

STANDARD GUIDELINE FOR DAN/KYU EXAMINATION

INTERNATIONAL KENDO FEDERATION

(Objective)

Article 1: These regulations pertain to Kendo/laido/Jodo promotion examinations and the awarding of Dan grades administered by the International Kendo Federation.

(General Provision)

Article 2: The Dan/Kyu stipulated in this Standard Guideline shall be from 1 Kyu (Ikkyu) to 10 Dan (Jyu Dan), shall be granted by the President of Organization according to the overall ability of an applicant, and shall be mutually recognized as being equivalent among Organizations.

(Applicant's Qualifications)

Article 3:

1. An applicant shall be a registered member of Organization and shall have the following periods of practice.

Examination Grade	Practice Periods	Lowest Ages
1 Kyu (Ikkyu)	-	-
1 Dan (Sho Dan)	1 Kyu holder	13 years old and over
2 Dan (Ni Dan)	One year or more after 1 Dan	
3 Dan (San Dan)	Two years or more after 2 Dan	
4 Dan (Yon Dan)	Three years or more after 3 Dan	
5 Dan (Go Dan)	Four years or more after 4 Dan	
6 Dan (Roku Dan)	Five years or more after 5 Dan	
7 Dan (Shichi Dan)	Six years or more after 6 Dan	
8 Dan (Hachi Dan)	Ten years or more after 7 Dan	46 years and over
9 Dan (Kyu Dan)	After granting of 8 Dan	65 years and over
10 Dan (Jyu Dan)	After granting of 9 Dan	

2. Those who desire to apply for a 6, 7 or 8 Dan examination, 60 years old or older and have practiced for a certain years as below shall be allowed to apply.

Examination Grade	Practice Periods
6 Dan	Two years or more after 5 Dan
7 Dan	Three years or more after 6 Dan
8 Dan	Five years or more after 7 Dan

(Examiner's Qualification, Required Number of Examiners and Eligibility Criteria)

Article 4: Examiner's qualifications, required number of the examiners and eligibility criteria are as follows:

Examination Grade	Examiner	Number	Criteria
1 Dan	4 Dan & over	5	Consent of min. 3 Examiners
2 Dan	5 Dan & over	5	Consent of min. 3 Examiners
3 Dan	5 Dan & over	5	Consent of min. 3 Examiners
4 Dan	6 Dan & over	6	Consent of min. 4 Examiners
5 Dan	7 Dan & over	6	Consent of min. 4 Examiners
6 Dan	7 Dan & over	6	Consent of min. 4 Examiners
7 Dan	7 Dan & over	6	Consent of min. 4 Examiners

Article 5: Concerning the 4-Dan or higher Dan examinations, if the required number of qualified and suitable examiners cannot be appointed by the method stipulated in the Article 5, the number of the examiners may be reduced to 5. In this case, the consent of minimum 4 examiners shall suffice for the decision of passing.

(Executing the examination)

Article 6: An examination shall be conducted by Organization; however in case where Organization **lacks** qualified examiners to meet the required number given in the Article 4, other Organization(s) may provide qualified examiners with the approval of the President(s) of that Organization(s).

(Examinations for Kyu and 8 Dan & Over)

Article 7: The examinations for Kyu and for 8 Dan and over shall be determined by each Organization. Regarding the 8 Dan and higher Dan examinations, each Organization shall determine a rigorous way of examination including Jitsugi evaluation.

(Method to Appoint Examiners)

Article 8 Examiners shall be appointed by the President of Organization after a discussion with the officials and fully-competent Dan holders. ‘Fully-competent Dan holders’ here means persons with equal or higher grades stipulated in the Article 4, Examiners’ Qualifications.

(Fees for Examination and Registration)

Article 9: Fees for examination and registration shall be stipulated by Organization.

(Return or Deprivation of Dan/Kyu)

Article 10: The President of Organization may, in consultation with the council or the investigation committee of the Organization, order a Dan/Kyu grantee of Organization to return his/her Dan/Kyu or deprive him/her of the same, in case where the grantee disgraced the Dan/Kyu.

(Issuing Certificate and Recording)

Article 11: Organization shall issue a certificate with the signature of the President of Organization to each successful applicant. Organization shall keep the Dan/Kyu records properly.

(Dan/Kyu Examinations in a non-affiliated country)

Article 12: In case of a Dan/Kyu examination held in a non-affiliated country, the ‘Memorandum of Dan/Kyu Examinations in an FIK Non-affiliated Country’ as of May 23, 2005 shall apply.

