

2.3 Grading System

2.3.1 Technical Rules for Kendo Gradings

- The Australian Kendo Renmei's (AKR) standard rules for Kendo grading are based on the Standard Rules for Dan/Kyu Examinations of the International Kendo Federation plus such additional rules as determined by the AKR.
- The applicant for a grading shall be a financial member of the AKR and his or her state body and club.
- The applicant who wishes to attempt a grading shall have the endorsement of his/her instructor or club President. This endorsement should be based on the applicant's attendance record as well as the skills displayed, and must also take into account the period that has elapsed since the applicant's last grading.
- The applicant must have paid the grading application fee prior to attempting the grading. The grading application fee will be retained by the State or National Renmei responsible for conducting that particular grading.
- The applicant who has passed the grading must pay the registration fee on the day of the examination. After this fee has been paid the grading will be registered by the AKR.
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- Results of the grading examinations, together with the registration fees collected shall be forwarded to the Secretary, AKR, so that the appropriate registers can be updated. The AKR shall then forward the results of the grading to the Australian Kendo Board.
- The grading application fee and registration fee shall be set by the AKR National Council.

National Examinations

- National Dan Grade examinations will be held in conjunction with the Australian Kendo Renmei National Championships. The Kendo Board are responsible for the organisation of the grading, allocation of the examiners based on the seniority of examiners available to participate and the allocation of Dojo Steward briefed on his duties. National Kyu Grade examinations will be held only for State Renmei who do not have an examination panel within their State.
- The AKR Executive will coordinate members requiring grading, checking of their membership status, time in their present rank has been met and that all examination fees are collected before the grading commences. They are also responsible for collecting the registration fees at the completion of the grading and the issue of Grading Certificates through the Chairman of the Grading Committee.

Attendance at International Examinations - prerequisites.

Members may undergo International examinations providing they have received approval in writing from the AKR Executive and present a copy of their previous Grading Record. The AKR Executive are to inform the International Examining body of their approval for the member to participate providing all memberships fees and credentials are in order before commencing the grading.

To apply for a grading administered by the All Japan Kendo Federation, please refer to the Manual of Documents, Section 1, Administration and Structure, clause 1.5.7.1.

2.3.2 Kyu Grading Requirements and Procedures

- Beginners should be training for 5 months or more prior to their first grading examination. Other applicants should spend 5 months or more between gradings.
- The examiners qualification, size of examination panel and consent criteria is detailed in the AKR Standard Rules for Grading.

It is not necessary that the applicant be promoted one grade at a time. If their ability warrants, and by agreement of the examiners, the applicant may progress by more than one grade to a maximum of two grades. i.e. 6 kyu to 4 kyu. However, to obtain 1 Dan, the applicant must have held 1 kyu for 5 months or more.

Examination subjects are as follows:

Kyu Applied for	Examination Subjects	Examination Subjects
1 Kyu	Matches (Jitsugi), Nippon-Kendo-Kata	Tachi-no-Kata 1-3

2.3.3 Dan Grading General Requirements

- Refer to common rules between all arts listed in Section 1 para 1.5
- Examinations for Dan grades shall be conducted by the Kendo Board at the National Championships and at such times and places as determined by the AKR in conjunction with the Kendo Board.
- The applicant shall have the following periods of practice:

Years for time in grade will be calculated from month to month i.e. March to March (regardless of what date in March). For this purpose the AKR National Championships will be regarded as one year apart.

Grade	Time required after previous grading
1 st Dan (Shodan)	1 year from 1 st Kyu
2 nd Dan (Nidan)	1 year
3 rd Dan (Sandan)	2 years
4 th Dan (Yondan)	3 years
5 th Dan (Godan)	4 years
6 th Dan (Rokudan)	5 years

Examination subjects are as follows:

Dan Applied for	Examination Subjects
1 Dan - 5 Dan	Matches (Jitsugi), Nippon-Kendo-Kata and Written Test
6 Dan	Matches (Jitsugi), Nippon-Kendo-Kata

(2) Nippon-Kendo-Kata shall be examined as follows:

Dan Applied for	Examination Subjects
1 Dan	Tachi-no-Kata 1-5
2 Dan	Tachi-no-Kata 1-7
3 Dan	Tachi-no-Kata 1-7
4 Dan – 6 Dan	Tachi-no-Kata 1-7 and Kodachi-no-Kata 1-3

2.3.4 Rokkyu Technical Requirements

Kihon-waza to be executed with Motodachi, candidates wearing Tare and Do.

