



## ENGLISH KARATE COUNCIL

### DAN GRADING AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The Council recognises that many Associations have existing policies and practices regarding Dan grading and technical standards which have worked for them over many years.

The Council accepts that Associations should continue with their current practice and procedures but recommends that whatever method is used there are clearly defined procedures setting out progression routes at all Dan grade levels.

There are five areas in which the Council makes general recommendations:

1. Styles of Karate
2. The Dan grading examination
3. Minimum length of time between grades
4. The candidate's age
5. Composition of Dan grading panels

#### **1. Styles of Karate**

Goju Ryu, Shito Ryu, Shotokan and Wado Ryu are widely accepted as the original styles of Karate all of which originated from Japan or Okinawa. Variations have since evolved which have been universally accepted as sufficiently different to be accepted as a new style. There are however others that could not be considered as new styles as they were a continuance of existing styles but allocated a different name.

The English Karate Council believes that these styles comprehensively cover the wide range of approach to the development of Karate. No new style will be recognised unless it can demonstrate that it offers some completely new approach. New Associations may use any name but cannot claim to be practicing a new style in any supporting literature.

#### **2. The Dan Grading Examination**

There is a wide range of Karate Associations within the Council member organisations. The Council agrees that it cannot recommend what should or should not be the specific content of a Dan grading examination.

However, where candidates are required to attend an examination at which they must demonstrate appropriate etiquette, skills and knowledge to a grading panel, the Council does recommend that the three K's – Kihon, Kata and Kumite should form part of that examination

Associations test Dan grades attempting 4th Dan (Yondan) and above in different ways. Some test by technical examination, others by considering the candidate's contribution to the development of Karate in general.

Where consideration is given to the award of a Dan grade which does not require the candidate's attendance at an examination, this will include: -

- Details of the individuals Karate history
- Their contribution to Karate
- Their age and seniority
- Any other contributory factor

Any confirmation or consideration should not be unreasonably withheld.

### **3. Minimum Length of Time between Grades**

The following table sets out the minimum requirements for progression within the Dan grade structure and the Council recommends that this structure should apply to all Karate styles (\*All the following would normally be on average at least twice a week).

|                       | <u>Minimum Times</u> | <u>Minimum Age</u> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Beginner to 1st Dan - | 3 years              |                    |
| 1st Dan to 2nd Dan -  | 2 years              |                    |
| 2nd Dan to 3rd Dan -  | 3 years              | - 21 years         |
| 3rd Dan to 4th Dan -  | 4 years              | - 25 years         |
| 4th Dan to 5th Dan -  | 5 years              | - 30 years         |
| 5th Dan to 6th Dan -  | 6 years              | - 36 years         |
| 6th Dan to 7th Dan -  | 7 years              | - 43 years         |
| 7th Dan to 8th Dan -  | 8 years              | - 51 years         |
| 8th Dan to 9th Dan -  | 9 years              | - 60 years         |
| 9th Dan to 10th Dan - | 10 years             | - 70 years         |

It is not possible to apply any catch up or aggregate time when considering eligibility for grade examinations or promotions. For the avoidance of doubt, a Yondan practitioner who had been a Sandan for eight years could not be considered for Godan a year after achieving Yondan. The time restrictions apply to each grade from the date of the award.

### **4. The Candidate's Age**

The English Karate Council accepts that Associations may wish to promote young people under the age of 16 years to Dan grade status. Within reason, the Council does not see this as a barrier. The Council agrees that Associations may therefore maintain their own structures for Dan grade promotion up to and including second Dan (Nidan) provided that they can fulfill the relevant criteria.

### **5. Composition of Dan Grading Panels**

The Council accepts that there will be differences in the composition of such panels. Some Associations may wish to establish a panel composed of more than one person while others rely on the Chief Instructor as the single examiner.

The Council recommends that where candidates are required to attend a Dan grading examination then the panel should consist of a senior Association Karateka of at least one grade higher than the candidate in the style being examined.

Where consideration is for a Karateka to be awarded a Dan grade which is not tested by a physical grading examination, the panel should consist of the most senior Association Karateka in the style being examined, unless the award is to the Association Chief instructor, who who in such circumstances would not form part of the panel.

English Karate Council  
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