

World Handicapping System (WHS)

Questions & Answers



The New World Handicapping System

How Does the New System Work?	The new World Handicap System will be averaged based, using the best 8 of the last 20 scores on your record.
What will happen to my existing playing history when WHS comes into effect?	The scores you currently have in your record will be used to calculate your new WHS Handicap Index which will automatically transfer across for day one of WHS.
When will I have my new Handicap Index	2020 will be a transition year as countries adopt the WHS to meet their golfing season and administrative requirements. The change-over date for Scotland is 2 nd November 2020
Is my handicap going to change (significantly)?	The amount your handicap may change by depends on a number of factors: consistency and frequency of play for example. During testing we have found most players new handicap index will be within 1 stroke of their current CONGU handicap.
What happens to your handicap if you are not a member of a club?	Your handicap can only be maintained and used if you are a club member.
How long do my 20 scores last on the new system?	Scores will not expire. However, to maintain an accurate handicap it is recommended that players should return at least 20 scores over a 2 year period.
Will I be given a new CDH number?	It is highly unlikely that a new CDH ID number will be reissued. This information will be released as soon as possible.

How Do I Get a World Handicap Index?

How do I get a World Handicap Index?	Handicap Indexes are only available to those players who are playing members of an affiliated club. Once you have found a club to join you can be allocated a Handicap Index over 54 holes if you are new to golf. If you are a returning player it may be that we can calculate an initial World Handicap Index from your previous CONGU record.
How are handicaps allocated?	A player will still need to return 54 holes worth of scores to be allocated an initial Handicap Index
How long do I have to submit my first 3 cards or 54 holes for Initial Handicap Allocation?	A new player has no time limit to return the first 54 holes worth of scores, but they won't hold a handicap index during this time.
Once I have been given a Handicap Index, what happens as I don't have 20 scores yet?	Following your first 54 holes worth of scores, your Handicap Index will be allocated, then each time you add a new score it will be recalculated using an adjusted calculation to give you an Index equivalent to that of the best 8 from 20 principle.
Will it still be a mix of 9 and 18 holes and does it still have to be at my home club?	Any combination is acceptable over 9 or 18 holes. However, it will be up to your home club if they will accept scores from another venue for initial allocation.
If I can enter one of my first cards for initial handicap allocation at another club, will it still need to be certified as having been done correctly by the other club?	Yes: all cards will need to be checked and signed by another member

Do I Have to Submit Every Score for Every Round I Play?

Do I have to submit every score for every round I play?	No: you will have to submit all singles competition scores, and you will have the choice to submit social/recreational scores. All scores will have to be pre-registered.
What is an acceptable score?	This is the same as the current “qualifying score” under CONGU UHS. An acceptable score will be any singles competition score and any pre-registered social score returned from any tee that has a course and slope rating for your gender.
What is the difference between a Supplementary Score and a Pre-registered Social Score?	They are the same thing, just a new name. Under WHS Supplementary Scores will be known as” General Play”, “Social Play” or Recreational Play”
What formats are acceptable for competition scores?	Singles – Medal, Stableford, Par/Bogey
What happens if a player pre-registers a round for handicapping purposes but fails to return a card?	The score will be classed as a no return. However, should the score be known, it will be posted by the Committee. If unknown, the Committee has the discretion to apply a penalty score if no return was for the purposes of manipulating a handicap.
Can random cards that have not been pre-registered be submitted for handicap purposes?	No.
How do I register and return away scores?	Through the sign-in system at the club you are visiting, you will be able to register before play and submit your scores on your return to the clubhouse

How Do Playing Conditions Affect the Score?

How do the playing conditions affect the score?	The system includes a playing conditions adjustment, known as a “Playing Course Calculation (PCC)”, and this will look at how players have performed compared to their expected performance on that golf course for that day. The calculation will take place at the end of each days play. Scores from a singles competition or pre-registered social/recreational score should be entered as soon as possible at the conclusion of play on that day.
Scores should be entered as soon as possible... What would happen if a score is not returned ASAP, and what time will be allowed? I am thinking not just of the tardiness of players but also technical problems with computers, phone lines, power cuts etc.	Scores should be entered before the end of the day (approx. midnight local time). Any scores not entered before that time will still be acceptable, but will not be used as part of the PCC calculation. However, the PCC calculated for the day of play will be retrospectively applied, when your score is posted.
How is the PCC calculated if only one player enters a competition or submits a social/recreational score that day?	A PCC can only be calculated if at least 8 scores from players with fully developed handicap indexes have been returned on that day.
Will there be the equivalent of the two CSS's calculated for home/away players?	No.

