player is a member has made a decision to adjust, freeze or suspend a player's GA Handicap, the relevant Member Association or GA, on inquiry, may amend or reinstate the player's GA

Handicap. Such inquiry may be requested in writing by the player to the Member Association, or it may be otherwise launched by the Member Association or GA if the Member Association or GA determines it is appropriate to do so.

- (ii) Where a Member Association has reviewed a decision of a club to adjust, freeze or suspend a player's GA Handicap, GA may (if it considers it appropriate to do so) conduct its own inquiry with a view to giving consideration to amending or reinstating the player's GA Handicap. Such inquiry may be requested in writing by the player to GA (although GA is under no obligation to respond to a request to review a Member Association's determination when such determination has been made as a review of a club's decision), or it may be otherwise launched by GA if GA determines it is appropriate to do so.
- (iii) A decision made by GA is final and binding. There is no further right of appeal or review for the player, club or Member Association to a decision of GA.

8. ALLOCATION OF SPECIAL COMPETITION HANDICAP IN EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

A committee in charge of a competition is authorised to allocate to a competitor (or group of competitors) a Special Competition Handicap if the following requirements are met:

- (i) The State Association or GA must first have been consulted to determine whether a general adjustment or otherwise of the player's GA Handicap is warranted.

Note: That the State Association or GA may have decided a general adjustment or otherwise of the player's GA Handicap is unwarranted does not prevent a committee in charge of a competition from allocating a Special Competition Handicap. A committee in charge of a competition will be eligible to allocate a Special Competition Handicap as soon as it has lodged in writing with the State Association or GA a submission or notice regarding re-assessment or otherwise of the player's GA Handicap. (Note: In this context, 'notice' may comprise for example a recommendation by the relevant competition committee to the Member Association for it to analyse the player's performances.)

- (ii) The committee in charge of the competition must accumulate a body of evidence (eg data, cards, scores, competition results) that would indicate the application of a Special Competition Handicap is necessary. The body of evidence need not be extensive but it must be compelling. Note: It will be for the committee in charge of the competition to determine whether or not this requirement has been met.
- (iii) The Special Competition Handicap must reflect the accumulated body of evidence. Note: It will be for the committee in charge of the competition to determine whether or not this requirement has been met.

Note i: Any committee in charge of a competition which allocates a Special Competition Handicap will be solely responsible for all associated outcomes.

Note ii: Neither GA, nor any Member Association, will be obliged to assist with any outcomes associated with the allocation of a specific Special Competition Handicap.

Note iii: When entering a score into a player's handicap record (or when processing a competition for handicap purposes), it is the Special Competition Handicap that should be used to calculate a net score. (In such a case, the Special Competition Handicap must be listed as the 'Played Off' handicap within the GOLF Link data entry process.)

Note iv: It is for the committee allocating a Special Competition Handicap to determine in which competitions the Special Competition Handicap will apply. A committee is not permitted to allocate to a player a Special Competition Handicap for a competition of which it does not have charge.

9. COMMON HANDICAPPING SCENARIOS – PROCEDURES FOR PRO SHOPS & ADMINISTRATORS

SCENARIO	COMPETITION ACTION	HANDICAPPING ACTION / GOLF Link SCORE STATUS
1. <i>In Stroke, Maximum Score, Par or Stableford</i> : No Daily Handicap on scorecard.	Disqualified from net event. Note: If gross event is held, card accepted for gross.	Apply correct handicap and use for handicapping. <u>Choose the “Non-Standard Entry” option in GOLF Link. Enter the player’s Stableford score (note: add 36 to the result for Par competitions; eg enter ‘34’ for -2, or enter ‘40’ for +4) into the Handicapping Score box.</u> <u>Leave the Competition Score box blank.</u>
2. Scorecard not signed. Or scorecard submitted after competition has closed.	Disqualified from the competition.	Use for handicapping as returned. <u>Choose the “Non-Standard Entry” option in GOLF Link. Enter the player’s Stableford score (note: add 36 to the result for Par competitions; eg enter ‘34’ for -2, or enter ‘40’ for +4) into the Handicapping Score box.</u> <u>Leave the Competition Score box blank.</u>
3. <i>In Stroke, Maximum Score, Par or Stableford</i> : Higher Daily Handicap on scorecard which affects the number of strokes received.	Disqualified from net event. Note: If gross event is held, card accepted for gross.	Apply correct handicap and use for handicapping. <u>Choose the “Non-Standard Entry” option in GOLF Link. Enter the player’s Stableford score (note: add 36 to the result for Par competitions; eg enter ‘34’ for -2, or enter ‘40’ for +4) into the Handicapping Score box.</u> <u>Leave the Competition Score box blank.</u>
4. <i>In Stroke, Maximum Score, Par or Stableford</i> : Lower Daily Handicap on scorecard.	Card accepted for competition as returned.	Where a net score is to be entered in the Competition Score box in GOLF Link, the value to enter is the score achieved with the inaccurate Daily Handicap. The Handicapping Score is the Stableford Score achieved with the inaccurate Daily Handicap. (Note: GOLF Link will then automatically calculate the correct ‘Score Differential’.) <u>GOLF Link Score Status: “Normal Score”.</u>
5. <i>In Stroke, Maximum Score, Par and Stableford</i> : Higher score recorded on a hole than the player had which affects the player’s Competition Score.	Card accepted as returned.	<u>Choose the “Non-Standard Entry” option in GOLF Link. Enter the player’s actual Stableford score (note: add 36 to the result for Par competitions; eg enter ‘34’ for -2, or enter ‘40’ for +4) into the Handicapping Score box.</u> <u>Enter the score as listed on the scorecard into the Competition Score box.</u>

