



The Rules of Amateur Status:

Guidelines for Golf Scholarships and Bursaries

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Introduction

The Definition of an amateur golfer provides as follows:

“An amateur golfer is one who plays the game as a non-remunerative and non-profit-making sport and who does not receive remuneration for teaching golf or for other activities because of golf skill or reputation, except as provided in the Rules.”

The Rules of Amateur Status cover acts which would cause an amateur golfer to breach the above Definition, thereby causing forfeiture of Amateur Status.

Rule 6-5 of the Rules of Amateur Status concerns the acceptance of grants, scholarships and bursaries and states as follows:

“An amateur golfer of golf skill and reputation must not accept the benefits of a grant, scholarship or bursary, except one whose terms and conditions have been approved by the Governing Body.”

The “Governing Body” for the Rules of Amateur Status in any country is the national union of the country (note: in Great Britain and Ireland, The R&A is the Governing Body). The Governing Bodies have established the following guidelines in order to assist those who wish to donate a scholarship or a bursary, or establish such a fund, and for those who wish to accept the benefit of a scholarship or bursary while attending an educational establishment (i.e. school, college or university).

Academic Scholarships or Bursaries

Scholarships or bursaries awarded purely on academic ability do not require the approval of the Governing Body. Acceptance of such a scholarship or bursary is not a breach of the Rules of Amateur Status.

Golf Related Scholarships or Bursaries

The Governing Body must approve all scholarships or bursaries awarded in its country where golf skill is a factor in the selection process for such an award. Acceptance of a golf scholarship or bursary, which has not been approved, may constitute a breach of Rule 6-5 of the Rules of Amateur Status.

Approval of Golf Scholarships or Bursaries

Any donor or individual who wishes to receive approval of a golf scholarship or bursary, or any individual who wishes to know if a golf scholarship or bursary has been approved, should write to their national golf union or association giving full details of the scholarship or bursary concerned.

Procedural Criteria for Approval of Golf Scholarships or Bursaries

In order for a golf scholarship or bursary to be approved by the Governing Body, the procedure for payment of the fund must meet the following criteria:

- (i) if the fund is not created by the educational establishment concerned, it must be paid in the first instance to the educational establishment; and
- (ii) the scholar or bursar may only receive the money directly or indirectly through the educational establishment.

Permitted Purposes of Golf Scholarships or Bursaries

A golf scholarship or bursary may be used for the following purposes:

- (i) for educational purposes, including tuition fees, books, room and board;
- (ii) costs of coaching (including coaching fees and travel and living expenses);
- (iii) golf equipment;
- (iv) Golf Club subscriptions; and
- (v) travel, living costs and caddie fees at individual or team university, college or school events.

A golf scholarship or bursary may not be used for travel, living costs and caddie fees at non-university, non-college or non-school individual or team events, except in accordance with Rule 4-2 of the Rules of Amateur Status.

Golf Scholarships in the United States of America

The Governing Body will permit amateur golfers to accept golf scholarships at universities and colleges in the USA, provided they comply with the United States Golf Association's Rules of Amateur Status. The USGA's Rules permit a scholarship or grant-in-aid to be accepted if it accords with the regulations of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women, the National Association for Intercollegiate Athletics, the National Junior College Athletic Association or other similar organisations governing athletics at academic institutions. Separate approval from the Governing Body is not required.

An amateur golfer in receipt of an NCAA approved golf scholarship is advised to contact the NCAA before accepting expenses of any kind from a different source e.g. a representative of a university, in addition to his NCAA scholarship. The acceptance of expenses from some other source may be contrary to NCAA regulations.

An amateur golfer is advised to contact the NCAA for further guidelines and restrictions placed on the amateur golfer accepting a scholarship in the USA.

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The R&A is golf's world rules and development body and organiser of The Open Championship. It operates with the consent of more than 130 national and international, amateur and professional organisations, from over 120 countries and on behalf of an estimated 30 million golfers in Europe, Africa, Asia Pacific and The Americas (outside the USA and Mexico). The United States The Golf Association (USGA) is the game's governing body in the United States and Mexico.

For further information or advice, please contact:

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