

Handicap Convenor – Review of Handicaps: Additional Guidance

Annual Handicap Review

“Keep handicaps meaningful, competitive and reflective of a players’ ability”

Q1. Where can I locate full information on the Annual Review of Handicaps?

Link: For full details please refer to [CONGU UHS Clause 23 – Review of Handicaps](#)

Q2. When should the Annual Review of Handicaps take place?

It is recommended that the Annual review should be conducted at a time convenient to the Handicap Committee between 31 October and 01 March.

Q3. Why is an Annual Review of Handicaps necessary? Surely the UHS, by using Qualifying Scores to adjust handicaps does this routinely.

For the majority of players who play regularly in competitions this is correct. However, there are a number of reasons why the Handicap Committee must carry out an Annual Review including the following:

- Even for those players who take part with reasonable regularity in Qualifying Competitions, particularly those of declining ability, the system can be too slow to react to changes in their standard of play and, by looking at all the returns over the twelve month period; trends that may not be apparent on a week-to-week basis are highlighted.
- In general, players who have been recently allotted a handicap have the potential to improve more rapidly than the system can take account of, and such players should have their initial competition scores reviewed to ensure that they are correctly handicapped.
- Players may be infrequent competitors in Qualifying Competitions and therefore have few opportunities to reduce their handicaps in line with their improved standard of play. They may compete frequently, however, with success in other forms of golf and their handicaps may require adjustment to reflect this.

Q4. Should handicap adjustments be applied both upwards and downwards?

Yes, to promote fair and equitable handicapping, it is just as important to increase handicaps, where necessary, as it is to reduce them. Please refer to bullet point 1 in A3 above.

Q5. If a handicap adjustment is not applied, does this only affect the individual player or does it also affect other players?

Not applying a handicap adjustment does not just affect the individual player. In fact not acting on recommendations thus leaving some players with handicaps that are too low could affect other players handicaps in the club, due to the impact on Competition Scratch Scores (CSS). This is particularly relevant in Qualifying Competitions with small field sizes. Increases recommended in the AHR Report should be strongly considered unless the Handicap Committee has good reason not to apply an adjustment e.g. performance in Non-Qualifying Competitions, match play.