SCENARIO	COMPETITION ACTION	HANDICAPPING ACTION / GOLF Link SCORE STATUS
6. <i>In Stroke</i> : Score not listed on scorecard for hole or holes which have been completed.	Disqualified from the competition.	<p>(A) If the correct score/s can be readily identified (to a reasonable degree of certainty), it is to be used for handicapping.</p> <p><u>Choose the “Non-Standard Entry” option in GOLF Link. Enter the player’s actual Stableford score into the Handicapping Score box.</u></p> <p><u>Leave the Competition Score box blank.</u></p> <p>(B) If correct score/s cannot be identified, the player is deemed to have had 2 points for each missing score.</p> <p><u>Choose the “Non-Standard Entry” option in GOLF Link. Enter the player’s deemed Stableford score into the Handicapping Score box.</u></p> <p><u>Leave the Competition Score box blank.</u></p>
7. <i>In Stroke</i> : Player fails to complete a hole/s they have commenced (eg due to a lost ball, or failure to get out of a bunker).	Disqualified from the competition.	<p><u>Choose the “Non-Standard Entry” option in GOLF Link. Enter the player’s Stableford score into the Handicapping Score box (they receive 0 points for the incomplete holes).</u></p> <p><u>Leave the Competition Score box blank.</u></p>
8. <i>On a hole in stroke</i> : Lower score recorded than the player knew they had (by accident).	Disqualified from the competition.	<p><u>Choose the “Non-Standard Entry” option in GOLF Link. Enter the player’s actual Stableford score into the Handicapping Score box.</u></p> <p><u>Leave the Competition Score box blank.</u></p>
9. <i>On a hole/s in Par, Stableford, or Maximum Score</i> : Lower gross stroke score recorded than the player knew they had (by accident).	<p>(i) If result of hole affected – Disqualified from the competition.</p> <p>(ii) If result of hole not affected, no penalty applies and card accepted for the competition.</p>	<p>(i) <u>Choose the “Non-Standard Entry” option in GOLF Link. Enter the player’s actual Stableford score (note: add 36 to the result for Par competitions; eg enter ‘34’ for -2, or enter ‘40’ for +4) into the Handicapping Score box.</u></p> <p><u>Enter the score as listed on the scorecard into the Competition Score box blank.</u></p> <p>(ii) Use for handicapping as returned.</p> <p><u>GOLF Link Score Status: “Normal Score”.</u></p>

SCENARIO	COMPETITION ACTION	HANDICAPPING ACTION / GOLF Link SCORE STATUS
<p>10. Player fails to complete all holes in the round due to any of the following being considered by the club to be of reasonable significance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Illness ▫ Injury ▫ Emergency ▫ Bad weather (Note: In this context, 'bad weather' does NOT generally need to be bad enough to force a suspension or cancellation of play. That some players may be willing to continue does not mean it is necessarily unreasonable in this context for others to stop. Clubs should be reasonably understanding in determining when weather is considered 'bad'. It should be remembered that club golfers play the game as a recreation.) ▫ Other reason for stopping which is considered valid by the club. <p>(i) PLAYER HAS COMPLETED LESS THAN 8 HOLES.</p> <p>(ii) PLAYER HAS COMPLETED 8 HOLES OR MORE.</p>	<p>(i) & (ii) The player's result in a Stroke competition should be recorded as "Withdrawn".</p> <p>In a Par, Stableford, or Maximum Score competition, this scenario of itself does not prevent a player from returning a legitimate score that is eligible to win a prize.</p>	<p>(i) Not used for handicapping. <u>GOLF Link Score Status: "No Score – Approved".</u></p> <p>(ii) (A) In Stableford, Par, and Maximum Score, if the player's incomplete score is identified and the player has returned a legitimate scorecard, the club's GOLF Link administrator should enter this into GOLF Link as the player's Competition Score. The Handicapping Score is determined in accordance with the Section in this <i>WHS Reference Guide</i> titled 'SCORES RETURNED FROM PLAY OF ANYWHERE BETWEEN 8 AND 17 HOLES'.</p> <p><u>Choose the "Non-Standard Entry" option in GOLF Link.</u></p> <p>(B) In Stroke, <u>choose the "Non-Standard Entry" option in GOLF Link.</u> If the player's incomplete score is identified, the club's GOLF Link administrator should enter into GOLF Link the player's Handicapping Score as a Stableford score which has been determined in accordance with the Section in this <i>WHS Reference Guide</i> titled 'SCORES RETURNED FROM PLAY OF ANYWHERE BETWEEN 8 AND 17 HOLES'. The Competition Score entry box will be left blank.</p> <p>(C) If the club does not, or can not, create an 18-hole score, the card is not used for handicapping.</p> <p><u>GOLF Link Score Status: "No Score – Approved".</u></p>
<p>11. Score for hole omitted in Par, Stableford, or Maximum Score where hole has been played.</p>	<p>Card accepted as returned. (No obligation under the Rules of Golf to record a score for every hole in Par, Stableford, or Maximum Score.)</p>	<p>(A) If the player's complete score is identified, the club's GOLF Link administrator should enter into GOLF Link the player's incomplete Competition Score, as well as the score they actually had into the Handicapping Score box.</p> <p><u>GOLF Link Score Status: "Non-Standard Entry".</u></p> <p>(B) If correct score/s cannot be identified, the club's GOLF Link administrator should enter into GOLF Link the player's incomplete Competition Score as well as their Handicapping Score. The Handicapping Score is determined in accordance with the Section in this <i>WHS Reference Guide</i> titled 'SCORES RETURNED FROM PLAY OF ANYWHERE BETWEEN 8 AND 17 HOLES'.</p> <p><u>GOLF Link Score Status: "Non-Standard Entry".</u></p>

