

Code of Practice for Handicapping Allotments and Adjustments of Handicaps **Handicapping Appeals Procedure**

Handicapping Allotments and Adjustments made by Club Handicap Committees fall into four categories:

- 1. Initial Handicap Allotments** – as covered by Section 16 of the UHS.
In making Initial Handicap Allotments the Committee should ensure the decision can be justified in terms of the requirements of Clause 16.3 and the statements in FAQ 16.3/1.

Advice on adjusting newly allocated playing handicap can be found in Blue Box 23/5 of the CONGU manual.
- 2. Annual Review Adjustments** – indicated by the Annual Review (AR) UHS Section 23(A).
The Committee should consider all players flagged up in the AR report generated by handicapping software. Adjustments to players handicaps should only be made only but made when all evidence has been reviewed (Blue Box 23/2 to 23/4) unless there is grounds based on performance data not covered by the AR, or know of mitigating circumstances, for varying or waiving the recommendations.
- 3. General Play Adjustments** - indicated by exceptional performance UHS Section 23(B)
The Club Handicap Committee must have compelling evidence to justify such changes. When making such changes the Committee must take into account the circumstances outlined in 23/2 to 23/6, Note to Clause 23(B) and Decision 5(a). It is accepted that “exceptional” and “compelling” are subjective. Applying reductions purely on the grounds of getting to later stages of a match play competition and automatically applying a handicap reduction is not considered of itself acceptable grounds for reducing a handicap.
- 4. General Play Adjustments following Appeals by the Player**
The Committee should take into account all relevant information. Player requests for increase on medical grounds should be determined taking into account the long-term effects. Considerations for short-term problems should be made with extreme caution. A request for a decrease not justified by available data should be declined. Players submitting data from other handicap systems for consideration under General Play should be referred to the Wales Golf.

In all cases only the Handicap Committee should make the Allotments. The size of any adjustment must be made on grounds that it has been objectively determined and can be justified taking into account all the information available to the Committee. However in respect of exceptional circumstances indicated by the Exceptional Scoring Adjustment (ESR) the Committee may give strict guidelines to a nominated representative to make an adjustment which would be later ratified by the Committee.

Players should be informed by letter or email of any Clause 23 adjustments. Although it is not required to do so, Clubs may wish to indicate brief reasons for the change in the communication to the player.

Handicapping Appeals Procedure

This procedure is to direct the player's Home Club should any player be dissatisfied with a determination by their Handicap Committee under the CONGU® Unified Handicapping System Part 4 – Handicapping.

Any member wishing to appeal against a decision of a Handicap Committee should lodge an appeal to their Home Club, in writing setting out the grounds of the appeal within seven days of the receipt of the notification of the decision. The notice of appeal should include:

- The name of appellant
- The decision appealed against
- The date of the decision appealed against and
- The specific grounds of the appeal including any relevant document copies.

On receipt of an appeal it is recommended the following procedures should be used: -

1. Any decision imposed by the Handicap Committee shall stand pending the outcome of the appeal **except, in the case of expulsion, the member shall be suspended pending the outcome of the appeal.**
2. An appropriate Appeal Committee shall be appointed by the Home Club, none of whom had been members of the Committee, which reached the original decision on the matter. The Chair of the Appeal Committee shall communicate with all parties.
3. The Appeal Committee shall adjudicate upon the matter taking into consideration the written or oral evidence of the relevant member and seeking such further evidence, written or oral, as it thinks fit. All parties should be given the right of representation in the event of oral evidence being considered.
4. The Appeal Committee may cancel, reduce, confirm or increase the penalty under appeal or substitute a penalty of a different form. The Appeal Committee shall make its findings known to the appellant within 28 days of the appeal being lodged.

Natural Justice

The Rules of Natural Justice should be applied in that the principles and procedures that govern the adjudication of disputes between persons or organizations should be observed. Chief among which are that the adjudication should be unbiased and given in good faith, and that each party should have equal access to the tribunal and should be aware of arguments and documents adduced by the other. A contemporary written record of the proceedings of the Appeals Committee shall be made under the direction of the Chairman.

Final Appellant Service

Wherever possible any handicapping issues should be resolved at Club level. If however there is failure to reach agreement by the Appeal Committee the Club should write to the CEO of Wales Golf including all relevant information from both sides for review. Wales Golf will convene a panel from the Handicapping & Course Rating Committee to review any appeal. Wales Golf may cancel, reduce, confirm or increase the penalty under appeal or substitute a penalty of a different form. Any decision made by Wales Golf will be final.