



Golf Ireland Professional

2023

Scheme Guidelines



Golf Ireland Professional 2023

Scheme of Assistance for Irish Professional Golfers

1. Introduction

The Golf Ireland Professional Scheme was established in 1999 by the then Minister for Tourism, Sport and Recreation to assist Irish golfers, both male and female, in the early stages of their professional careers on tour and to become established players on the major international tours.

The Golf Ireland Professional Committee was established to oversee the operation of the Scheme and to consider applications received under the Scheme. The Committee consists of representatives from the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Sport Ireland, the Irish PGA, Golf Ireland, and the private sector.

Golf Ireland runs the Scheme and funding for the scheme primarily comes from Sport Ireland.

2. Objective of the Scheme

The objective of the Scheme is to support golfers who have the potential and programme to become established players on the main international tours, such as the DP World Tour/US PGA Tour and the Ladies European Tour/LPGA Tour. The Golf Ireland Professional Scheme is designed to provide support, both financial and non-financial, to selected young professional golfers to help them to succeed at international level.

Golfers, who are being supported by the Scheme, will be expected to show and maintain a reasonable level of progression in their performances on a yearly basis. This level of progress will determine future funding decisions by the Committee.

3. Eligibility and Criteria

Professional golfers, male or female, who meet the performance criteria as outlined below, will be eligible to submit an application for assistance from Golf Ireland. Applicants must provide evidence of a competition schedule and tour playing rights, which will lead to becoming an established player on the DP World Tour/US PGA Tour and the Ladies European Tour/LPGA Tour.

The Scheme will consist of three general categories for achievement of criteria; current professional golfers, male amateur golfers turning professional and female amateur golfers turning professional.

I) Professional Golfers (including PGA Irish Region professionals)

a) *To be considered for support from Golf Ireland, male professional golfers must meet criteria for the 2023 season on the following tours:*

- DP World Tour (exemption categories 1–17)
- European Challenge Tour (exemption categories 1-15)

- U.S. PGA Tour (exempt tour priority rankings 1–27)
- Satellite Tours (PGA EuroPro Tour, EPD Tour, Alps Tour, Nordic League – top-10 on 2022 Orders of Merit)
- Asian Tour (exempt status)
- South African Sunshine Tour (exempt categories 1-8)
- Japan Golf Tour (exempt status)
- Korean Golf Tour (exempt status)
- Korn Ferry Tour (exempt status)
- PGA Tour of Australasia (exempt status)
- PGA Tour Canada (exempt status)
- PGA Tour Latin America (exempt status)
- PGA Tour China (exempt status)

b) *To be considered for support from GIP, female professional golfers must meet criteria for the 2023 season on the following tours:*

- Ladies European Tour (exemption categories 1–15)
- U.S. LPGA Tour (priority status 1-18)
- Epson Tour (exempt status)
- Japan LPGA (exempt status)
- Korea LPGA (exempt status)
- Australian LPG Tour (exempt status)
- China LPGA (exempt status)

Note: Please note that applications received from players who achieve the criteria at a and b above will be subject to the provisions for maximum years of support as set out at section 5 of the guidelines.

Note: Players that win over €250,000 in total prize money in the season immediately prior to that in which they wish to receive assistance through the Scheme will not be eligible to receive financial support for the season ahead. Further, players that have won over €1,000,000 in prize money over their careers will also not be eligible to receive financial support through the Golf Ireland Professional Scheme. These players will still be eligible to receive non-financial support through the Sport Ireland Institute or through the Golf Ireland Professional Performance Manager, Neil Manchip.

II) Male Amateur Golfers (turning professional)

To be eligible for support through the Golf Ireland Professional Scheme, applicants must have been ranked among the top-50 in the R&A's World Amateur Golf Rankings for at least four weeks in the twelve-week period prior to turning professional.

Players selected on the Great Britain and Ireland team for the most recent staging of the Walker Cup prior to the player turning professional will also be eligible for support.

III) Female Amateur Golfers (turning professional)

To be eligible for support through the Golf Ireland Professional Scheme, applicants must have been ranked among the top-50 in the R&A's World Amateur Golf Rankings for at least four weeks in the twelve-week period prior to turning professional.

Players selected on the Great Britain and Ireland team for the most recent staging of the Curtis Cup prior to the player turning professional will also be eligible for support.

Note: Applicants for support under the amateur criteria for the 2023 Scheme will be allowed a maximum of two years to achieve the professional golfers criteria in section 1a (excluding Satellite Tours criteria) and 1b. Players who achieve the professional criteria in section 1a (excluding Satellite Tours criteria) or 1b in Year 1 but regress in Year 2 will be considered for support for Year 3.

Should players intend to turn professional in the middle of the season (no later than the end of July in the relevant year), they should inform Golf Ireland of their desire to receive support for part of the year ahead prior to the closing date for applications. The below are the reasons where applications of this nature will be accepted:

1. The player is finishing college during the relevant year
2. The player has invitations to play in a major championship that are dependent on the player remaining as an amateur when competing in that championship
3. The player is seeking selection to Walker/Curtis Cups (if scheduled to be played in first six months of the relevant year)

The player will still need to meet the criteria for support at the time they actually turn professional rather than at the time of notifying Golf Ireland of their intentions.