<p>12. When NOT APPROVED by the club:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Player fails to complete all holes in the round, or; ◆ Card not returned. <p>(i) PLAYER HAS COMPLETED LESS THAN 8 HOLES.</p> <p>(ii) PLAYER HAS COMPLETED 8 HOLES OR MORE.</p>	<p>Disqualified from the competition.</p> <p>(Exception: In a Par, Stableford, or Maximum Score competition, if the player returns a properly completed scorecard for the holes played, this scenario in itself does not prevent them from being eligible to win a prize.)</p>	<p>(i) The round should be entered into GOLF Link with a <u>Score Status of: “No Score – Not Approved”</u>.</p> <p>(ii) (A) If a disqualified player’s incomplete score is identified, the club’s GOLF Link administrator should enter into GOLF Link the player’s Handicapping Score as their score for the round. The Handicapping Score is determined in accordance with the Section in this <i>WHS Reference Guide</i> titled ‘SCORES RETURNED FROM PLAY OF ANYWHERE BETWEEN 8 AND 17 HOLES’.</p> <p><u>Leave the Competition Score box blank. GOLF Link Score Status: “Non-Standard Entry”</u>.</p> <p>(B) In Stableford, Par, and Maximum Score, if the player’s incomplete score is identified and the player has returned a legitimate scorecard, the club’s GOLF Link administrator should enter into GOLF Link the player’s Handicapping Score as a Stableford score which has been determined in accordance with the Section in this <i>WHS Reference Guide</i> titled ‘SCORES RETURNED FROM PLAY OF ANYWHERE BETWEEN 8 AND 17 HOLES’. The player’s actual score is entered into the Competition Score entry box.</p> <p><u>GOLF Link Score Status: “Non-Standard Entry”</u>.</p> <p>(C) If a complete 18-hole score is identified, it is used for handicapping as played.</p> <p><u>Choose the “Non-Standard Entry” option in GOLF Link. Enter the player’s Stableford score (note: add 36 to the result for Par competitions; eg enter ‘34’ for -2, or enter ‘40’ for +4) into the Handicapping Score box. Leave the Competition Score box blank.</u></p> <p>(D) If the player’s score is not identified, or if the Handicapping Authority decides not to apply the ‘Scores Returned Over 8-17 Holes’ regulation; <u>the round should be entered into GOLF Link with a Score Status of: “No Score – Not Approved”</u>.</p> <p>GENERAL NOTE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the vast majority of cases where a player has failed to return a scorecard or has failed to complete a round without good reason, it is because they have played poorly. As a result, it is equitable and accurate that the player be attributed a poor score by GOLF Link. • It is also the case that there exists a small minority of players who repeatedly fail to return scorecards or who fail to complete rounds. • A handicap will lose its full status in the event that a player should accrue in their most recent 20 scores five or more entries with a status of ‘No Score – Not Approved’. Such a handicap will be known as a “Provisional GA Handicap”. • Clubs are able to access through GOLF Link a report listing the number of “No Score – Not Approved” entries each member has in their most recent 20 scores. For assistance, ring the GOLF Link Customer Service Centre on 1300 650 750.
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SCENARIO	COMPETITION ACTION	HANDICAPPING ACTION / GOLF Link SCORE STATUS
<p>13. Player disqualified for a breach of the Rules that makes the estimation of a score, or the use of the round for handicapping purposes, to be inappropriate (eg use of non-conforming clubs, use of non-conforming balls, cheating).</p>	<p>Disqualified from the competition.</p>	<p>See also the Section in this <i>WHS Reference Guide</i> titled 'SCORE FOR PLAYER WHO IS DISQUALIFIED'.</p> <p>Not used for handicapping. <u>GOLF Link Score Status: "Illegitimate Score".</u></p>
<p>14. Player repeatedly fails to record hole-by-hole (or total) Stableford scores on their scorecard either in a Stableford competition, or for the purposes of complying with the SHA regulation in a Stroke competition.</p>	<p>No penalty in competition being played.</p> <p>(Note: While it is not permissible to penalise a player under the Rules of Golf for failing to record their hole-by-hole (or total) Stableford points on their scorecard, the Committee may, in order to assist club administrators, introduce a 'club regulation' to this effect and provide disciplinary sanctions (eg ineligibility to play in the next club competition/s).</p> <p>GA will support in writing clubs that apply such sanctions. It is fundamental to the culture of Australian golf that players assist their clubs by recording Stableford scores on scorecards when required.)</p>	<p>Use for handicapping as returned. <u>GOLF Link Score Status: "Normal Score".</u></p>

