

Handicap Information

The handicapping authority is the Council of National Golf Unions (CONGU), which has responsibility for the handicaps of men and ladies in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

CONGU regulations govern the allocation and adjustment of handicaps.

Competition Handicaps

Players who compete in 3 handicap qualifying competitions within a calendar year will have their handicaps annotated with a 'c' to show that they have a 'competition' handicap. This is CONGU's way of ensuring, as far as possible, that players have handicaps that are representative of their current playing ability.

At Elton Furze our handicap software takes care of the calculations and administration, but CONGU regulations have implications for how we conduct competitions. Players whose handicaps are not annotated with a 'c' do not have a 'competition handicap', but they may play in most **qualifying** competitions to enable them to get one. However, such players will not be eligible to win these competitions.

For some competitions at Elton Furze players may be required to have a 'competition handicap' before they are eligible to enter. Where this is the case this will be made clear in competition information sheets posted on noticeboards.

Allocation of Handicaps

New members joining Elton Furze will be registered by office staff and existing handicap information they may have will be entered onto the Club's IT system at this point.

New members who do not have a handicap must play at least 3 rounds of golf with a current club member and submit signed cards (marked 'For initial handicapping purpose') showing their scores. These must be placed in the relevant box in the clubhouse foyer. One of the Handicap Secretaries will then enter these onto the system and a competition handicap and CDH Number (Central Database for Handicaps) will be issued to the individual concerned.

Please refer to the section 'Competition Rules' to find out more about qualifying to play in competitions.

Maintaining a Handicap

All golf players throughout the country (covered by CONGU regulations) must play in a minimum of 3 handicap qualifying competitions within a calendar year to retain their 'competition' handicap in the following year.

Handicap Limits

The maximum handicaps are 28 for men, 36 for ladies and 54 for juniors. There are no minimum handicaps but initial playing handicaps of 5 or better must be approved by county golf authorities (Cambridgeshire for men and Northamptonshire for ladies).

Adjustment of Handicaps

Most singles competitions played at Elton Furze are 'qualifying' for handicap purposes and players' handicaps will be adjusted automatically after each competition. This is irrespective of whether they complete a round or not.

CONGU requires clubs to keep players' handicaps under review, and at Elton Furze this responsibility is undertaken by a Handicap Committee. This meets periodically and, guided by computer analysis of playing history, this committee has authority to adjust handicaps based on general playing ability, such as performance in pairs or other non-qualifying competitions. The exception to this concerns players with handicaps of 5 or less; in such cases, county approval has to be sought before a player's handicap can be reduced.

Handicap Certificates

Individuals may get handicap certificates by logging into www.HowDidIDo.co.uk and registering there.

Alternatively, but less conveniently, people may request handicap certificates via the touch screen in the clubhouse foyer and these will be processed by the relevant handicap secretary and posted on changing room noticeboards normally within 7 days.

Further Information

There are a large number of rules and regulations connected with handicaps and it is not appropriate to cover everything here. Anyone wishing to find out more should speak with one of our Handicap Secretaries or refer to CONGU's quick guides at www.congu.co.uk/quick-guides/.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where are handicaps kept?

Handicaps are kept in the Central Database of Handicaps (CDH) administered by England Golf. This database is integrated with Elton Furze's computer software so that individuals' handicaps can be adjusted as necessary immediately after competitions in which they play are formally closed.

What is a Competition Handicap?

A competition handicap identifies to both home club and away clubs that a player has returned at least 3 qualifying scores in a calendar year.

What do I need to do to have a Competition Handicap?

In order to have a competition handicap, a member is required to return 3 qualifying scores in a calendar year. These can include scores returned in club qualifying competitions (both home and away) and 9 hole qualifying competitions. Scores returned in non-qualifying events (eg pairs or team events) or in social golf are not acceptable.

Does a Non-Competition Handicap mean my Handicap has lapsed?

No, a non-competition handicap is still an official CONGU handicap. You will still be entitled to receive a handicap certificate and enter events that do not require a competition handicap as an entry requirement.

What restrictions can be imposed on Non-Competition Handicaps?

Clubs may adopt a condition of entry for certain competitions that prevents those players with non-competition handicaps from taking part. This may apply to both home club competitions and club open events. Although conditions of entry can be applied, a club is not permitted to restrict entry into all competitions for those members with non-competition handicaps.

What happens if I cannot play in enough competitions to get a 'competition' handicap?

At Elton Furze there is ample provision for players to compete in the 3 qualifying competitions required in a year to get a 'c' handicap. This can be achieved by:

- Playing in monthly medals or stablefords – see Club diary
- Playing in mid-week singles competitions – see Club diary
- Returning Supplementary scores – see separate section in this Handbook

Do Nil>Returns (NRs) or Disqualifications (DQs) count towards my 3 qualifying scores?

In normal circumstances Nil Returns and Disqualifications will not be accepted as qualifying scores.

Where can I find my handicap?

Register, free of cost, at the website www.HowDidIDo.co.uk, from which individuals are able to print their own handicap certificates.

Disputes or Questions

Disputes or questions about handicapping should be directed to the appropriate Men's or Ladies' Handicap Secretary.