4. Financial Support

Individual grants will be provided to successful applicants to assist with out-of-pocket expenses directly associated with the pursuit of training, coaching and competition programmes. The assessment of the amount to be awarded in each case will be based on the information provided in the player's application form and their competition pathway.

Grant payments will be divided into two instalments and will be paid out in accordance with the following timelines directly to the successful applicants;

- 1st Payment – April
- 2nd Payment – August

Eligibility for the Scheme and payment of the awards will be subject to providing:

- (a) Signed Form of Agreement
- (b) Bank Details
- (c) Expenditure reports with appropriate receipts, covering the value of the grant
- (d) Photographic evidence of correct positioning of Golf Ireland and Sport Ireland branding, as designated by the Golf Ireland Professional Committee

5. Period of Support from the Scheme

The Golf Ireland Professional Scheme will generally provide a cumulative maximum of five years of support to any player meeting the criteria. The five years of support does not necessarily have to occur consecutively. However, if a player, having had five years of support is deemed by the Golf Ireland Professional Committee to have shown significant enough progress then an additional sixth year of support may be provided. A player does not necessarily have to have been involved in the Scheme in the year immediately prior to which they are seeking support to receive an additional sixth year. For example, a player may not have been involved in the Scheme for two years but then earn a DP World Tour Card for the upcoming season. In this case, an application would be considered by the Committee.

Aside from the exception listed below, six years of support will be the maximum length of support that will be provided to any player.*

Should a player have already received the maximum of six years of support and is at least one year removed from last being supported by Golf Ireland, they may be considered for one additional year of support should they progress from a lower level tour to holding a full card on either the PGA, LPGA, LET or DP World Tour for the year in which support is sought.

Should a player meet criteria for support but be considered to have significantly regressed in their professional career then support from Golf Ireland may not be provided.

The Committee may also take account of extenuating circumstances for a player where a player may not meet the professional criteria for the following year having suffered with injury (or another valid reason). The presence of extenuating circumstances will not necessarily mean that the Committee will decide to continue to offer support but will consider each situation on a case-by-case basis.

***Given the impact of COVID-19 on professional golf in 2020, that year of support will not be considered applicable under the maximum length of support rule.**

6. Non-Financial Support

The Scheme will continue to provide successful applicants with free access to a range of Sports Science, Medical and Lifestyle support services. The services will be coordinated by the Sport Ireland Institute based in Abbotstown. The services available will include:

- (i) **Sports Science support:** sports science support in sports physiology, sports psychology, sports nutrition and sports biomechanics.
- (ii) **Sports Medical support:** medical screening, diagnosis, physiotherapy and specialist medical advice on referral basis, based on agreed standard rates of fees and an overall monetary limit specific to each golfer.
- (iii) **Golf Ireland National Academy:** Use of the Academy's facilities which include; multiple indoor and outdoor bays, 5 USGA-specification greens, 5 grass teeing areas,

and a purpose-built wedge-play area.

7. Application Procedures

Application forms for the Scheme are available from Golf Ireland, Carton Demesne, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

Applicants are requested to:

- (i) Ensure that application forms are completed fully and accurately and that all the necessary information is supplied to include:
 - Playing rights 2023
 - Full playing schedule for 2023
 - Coach and coaching programme
 - Training and fitness programme
 - Financial details
 - Statement outlining goals and objectives
- (ii) Ensure that they fulfil the criteria specified for the particular category.
- (iii) Give precise information in relation to handicaps and previous performances.

8. Selection Procedures

Following consideration of the applications received under the Scheme, the Golf Ireland Professional Committee will make decisions on the grants to be awarded. In view of the level of funding available under the Scheme, it is intended to provide substantial aid to a limited number of applicants only. All applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome of their application. Details of the awards made under the Scheme will be published on www.golfireland.ie.

9. Appeals Process

Golfers may appeal decisions of the Golf Ireland Professional Committee made in respect of or under the Scheme regarding non-inclusion or the level of grant allocation. The appeal must be made on the appropriate Golf Ireland Professional Application Appeal Form, which will be available after the announcement of the awards.

Such appeals must be made by the player to the secretary of the Appeals process. An independent panel may be set up and any decision of the panel in relation to such an appeal shall be final and binding, and no further appeal may arise there from.

10. Conditions of Participation in the Scheme

Participants in the Scheme will be bound by conditions of award outlined hereunder:

- Must be undertaking a current competition programme.
- Must compete as an Irish player on the main international tours or tours for which financial support is being given.
- Provide details of all eligible expenditure with appropriate receipts when requesting grant instalments. Any player who fails to make a return of expenditure will not

receive further grant payments or be considered for further support under the Scheme.

- Acknowledge the support of Golf Ireland in media interviews and articles.
- Agreement to publicly represent Golf Ireland and its members in the promotion of Ireland abroad as a golf destination. This will involve a small number of public appearances and the wearing of logos in prominent areas of upper body golf clothing as approved by Golf Ireland.
- Adhere strictly to anti-doping policies of Sport Ireland and relevant Tours. All scheme members must be familiar with their rights and responsibilities in relation to anti-doping programmes and act accordingly.
- Any breach of the rules or misconduct regarded by the Committee as incompatible with participation in the Scheme may result in the withdrawal of all or part of the financial support and/or access to services awarded under the Scheme.