10. HANDICAP ALLOWANCES & THE APPLICATION OF HANDICAP STROKES

(A) HANDICAP ALLOWANCES

- Handicap allowances are designed to provide equity for players of all levels of ability in each format of play, over both 9 holes and 18 holes. In Australia, a “Handicap Allowance” is known as “the Multiplier”. The standard Multiplier in Australia is 0.93 (or 93%).
- The following table sets out the handicap allowances recommended by The R&A and USGA (based on medium-sized field net events) for formats of play that are not typically played on a frequent basis. The allowances may be adjusted based on field size and the desired equity at the discretion of the committee in charge of the competition:

Format of Play	Type of Round	Multiplier Value
MATCH PLAY	Individual	100%
	Four-Ball	90%
OTHER (In the team stroke play formats listed in this table it is typical to use a team handicap that is rounded to one decimal place, and therefore to calculate the competition results to one decimal place. For example in Stroke Foursomes, or Ambrose events, etc.)	Foursomes	50% of combined team handicap
	Greensomes	60% low handicap + 40% high handicap
	Pinehurst/Chapman	60% low handicap + 40% high handicap
	Best 1 of 4 stroke play	75%
	Best 2 of 4 stroke play	85%
	Best 3 of 4 stroke play	100%
	All 4 of 4 stroke play	100%
	Ambrose or Scramble (4 players)	25%/20%/15%/10% from lowest to highest handicap
	Ambrose or Scramble (2 players)	35% low/15% high
	Total score of 2 match play	100%
	Best 1 of 4 Par	75%
	Best 2 of 4 Par	80%
	Best 3 of 4 Par	90%
4 of 4 Par	100%	

(B) GIVING & RECEIVING STROKES IN MATCH PLAY

In general, after handicap allowances have been applied in match play formats, the player with the lowest Daily Handicap plays off zero strokes relative to the other player(s). The other player(s) receive(s) the difference between their own Daily Handicap and that of the player with the lowest Daily Handicap.

(C) PLUS DAILY HANDICAPS

- Unless otherwise specified by the Committee, players with a ‘plus’ Daily Handicap give strokes back to the course, beginning at the hole with stroke index 18. For example, a player with a Daily Handicap of +2 would give strokes back to the course at the holes with stroke index 18 and 17.
- When handicap allowances are applied, a player with a plus Daily Handicap moves up towards zero including rounding. This is to maintain the same relative difference between Daily Handicaps

(D) COMPETITION GRADES

Golf Australia does not make any specific recommendations on competition grades. We feel it is best left to each club to determine how it wishes to handle this issue after taking account of each of its own local characteristics. Factors taken into consideration should include the following:

- Typical number of competition entrants (for example some clubs will regularly have only five or so competition entrants making it unnecessary to have any more than two grades, if that).
- The distribution of handicaps within the club (for example if the vast majority of players have handicaps over 30, it may mean A and B grade should have a higher ceiling than if there is a reasonable proportion of players with handicaps between 20-30, and a reasonable number of players with handicaps of less than 20).

- The manner by which grades have traditionally been set within the club (some clubs may feel quite comfortable in amending the grade settings relatively regularly whereas others will prefer to keep grades set at traditional values).
- The nature of a specific competition (for example a club championship may attract a reasonable number of players which may result in three grades being warranted as well as a desire for tradition to be retained, whereas a mid-week Par event may attract very few players and have no traditional considerations).

11. AUSTRALIAN COUNTBACK METHOD

When a committee has decided that it wants to eliminate the chance for joint winners of a competition it is managing, the globally-recognised best-practice way to achieve this is to include in the Terms of the Competition a requirement that a play-off will be conducted in the event of a tie. However, GA recognises that it is not practicable to expect players to make themselves available for a play-off in the vast majority of club competitions. The recommended practical option to split ties for first place (and to split ties for any other positions a committee may require) is to use the Australian Countback Method. The Australian Countback Method is the default countback method in Australia when a committee's Terms of the Competition do not specify otherwise. The Australian Countback Method is based on the R&A Countback Method.

The Australian Countback Method is designed to cater for all of the following:

- Competitions that are either net or gross.
- All of the following formats of play: Stroke, Stableford, Par, or Maximum Score. (Note: Not match play.)
- Where the tying players have competed on the same course and from the same set of tees.
- Where the tying players have played on the same course but from different sets of tees with the same pars.
- Where the tying players have competed on the same course but from different sets of tees with different pars (eg which will sometimes happen when the pars are different between men and women).
- Where the tying players have competed on different courses (for example at a 36-hole facility), including where the pars are different.

When there is a tie for an 18-hole competition, the winner under this method is:

1. The tying player with the best result for the last nine holes.
2. However, if the tying players have the same result for the last nine, the winner is determined on the basis of the last six holes, then the last three holes if still a tie, and if still a tie then hole-by-hole from the 18th hole.

