



2024 Rules of Handicap update for club members

On the 1st of April 2024, The changes to WHS™ Rules of Handicapping & Course Rating™ standards will take effect in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

Your Club handicap committee are the first point of contact for any WHS™ queries. They have access to the required resource(s) and tools to ensure they can support the membership at their club.

To ensure the golfer understands the impact of the changes on their game, below is a summary of each change.

Calculating Course Handicap™ using CR-PAR: It is an adjustment for the difference between the Course Rating and Par of the course being played. It will be implemented as part of the Course Handicap™ Calculation to give players the number of strokes required to play the course. If the Par is lower than Course Rating, players will receive additional strokes, if the Par is higher, they will not receive as many. This applies for all handicap indexes. Without C.R.-PAR, the “play to handicap score” for a golfer is the Course Rating™. With C.R.-PAR implemented, it will move the “play to handicap score” to PAR of the course or 36 points. This will align with other Countries around the world.

The Inclusion of Four Ball Scores as an authorised format of play within GB&I: These scores will be added to the list of mandatory scores to be returned for handicapping. Only scores of 42 points or more, where a player has featured 9 times or more, will trigger inclusion in the handicap calculation. Holes where the player did not score will be allocated points relative to the score recorded on the card. All competition scores will be submitted through a clubs’ competition software. This is for **COMPETITIONS** only.

Use of an Expected Score for a Hole Not Played: Improvements have been made to the method used to handle holes not played, which will now



be based on a player's expected score rather than a score of net par. This new method will produce a 9-hole or 18-hole Score Differential™ that more accurately reflects a player's ability. As golfers across the world are playing more 9-hole rounds, an expected score will also be used to convert a 9-hole round into an 18-hole Score Differential™. The calculations used to calculate an expected score, includes ratings of standard difficulty, and are not shared by the USGA. This means the Score Differential™ will more accurately reflect the playing ability of the individual golfer.

Course Handicap™ un-rounding: As of April 2024, for competition purposes, the calculated and unrounded Course Handicap™ will be carried through to the Playing Handicap calculation using "machine precision" (competition software). For general play score submission, the golfer will continue to use the calculated and rounded Course Handicap™.

Team Match Play allowance application: The application of allowances in team match play events has also been changed so that the % is applied to the difference between the players course handicaps, taken from the lowest player upwards.

Playing Conditions Calculation Adjustments Made More Frequent: The Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC) within GB&I has already been modified to increase the likelihood of an adjustment for abnormal playing conditions.

Other important information to note.....

Player responsibilities under the Rules of Handicapping

Players have an important role in ensuring the Rules of Handicapping are being implemented and administered appropriately. The main areas of responsibility for players are:

Player A player is expected to:



- Act with integrity by following the Rules of Handicapping and to refrain from using, or circumventing, the Rules of Handicapping for the purpose of gaining an unfair advantage,
- Attempt to make the best score possible at each hole,
- Submit all acceptable scores to provide reasonable evidence of their demonstrated ability,
- Submit acceptable scores for handicap purposes as soon as possible after the round is completed and before midnight local time,
- Play by the Rules of Golf, and
- Certify the scores of other players.

Submission of Scores

- Competitions must be return “promptly” after play and via the method instructed by the Terms of Competition as set by the competition organisers.
- General Play – A player must declare their intent to submit a score prior to their round and the score must be submitted by midnight on the day of play. This is important to note, as any scores submitted after midnight will not be included the PCC calculation. It is strongly recommended to submit your score immediately after your round.

Available resources

Below are a number of resources available to help understand the changes, please click on the link to view. All resources are available on the England Golf Website. [2024-whs-update-resources - England Golf](#)

- [2024 Player Reference Guide](#)
- [CR-PAR Video](#)
- [CR-PAR Infographic](#)
- [Four-ball Infographic](#)
- [Expected Score Video](#)
- [Expected Score Infographic](#)
- [PCC Video](#)
- [PCC infographic](#)