

BRITISH  
JUDO



# REFEREEING

## HANDBOOK

February 2026



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Scope

This document is intended to support BJA members, governing all refereeing matters outside of the contest rules. It includes the refereeing structure, qualification, assessment and examination processes, which are supported by the educational and training programmes.

## 1.2 Application

The latest version of this Handbook and the Contest Rules published on the BJA website are the only authorised rules, processes and procedures for use at BJA licensed events. In case of conflict, the latest version of these published documents, alongside official amendments, shall prevail.

Where references are made to BJA membership, it applies only to valid current members and this shall equally apply to JudoScotland, NIJF and WJA members unless otherwise stated.

**All British Judo licensed events must be run fully in line with these documents unless written dispensation has been given by the BJA / NRC.** The NRC reserves the right to make adjustments as required should exceptional circumstances arise.

## 1.3 General Correspondence about Refereeing

All general enquiries should be sent to the NRC secretary. Specific enquiries may be sent directly to the responsible NRC member, however, a copy should be sent to the NRC secretary. If the correspondence is a complaint, this should be clearly stated.

## 2 REFEREE AWARD STRUCTURE

### 2.1 Referee Pathway

The British referee structure is made up of a single pathway for all referees, starting from the minimum age of twelve years with no maximum age in the UK. The eight-level structure enables any British Judo member to become a referee, then progress through the structure upon satisfying the criteria for each level. The current British Judo and IJF referee structure is:

1. Club Referee
2. Area Referee
3. National C Referee
4. National B Referee
5. National A Referee
6. Senior National Referee
7. Continental Referee
8. International Referee

Any British Judo member wishing to become a referee can gain information on how to do this from their area refereeing representative or the British Judo website.

### 2.2 Club Award Entry Criteria

To attempt the Club Referee Award the candidate must on the day of education and theory/practical examination have / be a minimum of:

- 12 years of age
- 10th Mon / 3rd Kyu
- A minimum of 1-year judo experience
- Must hold current BJA membership

To fully qualify at the Club Referee level, candidates must:

- Successfully complete a Club Award education module
- Successfully complete the Club Award theory examination
- Successfully complete the Club Award practical examination

### 2.3 Area Award Entry Criteria

To attempt the Area Referee Award the candidate must on the day of education and theory / practical examination have / be a minimum of:

- 15 years of age
- 13th Mon / 2nd Kyu
- Have been a Club referee for at least 1 year, unless entering directly at Area level
- Must hold current BJA membership

To fully qualify at the Area Referee level, candidates must:

- Successfully complete the Area Award education module
- Successfully complete the Area Award theory examination
- Successfully complete the Area Award practical examination

## 2.4 National C Award Entry Criteria

To attempt the National C Referee Award the candidate must on the day of education and theory / practical examination have / be a minimum of:

- 18 years of age (unless they started at Club level, it is then 16)
- 18th Mon / 1st Kyu (if going directly to National C, must have satisfied Fast Track criteria)
- Have been an Area referee for 1 year, unless entering directly at National C level
- Must hold current full BJA membership

To fully qualify at the National C Referee level, candidates must:

- Successfully complete a National C Award education module
- Successfully complete the National C Award theory examination
- Successfully complete the National C Award practical examination

## 2.5 National B Award Entry Criteria

To attempt the practical examination for the National B Referee Award the candidate must on the day of examination have / be a minimum of:

- 19 years of age (unless they started at Club level, it is then 18)
- 1st Kyu (if going directly to National B, must have satisfied Fast Track criteria)
- Successfully completed the National B education module
- Successfully completed the National B theory examination
- Have been a National C referee for 1 year, meeting the 2-year revalidation requirements
- Must hold current full BJA membership

## 2.6 National A Award Entry Criteria

To attempt the practical examination for the National A Referee Award the candidate must on the day of examination have / be a minimum of:

- 21 years of age (unless they started at Club level, it is then 20)
- 1st Dan
- Successfully completed the appropriate education module
- Successfully completed the National A theory examination
- Been a National B for more than 1 year, meeting the 2-year revalidation requirements
- Must hold a current full BJA membership