But which results for these holes should be compared? GA recommends that the results to be compared from the holes designated above should be:

- **For Stableford competitions:** Simply compare the Stableford points totals for the holes designated above.
- **For Par competitions:** Simply compare the Par result totals for the holes designated above.
- **Stroke competitions and Maximum Score competitions:**
 - i. Firstly, use the above instructions to identify the holes to be used in the comparison.
 - ii. Secondly, for net competitions use the stroke index to determine how many handicap strokes each tying player receives on each of the holes involved in the comparison.
 - iii. Thirdly, for net competitions determine the total of how much over or under par each tying player's net scores are across all of the holes involved in the comparison. [For gross competitions determine the total of how much over or under par each tying player's gross scores are across all of the holes involved in the comparison.]
 - iv. Finally, the winner of the tie is the player with the best total result against par across all of the holes involved in the comparison.

Other points to note:

- If this method is used in a competition with a multiple-tee start, it is recommended that the "last nine holes, last six holes, etc" is considered to be holes 10-18, 13-18, etc. If this method is used when the ENTIRE field commences its round from the same tee, the countback holes are adjusted accordingly (e.g. if the entire field commences its round from the 10th tee, as holes 1-9 are the "back nine" in this instance, it is recommended that the "last nine holes, last six holes, etc" is considered to be holes 1-9, 3-9, etc).
- **In 36, 54, and 72-hole events,** the last 18 holes shall be used and if still tied countback as per an 18-hole round. **In 27-hole events,** the last 18 holes shall be used and if still tied countback as per an 18-hole round.
- In 9-hole events, the best result for the last 6 holes shall be used; if there is still a tie the last 3 holes, if a tie still persists then hole-by-hole from the 9th.

- **For competitions of 10-17 holes**, the best result for the last 9 holes shall be used; if there is still a tie the last 6 holes, and then the last 3 holes. If a tie still persists then hole-by-hole from the last hole. For example, if a 12-hole competition is played over holes 1-12 the countback is based on holes 4-12, if still a tie, holes 7-12, if still a tie holes 9-12, and then hole by hole from the 12th hole.
- **In handicap competitions over 9-17 holes**, each player's competition handicap allowance is determined by the 18-hole stroke index. With nine-hole medal play events for example, if stroke index holes 1 and 3 are on the front nine and the 9-hole competition is being played over the front 9 then a player on a 3 handicap would be allowed 2 strokes for that 9.
- The Terms of the Competition should provide for what will happen if this method does not produce a winner.

12. STROKE INDEX ALLOCATION

The Rules of Golf state: "The Committee is responsible for publishing on the scorecard or somewhere else that is visible (for example, near the first tee) the order of holes at which handicap strokes are to be given or received." (See Rules of Golf, Committee Procedures, Rule 5I (4)).

It is recommended that a stroke index allocation be applied over 18-holes, split into six triads with each hole ranked on its playing difficulty relative to par. The difficulty of each hole can be determined objectively using hole-by-hole data.

The recommended methodology and procedures for determining a stroke index allocation within the six triad structure, designed to accommodate both stroke play and match play formats, is as follows:

- Apply odd stroke index allocations over the front nine and even stroke index allocations over the back nine. If, however, the back nine is significantly more difficult than the front nine, as determined by the Scratch Rating, the even stroke index allocations can be switched to the front nine and the odd stroke index allocations to the back nine.
- Spread stroke index allocations evenly over the 18 holes so that players receiving strokes will have the opportunity to use a high proportion of these strokes before a match result has been decided.
- Apply the lowest stroke index hole (1 or 2) on each nine in the middle triad. If no hole within the middle triad is ranked within the lowest 6 holes relative to par, then it can be moved into an adjacent hole at the end of the first triad or the beginning of the third triad on each nine.
- Apply the second lowest stroke index hole (3 or 4) on each nine in either the first or third triad, unless the lowest stroke index hole has been allocated in that same triad.
- If possible, avoid low stroke indexes (6 or less) on consecutive holes.
- When a player receives more than 18 strokes, the same allocation order is used with stroke index 1 repeating as stroke index 19, 37 and 55, with all additional strokes going up sequentially.
- Note: The R&A and USGA best practice guidelines for formulation of stroke indexes do not include the use of 'split indexing'.

These recommended procedures support the guidance contained in the Rules of Golf, Committee Procedures, Rule 5I (4).

13. ESTABLISHING PAR

The Rules of Handicapping feature par as a factor in the calculation of:

- Net par (for hole(s) not played)
- Net double bogey (maximum hole score for handicap purposes)
- Daily Handicap (which includes a Scratch Rating minus Par adjustment)

It is important that an accurate par be established for each hole on a golf course for both men and women, and these values should be printed alongside each hole on the scorecard.

It is recommended that par be established for each hole in accordance with the following hole lengths:

Par	Men	Women
3	Up to 260 yards (240 metres)	Up to 220 yards (200 metres)
4	240 to 490 yards (220 to 450 metres)	200 to 420 yards (180 to 380 metres)
5	450 to 710 yards (410 to 650 metres)	370 to 600 yards (340 to 550 metres)
6	670 yards and up (610 metres and up)	570 yards and up (520 metres and up)

Note: These guidelines assume an altitude less than 2,000 feet / 610 metres above sea level.

