

Údarás Rialála  
Cearrbhachais  
na hÉireann

Gambling  
Regulatory  
Authority  
of Ireland

# Pool Betting - Guidance



## What is pool betting?

Betting under the Gambling Regulation Act 2024 includes pool betting.

Pool betting can most easily be contrasted with fixed odds betting.

In both instances:

- A person places a bet on an outcome of an event;
- If the person selects the correct outcome, an amount is won; and
- If the person selects an incorrect outcome, the amount they bet is lost.

The difference between pool betting and fixed odds betting is the way winnings are calculated.

In fixed odds betting, winnings are calculated by reference to the odds given on the likelihood of the outcome. If a person places a €10 bet on an outcome with 10/1 odds, the winnings will be €100 (€10 multiplied by ten) plus return of the staked amount.

In pool betting, the winnings that the person may receive are not calculated by reference to any odds but by reference to the amount staked. Any odds displayed are for information purposes only to indicate the likelihood of that outcome occurring. A person still places a bet on an outcome of an event in pool betting. However, unlike fixed odds betting, the amount of all bets placed on the event is pooled together. This is referred to as the pool or the tote. Persons who selected the correct outcome then receive winnings as an amount from the total pool proportionate to their bet. Unlike fixed odds betting, a person betting into a pool will not know how much their potential winnings could be when their bet is

placed. The pool will constantly change as more bets are placed, and the pool betting operator will run calculations in real time on the size of the pool and the proportion of bets placed to calculate winnings.

The pool betting operator makes a deduction from the pool usually by reference to a per centage of the pool. This is how the operator covers their expenses and generates an income from offering the pool betting facility. This is in contrast to fixed odds betting, where the operator's income in relation to a particular event is the bets placed on an incorrect outcome.

Please see the example laid out below.

#### Example scenario of pool betting:

Person 1 places a €50 bet on outcome A.  
Person 2 also places a €50 bet on outcome A.  
Person 3 places a €100 bet on outcome B.

The gross total pool is €200 (person 1's €50 stake plus person 2's €50 stake plus person 3's €100 stake).

The operator's deduction is 10%, which is €20 (€200 multiplied by 0.10 is €20).

The net total pool is €180 (total pool minus deduction).

Outcome A is the correct outcome.

Two persons (person 1 and person 2) bet the same amount on the same outcome. The proportion is therefore 1:2 so each will take 50% of the net pool, which is €90 (1 divided by 2 is 0.5, €180 multiplied by 0.5 is €90).

Person 1's winnings are €90

Person 2's winnings are €90

Person 3 selected an incorrect outcome and does not receive a winning.

This represents a simplified set of circumstances intended to demonstrate the mechanics of pool betting. Multiple factors including more persons placing more bets of different values will increase the complexity of the calculations for the winnings.

### Can I apply for a betting licence to cover pool betting?

It is an offence to provide pool betting unless you hold a betting licence.

Under the new licensing regime, a person may apply to the GRAI and, if they satisfy the criteria laid out under the Act, may be licensed to provide pool betting following a determination by the GRAI.

### How can I apply for a betting licence to cover pool betting?

If you wish to offer pool betting, you will need to apply for a betting licence and specify the events, series of events or class of events for which you will offer pool betting.

Use the GRAI's Portal to complete a Business Registration and then make a Licence Application, select "betting" as licence type and select "pool betting" when prompted. Enter the information requested described below in relation to the event, series of events or class of events for which you intend to provide pool betting.

Other than this information, the application will follow that of a standard betting licence.

Follow the steps outlined in the [application guidance](#).

## What information will I be asked to include in relation to pool betting activities?

### **Describe the event, series of events or class of events**

You must provide a description of and details in relation to the event, series of events or class of events for which you intend to provide pool betting, up to a maximum of 250 characters. This should include information such as the sport or race concerned, how a result is determined, the competition or occasion, the location, etc. which will enable the GRAI to understand the circumstances of the outcome which is being bet on. It should be possible to summarise this description in the following format:

*“[description of the sport or type of racing] taking place at [description of locations or venues]”.*

You must also provide an overview of how the pool betting offering will function, including information about delivery, oversight and ensuring fairness to users, up to a maximum of 250 characters.

If you require more characters to describe the event and give an overview, you must prepare a supplementary information document and upload this in the Other Relevant Documentation field when completing the Business Registration form.

Any licence granted will specify the event, series of events or class of events in respect of which a licensee will be authorised to provide pool betting under the licence.

Pool betting can only be offered on the event applied for by the licensee and specified on a licence.

It is an offence to provide, or cause another person to provide, a betting activity which constitutes pool betting that is not specified on a licence.

## **Dates**

If you are seeking to provide pool betting in relation to a once off event, you will need to provide the date of the event (not beyond three years from the date of issue of the licence).

If you are seeking to provide pool betting in relation to a series of events, you will need to provide the date the series of events will be completed (not beyond three years from the date of issue of the licence). To the extent that the licence authorises pool betting, it will expire on the date the series of events is completed.

If you are seeking to provide pool betting in relation to a class of events, you will need to provide a date range for the class (not extending beyond three years from the date of issue of the licence). To the extent that the licence authorises pool betting, it will expire on the date the class of event is completed.

Your licence will specify the date on which your licence will expire. The licence must be renewed in advance of expiry if a licensee wishes to continue offering pool betting beyond the expiry date.

## **Am I able to apply for a remote intermediary betting licence for pool betting activities?**

No. Under the Act it is only possible to apply for a licence to provide pool betting under an in-person betting licence or a remote betting licence.

## I want to apply for an in-person pool betting licence. What will I need to consider?

You must have a premises that is suitable for the gambling activity proposed.

Gambling activities can be offered in-person from a premises or a relevant premises.

A relevant premises means:

- a greyhound racetrack operated under a greyhound racetrack licence under the Greyhound Industry Act 1958;
- an authorised coursing ground and the precincts of authorised coursing grounds (within the meaning of the Greyhound Industry Act 1958);
- an authorised racecourse (within the meaning of the Irish Horseracing Industry Act 1994); or
- a place at which a point-to-point steeplechase is being held (within the meaning of the Irish Horseracing Industry Act 1994).

The GRAI does not assess your premises if you are providing pool betting activities from a relevant premises.

If you will not be offering the gambling activity from a relevant premises, you must provide information in relation to the premises so that the GRAI can assess the premises as being suitable for the gambling activity proposed.

See details of the information that must be provided in the [premises guidance](#).

## Can I apply for a betting licence to cover pool betting for a charitable or philanthropic purpose?

Not at this time. The GRAI will only be issuing business to consumer licences under the initial phase of licensing.

Licences for a charitable or philanthropic purpose will follow in a later phase of licensing.

Please monitor [grai.ie](http://grai.ie) for any updates.