## 2.7 Senior National Award Entry Criteria

For the Senior National Award, the candidate should generally at the time of application be / have:

- Been a National A referee for at least 8 years
- Been a referee tutor for at least 5 years
- Have averaged at least 10 events per year for the last 5 years
- Must hold current BJA membership
- Be considered of appropriate character for the award by the NRC, in line with the BJA Code of Conduct and requirements for referee professionalism (see later)
- Demonstrate a significant contribution in at least two of three dimensions:
  - High personal refereeing performance
  - Leadership in refereeing e.g. NRC, Area Rep and RIC roles

- Development of referees e.g. Mentoring, Tutoring, Seminars

The NRC has the discretion to consider applications for the Senior National Award which do not meet the above criteria, but still represent sustained achievement and significant contribution to refereeing/British Judo.

### 2.8 Continental Referee Training Programme Entry Criteria

To attempt the practical assessment for entry onto the Continental referee training programme, the candidate would normally be expected on the day of assessment to have / be a minimum of:

- 23 years of age
- 1st Dan
- National A referee for more than 1 year, meeting the 2-year revalidation requirements,
- Must hold current full BJA membership

The Continental Licence can be attempted from either the National A or Senior National awards.

### 2.9 Continental Examination Entry Criteria

To attempt the Continental referee examination, the candidate must on the day of examination have / be a minimum of:

- 2nd Dan
- At least 2 years' experience as a National A referee (recommended 2-5 years) or Senior National
- Be a minimum of 25 years and a maximum of 45 years (in the calendar year of their 25 /45th birthday)
- Active at national and international level
- Selected by the NRC and approved by the BJA Board
- Pass the theory examination at the specified event
- Must hold a current BJA membership

The Continental licence (IJF B) examination is organised by the European Judo Union in cooperation with the IJF Refereeing Commission, according to the rules including age criteria laid out by the IJF. Full criteria for application for the Continental examination are available on the IJF website.

### 2.10 International Examination Entry Criteria

To attempt the International referee examination, the candidate must on the day of examination have / be a minimum of:

- Selected by the NRC and approved by the BJA Board
- Approved by the EJU as an appropriate candidate for examination
- Be a minimum of 30 years and a maximum of 50 years (in the calendar year of their 30 / 50th birthday)
- Continental referee for at least 2 years (recommended 2 to 5 years)
- Active at national and international level
- Minimum of 3rd Dan
- Must hold a current BJA membership

The International licence (IJF A) is awarded and governed by the IJF according to its rules and regulations. Full criteria for application for the International examination are available on the IJF website.

### 2.11 Standard Entry and Fast Track Options

The NRC, BJA and IJF recognise that knowledge and expertise developed in other judo disciplines are valuable and highly transferable to refereeing. To attract advanced candidates and give credit to previous experience, the refereeing structure allows ‘Fast Track’ entry to the higher referee awards. High performing athletes or coaches with significant international experience are encouraged to take up this opportunity.

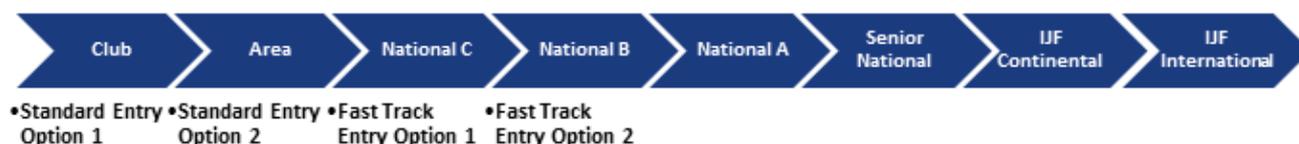
- **Standard Entry Option 1 to Club Award:** Judoka of at least 12 years old and 10th Mon / 3rd Kyu may attempt the Club award
- **Standard Entry Option 2 to Area Award:** Judoka of at least 15 years old and 15th Mon / 2nd Kyu may directly attempt the Area award
- **Fast Track to National C Award:** Judoka of at least 18 years old and a competitive 1st Dan may directly attempt the National C award
- **Fast Track to National B Award:**
  - Judoka who have had at least 10 senior BJA selections for international events at European Cup or above and won at least two medals at senior European Cup or higher may directly attempt the National B award.
  - Coaches with at least 10 events completed at Junior European Cup or higher and whose athletes have returned at least two medals at this level.