- Par reflects the score a scratch player is expected to score on a given hole and may be allocated depending on the playing difficulty of the hole, including any effective length correction factors, for example, elevation changes, forced layups, and prevalent wind.
- Where a hole length falls within two par ranges, for example 470 yards (men) or 400 yards (women), the par may be allocated as 4 or 5 depending on the difficulty of the hole.
- Where a hole length falls within two par ranges, par should be designated relative to the way the hole was designed to be played. For example, if the hole lengths from all sets of tees on a specific hole lie within the recommended par 4 range for men, with the exception of the forward tee at 250 yards, this hole should still be designated as a par 4 hole due to the way the hole is designed to be played.

14. COURSE WITH BUNKERS FILLED WITH WATER OR OUT OF PLAY

(A) INTRODUCTION

From time to time a committee will have to conduct a competition on a golf course which has bunkers that are either filled with water or otherwise out of play. This may be because the bunkers are being renovated (either as a part of the club's normal renovation or building program, or to fix damage that has been caused by flooding).

This can be a relatively common occurrence in some areas and is a problem faced by organisers of events ranging from Friday twilight competitions right through to international championships. The following information is provided to help committees handle these circumstances if they arise.

(B) 'GENERAL AREA'

'General Area' is a term that is used below; it is a defined term in the Rules of Golf. 'General Area' is the whole area of the course except the teeing area and putting green of the hole being played, and all penalty areas and bunkers on the course.

(C) DAMAGED OR WATER-FILLED BUNKERS – LOCAL RULE OPTIONS & HANDICAPPING OF SCORES

- Once a round has commenced, a Committee is not authorised to introduce a new Local Rule to apply for the remainder of that round. In a competition played over more than one round, a Local Rule may be introduced or rescinded between rounds.
- When a Committee considers a bunker to be damaged to the extent that it will require renovation to again become playable, the Committee may define the entire bunker to be ground under repair.
 - In such a case, the bunker is automatically classified as 'general area'. (Therefore, unless a Committee specifically states otherwise, Rule 16.1b applies, not Rule 16.1c.)
 - Heavy rain has the potential to cause bunkers to flood. In many instances bunkers will be playable once the water has cleared. In other instances bunkers will be substantially damaged and they will remain unplayable even once the water is gone. This can be due to a significant amount of sand and/or soil having moved, or bunker surfaces being left heavily covered with a sludgy residue which would significantly impact the proper playing of the game.
 - In rare cases, there can be safety considerations attached to damaged bunkers.
 - A committee may consider that all bunkers on a course are damaged to the extent that they will require renovation to again become playable.

(iii) When bunkers are completely flooded prior to a competition commencing but the Committee does NOT consider them to be in need of renovation, there is still an available Local Rule option. The Committee may introduce a Local Rule stating that certain specific bunkers are deemed to be ground under repair and classified as general area.

- In such a case, these specific bunkers must be known to be flooded prior to the competition commencing and there must be no reasonable likelihood of the bunkers drying up during the competition.
- Under this Local Rule it will be permissible for a player to take relief outside these bunkers without penalty in accordance with Rule 16.1b.
- A Local Rule may not be introduced to provide relief generally from all bunkers if the Committee does NOT consider them to be in need of renovation. (EXCEPTION: Where there are 15 or less bunkers on the course, the Committee may introduce a Local Rule stating that ALL bunkers are deemed to be ground under repair and classified as general area, regardless of whether or not they need renovating.)
- **Model Local Rule when Renovation of Bunkers is NOT required:** “The following bunkers are deemed to be GUR and in the general area: [list bunkers]. The ball may be dropped without penalty at the nearest point of relief outside the bunker in accordance with the standard GUR relief procedure.”

(D) WHEN NO LOCAL RULE IS IN PLACE – RELIEF FROM TEMPORARY WATER IN A BUNKER

Where there is no Local Rule in place, whether a bunker contains a small amount of water or is completely filled, the Rule regarding Abnormal Course Conditions (note: temporary water is an abnormal course condition) caters for all possibilities (see Rule 16.1c). In accordance with this Rule, a player experiencing interference from temporary water always has the option of dropping their ball outside the bunker, back-on-a-line, under penalty of one stroke. If a player chooses this option, they must drop within one club-length of a chosen reference point back on a line from the flag, keeping where the ball lay directly between the hole and the chosen reference point – with no limit to how far behind the bunker the ball may be dropped.

(E) IMPACT ON COURSE RATINGS

When clubs have bunkers filled with water or otherwise out of play, they should continue to process competitions through GOLF Link. The following table provides advice on when a club needs to contact its State Association or GA, and when its course ratings may be affected.