- Correct Hakama & Keikogi
- Correct Bogu
- Rei and Sonkyo
- Ashi-sabaki
- Kihon Men
- Kihon Kote
- Kihon Do
- **Kihon Kote-Men (Delete)**
- **Kihon Kote-Do (Delete)**
- **Kiri-Kaeshi (Delete)**

2.3.5 Gokyu Grading Technical Requirements

Kihon-waza to be executed with Motodachi, candidates wearing Tare and Do.

- Correct Hakama & Keikogi
- Correct Bogu
- Rei and Sonkyo
- Ashi-sabaki
- Kihon Men
- Kihon Kote
- Kihon Do
- **Kihon Kote-Men (Delete)**
- **Kihon Kote-Do (Delete)**
- Kiri-Kaeshi

2.3.6 Yonkyu Grading Technical Requirements

Candidates wearing full Bogu and demonstrating against each other.

- Correct Hakama & Keikogi
- Correct Bogu
- Kihon Men
- Kihon Kote
- Kihon Do
- Nidan-waza
 - **Kihon Kote-Men**
 - **Kihon Kote-Do**
- **Sandan-waza (Delete)**
- Kiri-Kaeshi
- Kiri-Kaeshi as **Uchidachi**
- Uchi-komi Geiko

2.3.7 Sankyu Grading Technical Requirements

Candidates wearing full Bogu and demonstrating against each other.

- Correct Hakama & Keikogi
- Correct Bogu
- Kihon Men
- Kihon Kote
- Kihon Do
- Nidan-waza
- Sandan-waza
- Kiri-Kaeshi
- Kiri-Kaeshi as Motodachi
- Uchi-komi Geiko

2.3.8 Nikyu Grading Technical Requirements

- Kiri-Kaeshi
- Kiri-Kaeshi as Motodachi
- Uchi-komi Geiko
- Kakari Geiko
- Ji Geigo

2.3.9 Ikkyu Grading Technical Requirements

- Kiri-Kaeshi
- Kiri-Kaeshi as Motodachi
- Uchi-komi Geiko
- Kakari Geiko
- Ji Geigo
- Kata: O-dachi: Ipponme to Sanbonme

2.3.10 Shodan Grading Technical Requirements

- Kiai
The application of kiai to be in harmony with yoko-datotsu.
- Chudan No Kamae
Application of Chudan-no-kamae is maintained before and after Yoko-datotsu.
- Grip of shinai
Correct grip on shinai should automatically assume the Chudan-no-kamae and be the prelude to Ten-no-uchi.
- Ashi-waza
The main reference being the correct foot placing and attention to the height of the heel.
- Appearance
The reflection of the spirit of Kendo in dressing.
- Kihon-waza - Basic blows
An understanding and display of all pre-requisites prior to the cut are exhibited.
- Etiquette
Correct attitude and manners displayed throughout the grading period.
- Shisei
Correct posture and attitudes maintained appropriate to the actions being carried out.
- Kiri-kaeshi

Fluency of Kiri-kaeshi is maintained without loss of maai and correct striking of Men with the mono-uchi.

- Kata: O-dachi: Ipponme to Gohonme
- Written exam:
What do you want to learn from training in Kendo.
Explain Maai.

2.3.11. Nidan Grading Technical Requirements

- Shikake waza
Ability to display correct form in executing methods of shikage-waza.
- Oji waza
Ability to display correct form in executing methods of oji-waza.
- Shin - Spirit
Demonstrate a true spirit during shiai.
- Timing for blow
- Maai (advanced)
- Kiri-kaeshi (advanced)
- Kata: O-dachi: Ipponme to Nanahonme
- Written exam
Explain why etiquette is important to Kendo.
Explain the opportunity for Datotsu.

2.3.12. Sandan Grading Technical Requirements

- Timing for blow before and after opponents attack
- Blow from Seme
- Usage of Maai
- Effective blow
- Attitude and posture
- Spirit
- Zanshin
- Kata: Ipponme to Nanahonme
Ko-dachi: Ipponme to Sanbonme
- Written exam
Explain why it is important to do Kendo Kata.
Explain why it is necessary to do Kiri-kaeshi.