Anyone wishing to progress their judo career through a Fast Track into refereeing should apply in writing to the NRC secretary, applications should include:

- A full CV of their judo career to date specifically identifying national and above medals
- A brief cover note stating why the candidate wants to enter this programme

Should anyone wish to discuss this opportunity before applying, please contact the NRC secretary, who will arrange a conversation to discuss Fast Track entry. Support will be provided through the process.

### 2.12 Entry Options Summary



Note: In exceptional circumstances, the NRC may authorise the examination and promotion of candidates to any level with bespoke criteria. This is a safety net to ensure referees are appropriately positioned within the structure when their consistent high performance clearly justifies it.

### 2.13 Examination and Assessment Summary

Level	Education Module	Theory Assessment	Theory Examination	Practical Assessment	Training Programme	Practice Events	Practical Examination	Managed By
Club	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Host Area
Area	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Host Area
National C	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Host Area
National B	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	NRC
National A	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	NRC
Senior National	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	NRC
Continental	No	Yes	Yes - IJF	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - IJF	NRC/EJU/IJF

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International	No	Discretionary	Yes – IJF	Discretionary	Discretionary	Yes	Yes - IJF	NRC/EJU/IJF
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## 3 REFEREE REVALIDATION

### 3.1 Referee Revalidation Criteria

Referees are revalidated on a three-year cycle on the 1<sup>st</sup> January of each cycle, starting 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024, 2027 and thereafter.

Referees will be automatically revalidated if they have fulfilled the documented revalidation criteria at the end of the three-year revalidation period.

The criteria for each level to automatically revalidate is identified below:

Referee Award	Minimum Activity	Maintenance of refereeing level
Club Referee	9 events	Assessment at area rep discretion
Area Referee	9 events	Assessment at area rep discretion
National C Referee	9 events	Assessment at area rep discretion
National B Referee	12 events	2 x NRC Seminar / other*
National A Referee	12 events	2 x NRC Seminar / other*
Senior National Referee	12 events	2 x NRC Seminar / other*
Retired/Honorary IJF (A or B)	12 events	2 x NRC Seminar / other*
Active IJF (A or B)	Controlled by EJU / IJF	2 x NRC Seminar / other*

\*The NRC may authorise alternative revalidation activity as deemed appropriate.

'Refereeing activity' means refereeing for the whole event; partial attendance does not qualify. All events must be BJA licensed events.

#### Club, Area, National C

Where a referee has completed less than the recommended requisite number of events, the area refereeing representative has the authority to recommend revalidation for referees at development levels (Club, Area and National C). This should be based on the area refereeing representatives' knowledge of the individual referees' performance level and activity. The NRC will accept this recommendation unless there are particular concerns

When requested, proof of activity via their signed record card should be presented to the area refereeing representative to support a decision. In cases of doubt, the refereeing representative may arrange an assessment of the referee's competence by a regional or above tutor.

#### National B, National A, Senior National, Retired / Honorary Continental / International

For National B and above, the NRC will manage the revalidation process based on the referee performance and activity according to the ranking list and education modules attended. Retired / Honorary Continental/International referees will normally be revalidated if they have attended the necessary NRC approved National Seminars or other events deemed fit for purpose by the NRC.

The NRC will make reasonable effort to ensure that all referees at these levels have had the opportunity to referee at events to achieve ranking points. The NRC would ideally want the referees to have received ranking points on at least 3 occasions in the 3-year revalidation period.

In the case of too few events or no ranking points, the NRC will consider alternative revalidation options, including:

- Assessment at an event at the NRC's discretion
- Bespoke revalidation module and theory test
- NRC's knowledge of a referee's competence

## Continental and International

For referees active at these levels, the EJU / IJF will continue to maintain their revalidation, providing the referee attends EJU / IJF / GBR seminars as required.