Number of Bunkers Out of Play	Period of Time	Contact State Association or GA	Impact Club’s Official Course Ratings
0-5	1 month or less	No	No
0-5	More than 1 month	Yes*	Possibly
6 or more	1-4 days	No	No
6 or more	5 days or more	Yes*	Possibly

- * When you contact your State Association or GA, they will supply you with a form to complete which will briefly describe the number and location of bunkers you have out of play. Your State Association or GA will immediately assess the returned form and determine if they need to make any temporary adjustment to your course ratings through GOLF Link. It may be the case that the bunkers you have out of play will have an inconsequential impact on your course ratings, or that heavier conditions or greater rough heights will offset the bunker impact. (Note: This guidance has been designed with a view to ensuring the service of clubs may be as quick as possible.)

(F) COMPETITIONS CONDUCTED CONTRARY TO THE RULES OF GOLF

If a committee is unaware of the restrictions imposed by this document and the Rules of Golf and as a result conducts a competition with a Local Rule which is contrary to the guidance provided, the scores must not be used for handicapping purposes except with the approval of the State Association or GA.

(G) MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES TO ASSIST PLAYERS

- (i) In situations where there is no Local Rule in place and where only a few bunkers are badly affected, players will have to deal with balls coming to rest in bunkers they had not considered to pose a concern. To remove the surprise factor, and in addition to any maintenance work performed, it is recommended that committees pre-advise their fields of specific problem locations. This will give players the opportunity to take into account the problem areas when considering their course management. This can be done for example by posting notices on the starting tees.

- (ii) If a course experiences periods of prolonged wet weather, an option to consider is to have course staff create an area of heaped or raised sand at a remote part of the bunker. This point should be positioned so that it can never be closer to the hole than any point at which a player's ball could originally come to rest within temporary water. Such areas need not be large – even as small as one metre square – and can be created by dumping, scraping, or heaping sand from within the wet bunker. The location of the hole may need to be arranged to suit.

15. HOW SCRATCH RATINGS & SLOPE RATINGS ARE ASSESSED, AND MODIFICATION OF COURSES

(A) GOVERNANCE

An Authorized Association is responsible for determining and issuing Scratch Ratings and Slope Ratings for all of the golf courses within its jurisdiction.

(B) COURSE MEASUREMENT

Each hole must be measured to the nearest yard/metre, for each set of tees from a permanent distance marker, in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Course Rating System.

(C) TEE MARKERS

The tee markers used to designate each set of tees on a golf course should be consistent in name, colour and/or design and distinguishable from the tee markers used for other sets of tees. It is strongly recommended that the Authorized Association issues guidance to golf clubs as to how these avoid any association with gender or age.

(D) DISPLAY OF RATINGS AND PAR

The Scratch Rating, Slope Rating and par for each set of tees must be readily available so that it is easy for a player to convert their GA Handicap to a Daily Handicap to submit an acceptable score.

(E) SCRATCH RATING AND SLOPE RATING

The Scratch Rating and Slope Rating is the evaluation of the playing difficulty of the course for the scratch player and the bogey player under normal playing conditions. The effective playing length is determined from the measurement of each hole, adjusted for the impact of roll, wind, elevation changes, altitude, doglegs and forced lay ups. In addition to the effective playing length, there are 10 obstacle factors evaluated on each hole for both the scratch player and the bogey player. These are: topography; fairway; green target; recoverability and rough; bunkers; crossing obstacles; lateral obstacles; trees; green surface and psychology. The Course Rating System uses table values, adjustments and formulas to calculate ratings.

The Scratch Rating is calculated from the effective playing length and obstacle factors for 9 or 18 designated holes. The Scratch Rating is expressed in strokes rounded to the nearest whole number and represents the expected score for a scratch player. The Bogey Rating represents the expected score for a bogey player. The difference between the Scratch Rating and the Bogey Rating is used in the determination of the Slope Rating. A golf course of neutral relative difficulty has a Slope Rating of 113.

The front of a teeing area, as defined in the Rules of Golf, should not be placed more than 10 yards (10 metres) in front of, or behind, the relevant permanent distance marker on each hole. Overall, the golf course should not be shortened (or lengthened) by more than 100 yards (100 metres) from its measured length, to ensure accurate application of the Scratch Rating and Slope Rating in the calculation of players' 'Score Differentials'.

(F) MODIFICATIONS MADE TO COURSES

(i) Temporary Changes

The club's Handicapping Authority is responsible for ensuring the Authorized Association is notified when temporary changes are being made to the golf course that may affect the Scratch Rating. The Authorized Association will determine whether scores made under such conditions are acceptable for handicap purposes, and whether the Scratch Rating and Slope Rating should be modified temporarily.

Where a temporary Scratch Rating and Slope Rating has been issued, this information must be made available to players prior to the commencement of their round.

For an 18-hole golf course:

If approved by the State Association or GA, the issuance of a temporary Scratch Rating and Slope Rating is determined by the club's Handicapping Authority and/or the State Association or GA following the procedure set out below:

- Locate the nearest set of rated tees for the appropriate gender.

- Determine the measured difference between the set of tees being played and the rated set of tees.
- For differences under 100 yards (100 metres), no adjustment is necessary and scores can be submitted as usual; otherwise
- For differences between 100 and 300 yards (100 and 274 metres), the below table can be used to determine the adjustments required and issue a temporary Scratch Rating and Slope Rating.