(Kendo Examination)

(Examination Subjects)

Article 13: Examination subjects are as follows:

Examination Grade	Examination Subjects
1 Dan ~ 5 Dan	Jitsugi, Nippon-Kendo-Kata and Written Test
6 Dan, 7 Dan	Jitsugi, Nippon-Kendo-Kata

Article 14: Nippon-Kendo-Kata shall be examined as follows:

Examination Grade	Number of Forms
1 Dan	Tachi-no-Kata 3 or more forms
2 Dan	Tachi-no-Kata 5 or more forms
3 Dan	Tachi-no-Kata 7 forms
4 Dan – 7 Dan	Tachi-no-Kata 7 forms and Kodachi-no-Kata 3 forms

Article 15: If an applicant fails in Nippon-Kendo-Kata or in written test after the success in Jitsugi, he/she may be allowed to take that subject only again at an examination held afterwards. This special treatment shall apply only once for one occasion per applicant.

(Criteria for Awarding Dan Grades; 'Fuyo Kijun')

Article 16: At a Dan examination, examiners evaluate candidates for promotion for each Dan grade based on evidence of an appropriate level of training, and the degree of technical proficiency and stability acquired through the course of their study. The acceptability criterion of each Dan 'Fuyo Kijun' is described as follows.

- (1) The central concern for Shodan, 2-Dan and 3-Dan is the level of 'Kihon' (basic techniques) demonstrated by the examinee. The examiner assesses whether the candidate has learnt and correctly acquired the basic skills.
- (2) The central concern for 4-Dan and 5-Dan is the level of basic Kendo techniques and advanced techniques (Kihon and Oyo). The examiner assesses whether the candidate has fully acquired and able to utilize basic and advanced skills.
- (3) The central concern for 6-Dan and 7-Dan is the ability to demonstrate 'Jiri' (technique and theory). Besides the basic and advanced Kendo techniques, the examiner assesses whether a candidate has acquired sufficient knowledge and understanding of Jiri, the techniques of Kendo accompanied with theory or principles.
- (4) The central concern for 8-Dan and above is whether or not the candidate has reached the highest stage of Jiri referred to as 'Jiri-Itchi' (total integration of Ji and Ri). The candidate will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate a profound understanding of Jiri-Itchi in addition to the aforementioned points for 7-Dan and below.

(Points for Observation 'Chakugan-ten')

Article 17: Each Dan examiner is required to make a decision after paying careful attention to the following points in accordance with the above criteria:

1. Shodan, 2-Dan, 3-Dan
 - (1) Chakuso and Reiho. The candidates appearance and whether they are correctly wearing the Kendo-gi and Hakama, and are holding the Shinai correctly (Chakuso); Appropriate manners and deportment (Reiho).
 - (2) Correct posture
 - (3) Datotsu (strikes and thrusts) in accordance to the correct basic Kendo techniques
 - (4) Strong spirit (Kisei).
2. 4-Dan, 5-Dan

Same criteria as Shodan to 3rd Dan with addition of the following criteria:

 - (1) Level of proficiency acquired in advanced Kendo techniques
 - (2) Level of mental and physical discipline demonstrated
 - (3) Strategic skills to control and win a match.
3. 6-Dan, 7-Dan 8-Dan and higher Dan

The Jitsugi examination for 6th Dan to 8th Dan will consider all the assessment points relevant to Shodan through to 5th Dan with the addition of the following two elements and an expected higher overall level of technical proficiency.

 - (1) Understanding of 'Riai' (The candidate must be able to execute Waza and move in a way that is rational and purposeful.)
 - (2) 'Fukaku' and 'Hinkaku' (Demonstrating one's own style which is dignified and elegant.)

The examiners are expected to make their evaluations and final decisions based on the abovementioned criteria within the prescribed examination time.

(Iaido Examination)

(Examination Subjects and Methods)

Article 18: Examination subjects are as follows:

Examination Grade	Examination Subjects
Shodan to 3 rd Dan	Jitsugi & Written
4 th Dan and 5 th Dan	Jitsugi & Written
6 th Dan and 7 th Dan	Jitsugi

Article 19: The content of the Jitsugi examination and the number of forms are as follows:

1. The required number of techniques is stipulated below. Compulsory AJKF Iai forms will be specified on the day of the examination. Koryu forms will not be specified. They should be decided by the candidate.