### 3.2 Incomplete Revalidation Activity

If revalidation requirements are not met and the referee's performance does not justify revalidation, the referee will become invalidated and not permitted to referee.

In the case of a performance referee (National B or above) who has become invalid, they may choose to revalidate at National C level until they can restore their higher level. The NRC will communicate the options available.

In exceptional circumstances the NRC reserves the right to revalidate any referee at their discretion without the need for assessment. Usually, this will only be exercised where a referee has narrowly missed the requirements with valid excuse and the NRC consider that this has not degraded capability unacceptably.

**National C and below:** Any referee up to National C level who becomes invalidated may be required to be reassessed at a level deemed appropriate by the area refereeing representative for both the practical and theory parts of the examination, this may incur a full examination fee and is at the area representatives' discretion. Alternatively, the referee may be revalidated by the area representative if appropriate.

**National B and above:** Any referee at National B or above who becomes invalidated may be required to attend an event identified by the NRC for re-assessment by nominated tutors which will include the practical and theory parts of the examination; this may incur a full examination fee. Alternatively, the referee may be revalidated by the NRC for a period of its choosing to allow them to meet the revalidation criteria.

### 3.3 Record of Activity

All referees must ensure that they have their record card signed by the referee in charge at every event. If the card is not signed and there is no record of the referee attending the event, the event will not be considered for revalidation purposes.

### 3.4 Revalidation of Referees Promoted within the Current Revalidation Period

Referees qualified or promoted part way through a revalidation period will have less time to meet the revalidation requirements. Therefore, revalidation will be managed as follows:

	Activity Requirement
First qualified – year one or two of revalidation period	50% of activity requirement

First qualified – year three of revalidation period	Automatically revalidated
Promotion at any time	May revalidate based on lower award criteria

### 3.5 Return to Refereeing

An invalid referee wishing to return following a lapsed period of more than two years may do so after attending an NRC identified education module and successfully completing the theory and practical assessment. The referee may choose the level they wish to return to, up to their previous level, and complete the relevant assessment; this may incur a full examination fee.

### 3.6 Referee Performance

**National C and below:** In cases where there is concern about a referee’s performance, this must be raised with the referee by the area refereeing representative and confirmed in writing. If agreement can be reached on an action plan to restore the referee’s performance this should be followed with a target date of no more than six months. Should good performance not be restored for any reason, the next course of action will be decided by the NRC after consultation with the area representative and the referee.

Attention will be paid to any referee who is considered to no longer be able to safely manage contest situations. If agreement cannot be reached or the referee refuses to accept that they are underperforming, this situation should be referred to the NRC secretary for further advice.

**National B and above:** If the Area referee representative / NRC / any tutor has cause for concern about a referee’s performance, the NRC may arrange for an assessment of that referee upon receipt of a written report supported by a tutor of an appropriate level. This will be arranged to suit both parties and will be carried out by a tutor appointed by the NRC. Should it not be possible to identify an agreed event for the assessment, the referee concerned will become invalidated one year after written notification of the need for assessment. The referee must be offered in writing a minimum of two separate opportunities in the year following written notification.

If an assessment identifies areas of underperformance, the individual may have a second opportunity within the following six months to regain the level required. If the second assessment identifies serious shortfalls (same or different), the individual may be immediately invalidated or offered a lower-level revalidation at the assessors’ discretion. Should any referee fail to meet the minimum requirements upon reassessment, that referee will be removed from the national calling list until such time that they have passed re-assessment. All retraining, assessments and examinations may be subject to the full examination fees.

### 3.7 Retirement

There is no compulsory retirement age for referees or tutors in the British system. However, referees must maintain the relevant standards for their level and activity. Allowances are not made for any reason including age or health related difficulties.

