

## **GOLF'S MODERNISED RULES OF AMATEUR STATUS PUBLISHED**

26 October 2021, St Andrews, Scotland and Liberty Corner, NJ, USA: Golf's new Rules of Amateur Status have been published by The R&A and the USGA ahead of coming into effect on 1 January 2022.

The work is the latest step by the governing bodies to make the Rules easier to understand and apply and follows the modernisation process of the Rules of Golf in 2019. The new Rules were informed by golfer and golf industry feedback as part of a comprehensive review, to ensure they continue to reflect how the modern game is played by millions of golfers around the world.

This review, along with the global feedback received when the proposals were publicly shared earlier this year, reaffirmed amateur golf's important position in the game and the value in maintaining amateur status Rules.

The result is a set of Rules that removes many of the restrictions that previously applied to amateur golfers, while ensuring that the integrity of the game is protected by limiting the form and value of the prizes an amateur golfer can accept.

As part of the modernisation effort, the new Rules identify only the following acts that will result in a golfer losing their amateur status:

- Accepting a prize with a value exceeding the prize limit (£700/\$1000) or accepting prize money in a handicap competition.
- Playing as a professional.
- Accepting payment for giving instruction (although all current exceptions still apply, such as coaching at educational institutions and assisting with approved programmes).
- Accepting employment as a golf club professional or membership of an association of professional golfers.

To achieve this simplified approach, the following key changes have been introduced:

- Distinguishing between scratch and handicap competitions in terms of the prizes that may be accepted.
- The prize rule applies only to tee-to-hole competitions played on a golf course or a simulator but no longer apply to long-drive, putting and skills competitions that are not played as part of a tee-to-hole competition.
- Eliminating all advertising, expense-related and sponsorship restrictions.

The new opportunities provided by lifting sponsorship restrictions and the ability to accept prize money up to the increased limit of £700 or \$1000 in scratch-only competitions will be of significant benefit to elite amateur golfers looking for ways to fund golf-related expenses.

Grant Moir, Director of Rules at The R&A, said, "We are delighted to be rolling out the modernised Rules of Amateur Status today. These Rules play an important role in protecting the integrity of our self-regulating sport but the code must evolve to meet the needs of the modern game. This is particularly important for modern elite amateur golf, where many of the players need financial

support to compete and develop to their full potential. The new Rules give them this opportunity and will help to make the game even more inclusive.”

“Golf is unique in its broad appeal to both recreational and competitive golfers,” said Craig Winter, USGA Senior Director, Rules of Golf and Amateur Status. “This was emphasised in the feedback we received earlier this year and we believe these updates will help simplify these Rules and ensure the long-term health of the amateur game not only to those who compete at the highest level of amateur golf but for the millions of golfers at every age and skill level who enjoy competitive events at their home courses.”

The new Rules are accompanied by guidance notes, an overview document and explanations that detail the rationale for why changes have been made and, in some instances, why they have stayed the same. These materials can be found at [www.RandA.org](http://www.RandA.org) and [www.usga.org](http://www.usga.org).

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## **Notes to Editors**

### **About The R&A**

References in this document to The R&A are to R&A Rules Limited. Together The R&A, based in St Andrews, Scotland, and the USGA govern the sport of golf worldwide, operating in separate jurisdictions but with a commitment to a single code for the Rules of Golf, Rules of Amateur Status and Equipment Standards. The R&A governs the sport worldwide, outside of the United States and Mexico, on behalf of over 36 million golfers in 144 countries and with the consent of 159 organisations from amateur and professional golf.

The R&A aims to invest £200 million in developing golf over a decade and supports the growth of the sport internationally, including the development and management of sustainable golf facilities.

For more information visit [www.RandA.org](http://www.RandA.org).

### **About the USGA**

The USGA is a non-profit organisation that celebrates, serves and advances the game of golf. Founded in 1894, we conduct many of golf's premier professional and amateur championships, including the U.S. Open and U.S. Women's Open. With The R&A, we govern the sport via a global set of playing, equipment, handicapping and amateur status rules. The USGA campus in Liberty Corner, New Jersey, is home to the Association's Research and Test Centre, where science and innovation are fuelling a healthy and sustainable game for the future. The campus is also home to the USGA Golf Museum, where we honour the game by curating the world's most comprehensive archive of golf artifacts. To learn more, visit [usga.org](http://usga.org).

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