Examination Grade	Number of Forms	Time Limit
Shodan-3 rd Dan	AJKF Iai 5 forms (1 Koryu form may be included)	6 minutes
4 th Dan & 5 th Dan	AJKF Iai 5 forms (1 Koryu form may be included)	6 minutes
6 th Dan & 7 th Dan	AJKF Iai 6 forms (2 Koryu forms may be included)	7 minutes

2. Torei (protocols for sword etiquette) must be that used in AJKF Iai.
3. Examination time commences from the bow to the Shomen after entering the examination area and ends when the candidate stands up holding the sword to the side after performing the final bow.

(Points for Observation 'Chakugan-ten')

Article 20: In addition to the criteria stipulated in Article 16, the pass or fail result for examinations for 5th Dan and below should be based on elements for observation outlined in the "AJKF Iai Handbook for Shinpan and Examiners" with particular consideration given to the following factors. Notwithstanding, the methodology for conducting the examination will be decided in accordance with conditions in the organizing federation.

1. Shodan to 3rd Dan
 - (1) Correct appearance and etiquette.
 - (2) Precise Nukitsuke and Kiritsuke.
 - (3) Precise Chiburi and [blade] angle.
 - (4) Precise Noto
2. 4th Dan and 5th Dan

Same criteria as Shodan to 3rd Dan with addition of the following criteria:

 - (1) Mental composure.
 - (2) Metsuke (gaze)
 - (3) Kihaku (vigour)
 - (4) The unison of Ki (spirit), Ken (sword), and Tai (Body).
3. 6-Dan, 7-Dan 8-Dan and higher Dan

The Jitsugi examination for 6th Dan to 8th Dan will take into consideration all the assessment points relevant to Shodan through to 5th Dan with the addition of the following two elements and an expected higher overall level of technical proficiency.

 - (1) Riai (Understanding of the rationale behind the techniques)
 - (2) Fukaku, Hinkaku (Grace and dignity in deportment)

(Jodo Examination)

(Examination Subjects and Methods)

Article 21: Examination subjects are as follows:

Examination Grade	Examination Subjects
Shodan to 3rd Dan	Jitsugi & Written
4th Dan and 5th Dan	Jitsugi & Written
6th Dan and 7th Dan	Jitsugi

Article 22: The content of the Jitsugi examination and the number of forms are as follows:

1. Number of forms:

Examination Grade	Number of Forms	Designated Forms
Shodan-3 rd Dan	AJKF Jodo 5 forms	AJKF Jodo forms will be decided in advance
4 th Dan & 5 th Dan	AJKF Jodo 5 forms	
6 th Dan & 7 th Dan	AJKF Jodo 6 forms	AJKF Jodo forms will be decided on the examination day

2. In all Dan examinations, candidates will perform both sides (Uchi and Shi) of the AJKF Jodo forms.

(Points for Observation 'Chakugan-ten')

Article 23: In addition to the criteria stipulated in Article 16, the pass or fail result for examinations for 5th Dan and below should be based on elements for observation outlined in the "AJKF Jodo Handbook for Shinpan and Examiners" with particular consideration given to the following factors. Notwithstanding, the methodology for conducting the examination will be decided in accordance with conditions in the organizing federation.

1. Shodan to 3rd Dan

- (1) Correct appearance and etiquette.
- (2) Precise Nukitsuke and Kiritsuke.
- (3) Precise fundamental striking and thrusting
- (4) Replete spirit

2. 4th Dan and 5th Dan

Same criteria as Shodan to 3rd Dan with addition of the following criteria:

- (1) Proficiency in timing, distance and angle
- (2) Proficiency in use of the sword (Jo)
- (3) Unison of Ki (Spirit), Ken (Jo), and Tai (Body)
- (4) The unison of Ki (spirit), Ken (sword), and Tai (Body)

3. 6-Dan, 7-Dan 8-Dan and higher Dan

The Jitsugi examination for 6th Dan to 8th Dan will take into consideration all the assessment points relevant to Shodan through to 5th Dan with the addition of the following two elements and an expected higher overall level of technical proficiency.

- (1) Riai (Understanding of the rationale behind the techniques)
- (2) Fukaku, Hinkaku (Grace and dignity in deportment)

Appendix:

Article 1: This Standard shall be established and put in force as of April 11, 1975.

Article 2: This Standard shall be revised and put in force as of May 11, 1987.

Article 3: This Standard shall be revised and put in force as of March 26, 1997.

Article 4: This Standard shall be revised and put in force as of July 3, 2003.

Article 5: This Standard shall be revised and put in force as of December 7, 2006.

Article 6: This Standard shall be revised and put in force as of May 24, 2012.

Article 6: This Standard shall be revised and put in force as of September 13, 2018.