Will Parts of the CONGU System Be Incorporated in the World Handicap System?

Will there still be an Annual Review?	Yes: the Annual Review will be an important part of the system.
Will Buffer Zones still exist?	Buffer Zones will not be part of the World Handicap System.
Can my handicap lapse?	No, as long as you retain membership of an affiliated golf club designated to manage and maintain your handicap, your handicap will remain valid.
Will there still be competition status handicaps?	No, a WHS Handicap Index cannot “lapse”. Committees will govern eligibility for entry in the Conditions of Competition.
Will there still be reduction only competitions?	No.
What about preferred lies, temporary greens etc., will they still be in use and will you still be	This is still being discussed but it is possible that similar rules to CONGU will be in use.

able to run competitions whilst they are in force?	
Will Standard Scratch Scores be used in the new World Handicap System?	No, the new handicap system will see the end of SSS. The USGA Slope System will be introduced instead.
What is a Slope Rating?	A Slope Rating is the difference between the course rating for a “scratch” golfer and the course rating for a “bogey” golfer multiplied by a factor. The Slope Rating indicates the difficulty of a golf course for the “bogey” golfer relative to the “scratch” player. Note: The R&A will soon publish a monthly article featuring key elements of the new World Handicap System. Further information on Slope Ratings will be included.
Where do I find the Slope Rating for a Course?	The Course and Slope Ratings for any course will be displayed at the club. Scottish Golf will soon be writing to every affiliated golf club with confirmation of their USGA Course Rating and Slope Rating.
Will the Slope Rating be Reflected in the Handicap Calculation?	Slope Rating is part of the system and will be used as part of the Course Handicap and Score Differential calculations. More information to follow soon.
Will we have a different slope rating for each tee at our club?	Yes: each tee has a separate Course Rating and Slope Rating. Each tee will therefore have a different “Handicap Calculation Conversion Table” that is used for players to look up your course handicap for the day.

Questions asked by Club Committees...

When will all this come into use? We need to get more scorecards printed.	The aim is to have this in place for the first quarter of 2020. There will be no requirement to have new scorecards printed for the launch: however, when you do get them printed in future you will need some additional information on them; such as the USGA Course Rating to a decimal point (replacement for SSS) and the Slope Rating.
What information will clubs be required to display?	Clubs will need to show players the USGA Course and Slope Ratings, as well as giving them access to the course Handicap Calculation Conversion Tables.
When will we receive the information on Slope Ratings and Conversions to Course Handicaps?	During 2019, if there is a need to get this sooner please feel free to contact Scottish Golf – courserating@scottishgolf.org
Should clubs wait until 2020 to redesign or reprint scorecards?	We would advise clubs to wait until they have their USGA Course Rating and Slope Rating information before having a lot of new scorecards printed.
Will the club have to advertise their Slope Rating and Course Rating on their website?	This will be up to the club, but the club will be required to publish any CCA's calculated on days of play.
Will we need to buy new software?	No, the software that is currently in use will be adapted to function with the new system. Some of the interfaces may change, but you will still need to use a licensed software provider.
How much will all this cost clubs? Will Scottish Golf help with the expense?	It is hoped that the cost to clubs will be kept to a minimum; and we are working with the R&A to ensure this is the case.
Will we still need a Handicap Committee and Handicap Secretary?	Yes: the club will still need to appoint a Handicap Committee to manage and maintain members handicaps e.g. carry out handicap reviews, adjust handicaps where necessary, and ensure that scores are being submitted. Where possible, we would encourage clubs to try and maintain the same committee for the next two years. This will provide continuity for education and transitional purposes.
What restrictions will you be able to place on handicaps for club competitions?	As with any competition, the Committee can have a set of Competition Conditions which may include a handicap limit. However, all players must have the opportunity to access competition golf.
Who will we ask for support?	Support for the new system will be provided by Scottish Golf.