## 4 EDUCATION PROGRAMMES AND EXAMINATIONS

### 4.1 Attendance and Fees

Level	BJA Fee	Recommended Participant Numbers for Education Modules	Recommended Participant Numbers for Practical Assessment / Examination
<b>Club Referee</b>	£15.00	4 – 12	2 per mat maximum (1 examiner per 4 candidates' maximum)
<b>Area Referee</b>	£15.00	4 – 12	2 per mat maximum (1 examiner per 4 candidates' maximum)
<b>National C Referee</b>	£15.00	4 – 12	2 per mat maximum (1 examiner per 4 candidates' maximum)
<b>National B Referee</b>	£50.00	2 – 8	1 – 4 (prefer 2-day events) Normally a maximum of 4 candidates for 2 examiners
<b>National A Referee</b>	£100.00	2 – 8	1 – 4 (prefer 2-day events) Normally a maximum of 4 candidates for 2 examiners
<b>IJF Assessments</b>	£200.00	Not Applicable	1 – 2 (IJF criteria)

Continental and International examinations conducted by EJU or IJF are self-funded. The BJA may contribute to these costs at the discretion of the NRC and Board.

All monies and administration, when not managed centrally, must be submitted to the BJA HO within two weeks of the event by the tutor. Awards are processed on receipt at British Judo head office of all money and correct documents addressed to the referee administrator.

### 4.2 Club, Area and National C Award Examinations

Candidates should apply for referee training and examinations with the consent of their area refereeing representative. However, if the candidate prefers, it is possible to apply directly to the BJA for all awards, however, the BJA do not normally expect to receive applications for Club, Area and National C awards unless exceptional circumstances apply. Training courses will generally be advertised on the BJA website.

Candidates should complete both the education module and theory examination successfully prior to the practical examination\*, all elements need to be completed within a 12-month period otherwise the candidate will need to retake the expired element(s). Referees attempting their first referee award must not undertake refereeing practice at licensed events until they have passed the theory examination.

Trainee referees may referee under the supervision of any valid adult referee (18+), this is to gain practical examination practice. Trainees are defined as those who have successfully completed the education module and theory examination for their first award.

\*In cases agreed by the NRC, it may be possible to pass candidates on the practical examination before the education module is complete for all levels (excluding their first), this is based on the NRC's discretion and requires an NRC examiner to be present.

Expenses should be paid to those candidates on examination as a respected part of the refereeing team.

### 4.3 Assessment Guidelines for National B, A and Continental Awards

Events for all National B, A and IJF assessments or examinations must be approved by the NRC. These may be concluded over one or two days at the discretion of the NRC; a two-day event is preferred.

A maximum of four attempts is permitted at National B and A levels, as well as entry to the BJA Continental programme.

For a candidate to be considered for the relevant programme they would normally need to score no lower than within 5 points of the targeted pass mark:

- National C attempting the National B programme would need to score at least 55%
- National B attempting the National A programme would need to score at least 65%
- National A / Senior National attempting the Continental programme would need to score at least 75%

In the case where a candidate passes the theory element and gains the relevant practical pass mark +3% or greater on National A or B initial assessments, these candidates may be awarded an immediate pass without the necessity to conduct the training programme.

In the case of a failed practical examination or initial assessment of less than halfway towards the attempted level, the candidate will need to undergo retraining and the full examination fee will apply again. A waiting period of six months is recommended between attempts.

### 4.4 National B Examinations

To be promoted to the National B level requires the candidate to show either:

- an exceptional first examination performance (63% or more)
- best two examination results out of three averaging at least 60% (with no single score less than 57%)

Any candidate who has an examination below 57% at any point in time will automatically fail. They will receive feedback and may reapply, beginning with the education module.

#### Example outcomes:

1 <sup>st</sup> Exam	2 <sup>nd</sup> Exam	3 <sup>rd</sup> Exam	Result	Comments
63%	N/A	N/A	Pass	63% is minimum to pass on first examination
57%	61%	61%	Pass	Average of 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> exam is 61%
62%	56%	N/A	Fail	Fail, fell below 57% on one occasion
62%	58%	N/A	Pass	Average of 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> exam is 60%
57%	57%	62%	Fail	Average 59.50%

### 4.5 National A Training Programmes

To be promoted to the National A level requires the candidate to show an average score at or above 70% over 3 consecutive assessment events. Only in exceptional circumstances will candidates attempting the National A award be deemed successful on the first attempt by scoring 73% or more.