Using these guidelines and the table below, find the range that includes the yardage difference:

Men's Rating Adjustment			Women's Rating Adjustment		
Yards [Metres]	Change to Scratch Rating	Change to Slope Rating	Yards [Metres]	Change to Scratch Rating	Change to Slope Rating
100 to 120 [100 to 110]	0.5	1	100 to 116 [100 to 110]	0.6	1
121 to 142 [111 to 130]	0.6	1	117 to 134 [111 to 122]	0.7	1
143 to 164 [131 to 150]	0.7	2	135 to 152 [123 to 139]	0.8	2
165 to 186 [151 to 170]	0.8	2	153 to 170 [140 to 155]	0.9	2
187 to 208 [171 to 190]	0.9	2	171 to 188 [156 to 172]	1.0	2
209 to 230 [191 to 210]	1.0	2	189 to 206 [173 to 188]	1.1	2
231 to 252 [211 to 230]	1.1	3	207 to 224 [189 to 205]	1.2	2
253 to 274 [231 to 250]	1.2	3	225 to 242 [206 to 221]	1.3	3
275 to 300 [251 to 274]	1.3	3	243 to 260 [222 to 238]	1.4	3
*The State Association or GA will determine the appropriate adjustment for any distance greater than 300 yards (274 metres)			261 to 278 [239 to 254]	1.5	3
			279 to 300 [255 to 274]	1.6	3
			* The State Association or GA will determine the appropriate adjustment for any distance greater than 300 yards (274 metres)		

Note: These guidelines assume an altitude less than 2,000 feet/610 metres above sea level.

- If the unrated tees are longer than the rated tees, add the resulting table values to the ratings of the nearest set of tees rated for the appropriate gender.
- If the unrated tees are shorter than the rated tees, subtract the resulting values from the ratings of the nearest set of tees rated for the appropriate gender.
- For differences above 300 yards (274 metres), play for the day would be ineligible for handicap purposes, unless otherwise determined by the State Association or GA.

For a 9-hole golf course:

If approved by the State Association or GA, the issuance of a temporary Scratch Rating and Slope Rating is determined by the club's Handicapping Authority and/or State Association or GA following the procedure set out below:

- Locate the nearest set of rated tees for the appropriate gender.
- Determine the measured difference between the set of tees being played and the rated set of tees.
- For differences under 50 yards (50 metres), no adjustment is necessary and scores can be returned or posted as usual; otherwise
- For differences between 50 and 150 yards (50 and 137 metres), the table below can be used to determine the adjustment and issue a temporary Scratch Rating and Slope Rating.

Using these guidelines and the table below, find the range that includes the yardage difference:

Men's Rating Adjustment			Women's Rating Adjustment		
Yards [Metres]	Change to Scratch Rating	Change to Slope Rating	Yards [Metres]	Change to Scratch Rating	Change to Slope Rating
50 to 76 [50 to 69]	0.3	1	50 to 62 [50 to 57]	0.3	1
77 to 98 [70 to 90]	0.4	2	63 to 80 [58 to 73]	0.4	2
99 to 120 [91 to 110]	0.5	2	81 to 98 [74 to 90]	0.5	2
121 to 142 [111 to 130]	0.6	3	99 to 116 [91 to 106]	0.6	2
143 to 150 [131 to 137]	0.7	3	117 to 134 [107 to 122]	0.7	3
* The State Association or GA will determine the appropriate adjustment for any distance greater than 150 yards (137 metres)			135 to 150 [123 to 137]	0.8	3
			* The State Association or GA will determine the appropriate adjustment for any distance greater than 150 yards (137 metres)		

Note: If playing a combination of different sets of tees, a current Scratch Rating and Slope Rating must be available to submit an acceptable score. If the Committee in charge of a competition has used a combination of tees for a competition course, this temporary rating procedure may be used, but this procedure is not a substitute for a formal or permanent Scratch Rating and Slope Rating.

(ii) Permanent Changes

A golf club must notify the State Association or GA when permanent changes are made to a golf course. Permanent changes to the golf course require the State Association or GA to review the current Scratch Rating and Slope Rating and to determine whether a re-rating is necessary.

(G) SITUATIONS WHERE FAIRWAY ROLL BECOMES NOTABLY DIFFERENT TO RATED DISTANCE

Scratch Ratings should be adjusted by the State Association or GA in situations where course difficulty is being clearly impacted by any of the following:

- Where the operation of the Tee-Up local rule is resulting in players gaining an average of at least 10 metres more run per stroke with a driver played from the fairway than they otherwise would.
- Where the operation of the Preferred Lies local rule is resulting in players gaining an average of at least 10 metres more run per stroke with a driver played from the fairway than they otherwise would. Note: In the vast majority of cases, the 'preferred lies' local rule only serves to 'normalise' conditions. It does not make conditions notably easier than the average conditions the raters assessed would occur. So no adjustment to ratings will be warranted in the vast majority of cases where the 'preferred lies' local rule is in operation.
- Where a sustained weather event (eg a drought) is having a notable impact on fairway roll (ie where fairways have become either heavier or firmer resulting in players losing/gaining an average of at least 10 metres of run per stroke with a driver played from the tee than they otherwise would, and where such changed conditions will last for at least several weeks).

A club should contact its State Association or GA for assessment if it believes it is being clearly impacted by any of these situations.