



# World Handicap System:

## Overview

There are currently six different handicapping systems used around the world. Golf is played to a unified set of Rules so a World Handicapping System (WHS) is just the next logical step. Accessible technology allows for the implementation of a World Handicap System. The adjustment of a player's handicap will be calculated by WHS and not the player's club. Changes will be made overnight and ready for the player the next day. Player's will be able to access their handicap information using various technical solutions, including club websites, WHS websites and mobile phone apps.

Countries will be able to switch over to WHS as from 1st January 2020. England and the other CONGU nations will not switch over until November 2020. At some stage between 1st January and November 2020, England will be running two systems simultaneously to aid with a seamless transfer between systems.

The Council of National Golf Unions (CONGU) will administer the WHS in England as they currently do with the existing system.

The USGA course rating system will be used. There is currently a proactive programme of rating within all counties of England to ensure that all courses are USGA rated before the introduction of the new handicapping system. Courses that haven't been rated by the transfer date will be given a temporary rating.

Once a course is USGA rated, it will be provided with a Course Rating (similar to Standard Scratch Score) and a Slope Rating. Course rating reflects the difficulty for a Scratch golfer and is shown to one decimal place and the Slope Rating is a whole number that represents the relative difficulty of how a Bogey golfer will play the course compared to a Scratch Player. Both Course Rating and Slope Rating will appear on the score card.

The WHS system is based on an average of the best 8 of the last 20 scores recorded in a player's record **regardless of the age of the score**. As players



submit scores, the oldest disappears from the handicap calculation. Players will submit competition scores for handicap purposes as they do now, i.e. monthly medal/Stableford with the opportunity to return scores from recreational or social golf, should they wish to. Players will also be able to submit an acceptable score at any club they are playing at by registering their intent before play. They do not need to be a member of that club.

Handicap Committees will be able to use scores from unofficial social competitions (such as Roll ups or Swindles) to adjust a player's handicap even if the player hasn't registered his or her intent to submit an acceptable score before play.

CONGU® categories 1-6 will not be used but there may be a system in place to differentiate the elite player. The competition status of a handicap is abolished and, providing the player is a member of an Affiliated Club, they will have a Handicap Index.

A Playing Conditions Calculation will be made daily. This is similar to the current Competition Scratch Score (CSS) but uses all scores submitted by players with a Handicap Index of 36.0 or lower on the day and not just those in a competition.

Various safeguards are in place to ensure that a player's Handicap Index cannot move up too drastically – these are known as caps. WHS will also apply Exceptional Scoring Reductions as used in CONGU®.

Handicap Committees should review handicaps of all their home players annually. The Handicap Committee may initiate a review of any player who is consistently returning scores that do not reflect their demonstrated ability.

To transfer a CONGU® handicap to a World Handicap, there needs to be 20 score differentials in the player's record so that the average of the best 8 can be used to determine player's the Handicap Index. For players with less than 20 scores in their record, a different score differential calculation will be made until the required number is achieved. Clubs should encourage their players to submit as many scores as they can, including returning Supplementary Scores.



To obtain an initial Handicap Index, a player must submit acceptable scores from a minimum of 54 holes, again, as required by CONGU®. For a player submitting their first scores to obtain an initial Handicap Index, the maximum score for each hole played is limited to par + 5 strokes.

When playing a round of golf, players will look up their Handicap Index on the club's Slope Table to find their Course Handicap. When playing in an Organized Competition, such as Monthly Medal, or a Four-ball stroke play, a Handicap Allowance is applied to find the Playing Handicap.

After play, the score is submitted and processed by WHS and handicaps recalculated overnight ready for the player the next day.