



World Handicap System – Handicap Review Guidance

The annual review should take place between 1st October and 31st December.

All handicap adjustment must be made by the WHS platform, and it is recommended that the notes section of the players record is used to record any adjustment made. Information on how to apply adjustments can be found in the WHS Platform User Guide - <https://www.englandgolf.org/download/whs-golf-club-platform-guide/>

It is not recommended that a committee should consider all members' handicaps for adjustment.

The Handicap Review procedure is designed to assess whether a player's Handicap Index is reflective of their demonstrated ability, and their current scoring pattern is consistent with their expected scoring pattern. This report will identify those players whose Handicap Index may require review and further consideration by the Committee.

Assessing a player's performance relative to expected scoring pattern.

Statistical (player) equations are used to calculate the expected scoring pattern of players and compare their actual scores against the expected scores. The analysis of scores in this way will guide Handicap Committees on which players' handicaps should be reviewed and potentially adjusted. It is recommended that scores over a 12-month period are studied.

- Use the reported titled – Handicap Review Report (from the reports section of the EG WHS platform.)
- Select the 12-month period from November 2020.
- Only report on Flagged Players



Downward adjustments

The criteria for triggering a handicap review downwards are set at a level whereby a score which is better than a player's expected score should occur approximately 2.5% of the time, based on their Handicap Index on the day of the review.

The following table gives the conditions upon which a player will be flagged.

Scores in period of study	Flagged scores
1 - 14	2 or more
15 - 33	3 or more
34 - 55	4 or more

When a player is flagged, the decision as to whether to apply any adjustments remains at the discretion of the Handicap Committee, taking into consideration any other knowledge the Committee has relating to the player's demonstrated ability. If a reduction is justified, then it is recommended that the player's Handicap Index is (initially) reduced by 1.0; and the process of identifying players is repeated following that reduction. If, with this reduced Handicap Index, the procedure would still trigger a review, it is recommended that the Handicap Index is reduced by one further stroke, for a total reduction of 2.0 strokes.

Upward adjustments

The criteria for triggering a handicap review upwards is set at a higher level than above. Further, the number of scores needed to trigger an adjustment is greater than for downward adjustments.

The following table gives the conditions under which a player will be flagged.

Scores in period of study	Flagged scores
1 - 14	3 or more
15 - 33	4 or more



34 - 55	5 or more
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Again, when a player is flagged, the decision as to whether to apply any adjustments remains at the discretion of the Handicap Committee, taking into consideration any other knowledge the Committee has relating to the player's demonstrated ability. If an increase is justified, then it is recommended that the player's Handicap Index is (initially) increased by 1.0, and the process of identifying players is repeated. If with this increased Handicap Index, the procedure would still trigger a review, it is recommended that the Handicap Index is increased by one further stroke, for a total increase of 2.0 strokes.

Handicap Index adjustments greater than 2.0 strokes

If a Handicap Committee considers that a greater adjustment is required to a player's Handicap Index, this should only be applied under exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances could include a player who has a long-term illness, injury or incapacity, preventing them from playing golf at the Handicap Index level previously attained. Temporary loss of form should never be considered as a reason for increase.

Applying an adjustment

A committee adjustment is applied as described in Rule 7.1. For upward adjustments it may be necessary to also reset the Low Handicap Index where appropriate, otherwise it may continue to restrict upward movement of the player's Handicap Index. The minimum adjustment is one full stroke, with any fractions thereafter.

Other information to be considered by the Handicap Committee

Committees should only review players who are initially flagged by this report or have been brought to your attention through peer review or illness/injury.

Other reports available will provide:

- Comparisons between General Play score submissions and Competition Scores. **(Competition Vs General Play Score Report)**
 - Ideally for looking at the differences in the performance levels of players, across GP and Competition Golf.



- Any significant difference between the 2 round types may be an indication of manipulation.
- Comparisons Between 9 and 18-hole rounds (**9-hole vs 18-Hole Scores**)
 - Provides detail of players performance over both 9 and 18 holes.
- Players who have hit the soft/hard caps (**Soft Cap/Hard Cap Report**)
 - Highlights players whose handicap index have risen to a point where the soft/hard cap has been triggered.
 - Some of these players may have been triggered as part of the Handicap Review. This is not necessarily a reason to apply a handicap increase as it is an integral part of the handicap system designed to anchor a player to their demonstrated ability.

Informing the Players

Players must be informed should any adjustment be made by the committee; this should be done in writing and player given the right to appeal the decision made by the committee.

Appeals sit on 3 levels –

- Club Review – Should a player question the decision; the club should offer the player the opportunity to discuss the decision with the committee.
- County Appeal – Should the player wish to appeal the decision following discussions with the club, this must be done via the County Union/Association.
- England Golf Appeal – Appeals to England Golf will only be considered once the Club and County have made their decision. The outcome of this appeal is final.

Additional Guidance / Support

If you need any additional guidance is conducting this review, please contact your County Handicap Advisor.