2.3.13 Yondan Grading Technical Requirements

- Nobility and appearance
Nobility is a requirement which is not considered for Sandan. For Yondan, nobility and near perfect kendo spirit are required. Nobility is something naturally generated as one progresses to a higher level in terms of technique and spirit.
- Attitudes and manners
This requirement applies to any grade but for Yondan, an irreproachable attitude and manners are required. In this regard more composite attitudes than ones required for Sandan and they include manners, appearance and the state of shinai.
- Rational blow
In short, this means that one never misses opportunities to attack, use of maai to the advantage demonstrate a good body manoeuvre and utilize San-sappo (Kill sword, kill spirit and kill technique of opponent). A state of Kendo where one does not miss opportunities to attack, control Maai, do not engage in unnecessary attacks and utilizes San-sappo.
- Seme with effective Kensen
For Sandan a blow from Seme was a requirement, which is an indispensable in Kendo. For Yondan, additional types of Seme are also required, including Seme in Spirit and Seme in sword. To place oneself in a state of total concentration and coerce opponent with Kensen.
- Qualifications as an instructor
After achieving requirements for Shodan, Nidan and Sandans, Yondan is required to obtain a higher level of techniques such as Suri-age, Kaeshi-waza, Uchi-otoshi-waza, Nuki-waza and apply these techniques depending on opponents. Required to understand Kendo both in techniques and in theory with achievement in a higher level of Kendo than Sandan. Also required to perfect all ten Kata and able to instruct them.
- Rational response to opponents attacks and change in techniques

The more senior one becomes, more rational response to a change is required, such as not to be perturbed by opponents, show rational response to attacks or a change in opponents attacks. It is a condition to be Yondan that one remains calm against any changes in opponents techniques and respond rationally to it with desirable techniques.

- Zanshin
The more senior one becomes, better Zanshin is required.
- Speed and Te-no-uchi
Brilliance in cuts and good Te-no-uchi are a barometer to measure improvement in Kendo. Requirements of good Te-no-uchi applies to Sandan also but for Yondan and above this becomes of further importance.
- Kata
- Written exam
What is the important thing about learning basics in Kendo.
Explain the meaning of Zanshin.
Explain the correct manner of Kendo.

2.3.14 Godan Grading Technical Requirements

The process from Yondan to Godan involves polishing through further training what has been achieved so far. For Godan, one would have to have mastered all requirements for Shodan up to Yondan through long persistent training and all the requirements up to Yondan would need to be brought up to completion in Godan. While the requirements to be qualified as Godan are similar to that for Yondan, there is a certain variation in the order of priority, that is, ones' quality as an instructor becomes more important. For instance, the following are the requirements for Godan in order of priority.

- Rational blow
In techniques, Godan should be able to utilise Shikake-waza, Oji-waza spontaneously in a match and should never miss opportunities to attack. One is also required to demonstrate a good footwork, good manoeuvre and good Zanshin after blows. Rational blow is the highest state in Kendo technique one can achieve. There should be no unnecessary movement or blows, it is a result of perfect balance, hit, techniques and spirit. Once one achieves this level of Kendo it becomes a beauty in its style and makes ones sense of the art in it.
- Nobility
For ordinary people, Kendo carries either a high or low nobility. Which one one's Kendo would end up with depends on one's personality. If one trains both physical and mental aspects of kendo and face opponents with a belief of winning rather than being possessed by winning, his Kendo will achieve high nobility. High nobility, this is what is required for Godan.
- Qualifications as an instructor
Quality as an instructor becomes important for Godan. They are required to instruct Yondan and below with theory, kata, techniques and style of Kendo. While qualifications as an instructor is one of the most important requirements for both Yondan and Godan, Godan is required to possess a higher level of this requirement.
- Attitudes
- Zanshin
- State of Kensen
- Kata
- Written exam
Explain your own mental attitude toward being a Kendo Instructor.
Explain the meaning of Yuko-datotsu.
Explain the importance of Kihon (Fundamentals) in Kendo.
Explain the Referee's duties.
Explain when it is the best time to attack.

2.4 Australian Championships

2.4.1 Organisation and Division of Responsibilities

The Australian Kendo Board is responsible for the overall running of the Australian Kendo Championships. The State Renmei hosting the event is responsible to the AKB for providing support in conducting a successful championship and seminar if required. The Australian Kendo Renmei Executive Committee are responsible for controlling any funding required in addition to the normal. The following details the major responsibilities of each body but is not limited to these requirements as each championship may vary:

Australian Kendo Board

- Arrange championship events for Kyu Grade Individual and Team, Dan Grad individual and Team, Womens individual, Veterans Individual and Kata Team.