

GOLF RSA HANDICAP RELATED GUIDELINES FOR CLUBS

1. BACKGROUND

The Handicap Index (HI) of a golfer is defined as the demonstrated ability of a golfer. GolfRSA, as the National Association, has a responsibility to confirm that the HI of the golfers in their jurisdiction (South Africa) has been issued in terms of the WHS Rules of Handicapping and golfers can use their HI on any golf course around the world and compete with anyone else on a fair and equitable basis.

Rule 1.3 (i) of the Rules of Handicapping outlines the responsibility of a golfer to ensure that the GolfRSA-issued HI is a true reflection of their ability as a golfer.

PLAYER

A player is expected to:

- Act with integrity by following the Rules of Handicapping and refrain from using, or circumventing, the Rules of Handicapping for the purpose of gaining an unfair advantage.
- Attempt to make the best score possible on each hole.
- Submit acceptable scores for handicap purposes as soon as possible after the round is completed and before midnight local time (GolfRSA: 24 hours to avoid a Penalty Score).
- Submit acceptable scores to provide reasonable evidence of their demonstrated ability.
- Play by the Rules of Golf.
- Certify the scores of fellow players.

Rule 1.3 (ii) of the Rules of Handicapping outlines the responsibility of the Club/Handicap Committee.

GOLF CLUB

- A golf club is responsible for ensuring the Handicap Index of those members who have designated it to be their home club is administered in accordance with the requirements of the Rules of Handicapping.

- A Handicap Committee must be established by a golf club and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the golf club's specified obligations and responsibilities under the Rules of Handicapping. (GolfRSA: It is acceptable to appoint one person at a club who is responsible for handicap reviews).

To assist clubs/Handicap Committees in the process of meeting the requirements of the Rules of Handicapping, the following guidelines are issued to clubs.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE GUIDELINES

The objective is to establish a fair and consistent process by which transgressions by a golfer that would result in the golfer's HI not being a true reflection of their ability are managed. These can be identified through peer review by a fellow golfer or by the club using the tools available to them, namely Exception Reports, Score History of a golfer and any other information that is available i.e. reports submitted to the club by Competition Committees or non-home clubs.

The club needs to identify and publish the name and contact details, cell phone number and email address of the responsible person(s) for Handicap matters at the club to whom the complaints must be lodged.

The responsible person will hereafter be referred to as the Handicap Committee Chair.

3. PROCESS WHEN A POSSIBLE TRANSGRESSION IS REPORTED OR IDENTIFIED

3.1 LODGING OF COMPLAINT OR IDENTIFYING AN ALLEGED TRANSGRESSION

i. Peer review

- Submissions by a fellow golfer can be a written submission or a verbal submission. The latter to be documented by the Handicap Committee Chair.
- The complaint must be factual, with reference to the circumstances or the score history on the HNA system.

ii. Club

- The club needs to investigate an identified or reported concern, and verify the transgression.
- This could include a third-party report from a Competition Committee or a club other than the golfer's home club.
- Submissions by a third party can be a written submission or a verbal submission. The latter to be documented by the Handicap Committee Chair.
- The details of the complaint must be factual, with reference to the date, event and circumstances.

3.2 CLUB HANDICAP COMMITTEE ACTIONS

i. Verify the facts

The Handicap Committee Chair must use his/her best endeavours to obtain all the facts relating to the alleged transgression. This should include a discussion with the golfer concerned, when appropriate.

ii. Formulate the transgression

Should the Handicap Committee Chair be of the opinion, after the facts were verified, that a formal process should be followed, the transgression needs to be clearly formulated using the guidelines in 3.2(v). below.

iii. Notification to the golfer

The golfer must be notified, using the Notice template, of the intent to investigate the alleged transgression and be given the document referred to in 3.1(ii). A date and time to be agreed on with the golfer for a meeting, which should give the golfer at least two days to prepare

iv. Meeting Procedure

- The meeting should be held in a private room.
- The Chair of the meeting would be the Handicap Committee Chair, or if objected to by the golfer, another suitable member of the club or, in exceptional circumstances, an independent person acceptable to both the club and the golfer. The club has the authority to select the independent person but should refrain from involving members of the Provincial Union staff or committee or GolfRSA staff or committee.
- A designated person should be appointed, and agreed by the participants, to take minutes of the meeting. It is recommended that another member of the handicap committee or a club representative is also present.
- The role of the second member of the committee to be present is to ask questions in order for the Chair to focus on the information submitted.
- It is advised that only witnesses and no other representatives of either the club or the golfer may attend the meeting.
- The Chair should satisfy him/herself that the golfer

understands the details of the alleged transgression

- The golfer must be given the opportunity to state his/her case and, if necessary, to call witnesses to verify the facts tabled. The golfer also has the right to question the witness that the club may have in attendance.
- If the golfer is found guilty of the transgression by the Chair, the sanction appropriate for the transgression can be handed down at the meeting or, alternatively, the Chair may adjourn the meeting and determine the date, time and venue when he/she would communicate the decision to the golfer. It is recommended that the decision should be taken within five days after the meeting.
- The sanctions should be documented, and a copy of the decision given to the golfer.
- Should the golfer dispute the sanction, then the club's internal escalation processes should be followed.
- Should the golfer, after all the internal processes have been exhausted, still regard the decision as unfair, they can lodge an Objection with the Provincial Union, following the GolfRSA Objections and Appeal procedure.

v. Transgressions and Proposed Sanctions.

- Refer to GolfRSA Transgressions and Proposed Guidelines attached.
- It is important to note that the club can select any of the sanctions applicable for a transgression based on the circumstances, and the sequencing is not necessarily an indication of the steps to follow. Example: Bucket 1, No. 3. A club can decide to immediately move to Sanction 4 i.e. a ban of six months or longer, should the circumstances warrant this sanction.

TEMPLATES

NOTE: All completed documents below to be filed in accordance with club procedures to ensure ease of subsequent retrieval. Suggest on member's personal file.

- Verbal warning
- Meeting notification
- Decision of Committee
- Lifting of sanction (only applicable if sanction was for a specific duration and re-instatement is required, either resetting of HI, lifting suspension or ban, etc. Not to be used if sanction was immediate such as correcting information on the HNA system)
- Notification to HNA