National A candidates must submit as part of the application process a satisfactory record card. Those with a strong record in the previous two years may be considered for immediate examination.

#### Initial Practical Assessment

For applicants to join the National A programme, they must achieve a minimum score of 65% on their first practical assessment event after the educational module. They will then be invited to join the programme.

It is only possible for a candidate to pass the National A programme on their initial assessment if:

- Agreed by the NRC in advance on the basis the candidate is considered to be a strong case – this could include experience as an international level coach or athlete
- Previous mat assessment results are strong
- They pass with a score of 73% or more (a strong pass)

## National A Programme of Ongoing Practical Assessment

After successfully completing the initial assessment, candidates will participate in ongoing assessment. There are no ‘final’ examinations, candidates pass when they demonstrate *consistent* performance at National A standard or above. Candidates are also withdrawn after due consultation when the ongoing assessments are not reaching minimum standards.

The NRC will identify events throughout the year which qualify towards the continuous assessment process. Ideally, a range of assessors should see the candidates over the events assessed.

The scores from each assessment (including the initial assessment) will be recorded and once the candidate has recorded three scores, the rolling average from the last three events will be calculated:

- If the rolling average is 7.0 or higher – the candidate passes and is promoted
- If the rolling average is 6.6 or above, but less than 7.0 – the candidate continues on the programme
- If the candidate falls below 6.6 at any point in time on any single assessment the candidate is withdrawn from the programme, unless there are extenuating circumstances agreed in advance

If a candidate continues on the programme for an extended period of time (6+ assessments or more than 2 years) a discussion will be had with the candidate, this could result in them withdrawing from the programme, unless assessors agree improved performance can be achieved in a reasonable time.

## Feedback and Progression

Throughout the programme, candidates will be given focus areas during each de-brief and areas of previous feedback should be reviewed by the assessor and candidate to understand if progress is being made or if key areas of required development remain. An ongoing record will be retained throughout the programme to assist with this.

If the candidate has an identified mentor, the candidate should share their assessment results and feedback with their mentor after each event.

## Examples of Continuous Assessment Outcomes:

### Example 1

Assessment	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ass. Result	6.8	7.1	7.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
3 Rolling Avg			7.03	0	0	0
Outcome	Cont.	Cont.	Pass			

Candidate averaged 7.03 in their first three assessments, therefore promoted.

Note: They are not promoted at the second assessment on a single assessment at 7.0 or above, it is the rolling average score of 3 assessments that counts.

### Example 2

Assessment	1	2	3	4	5	6
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<b>Result</b>	6.7	6.8	7.0	7.0	7.2	0.0
<b>3 Rolling Avg</b>			6.83	6.93	7.07	0
<b>Outcome</b>	Cont.	Cont.	Cont.	Cont.	Pass	

Candidate rolling average after events 3 and 4 was sufficient to continue on the programme but insufficient to pass, after their fifth assessment an average of 7.07 from the last three events was achieved, therefore a pass.

**Example 3**

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Result</b>	6.7	6.8	6.6	6.7	6.5	0.0
<b>3 Rolling Avg</b>			6.7	6.7	6.6	0
<b>Outcome</b>	Cont.	Cont.	Cont.	Cont.	Fail	

Candidate rolling average after event 3 and 4 is sufficient to continue on the programme, but they fell below 6.6 on one occasion.

**Example 4**

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Result</b>	6.7	6.8	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9
<b>3 Rolling Avg</b>			6.7	6.7	6.7	6.8
<b>Outcome</b>	Cont.	Cont.	Cont.	Cont.	Cont.	Cont.

The candidate achieves sufficient scores at each assessment to maintain a rolling average between 6.6 and 7.0. They stay on the programme, however, after 6 consecutive assessments not reaching the 7.0 or more target, their continued participation should be reviewed.

**Record of Activity**

It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure that the record and summary are completed on each assessment. Once they have completed the rolling 3 assessment average to a satisfactory level the candidate should return the record fully completed to the NRC examinations officer. Incomplete forms may be returned, delaying promotion.

**4.6 Continental Training Programme**

The programme is intended to support a candidate’s performance through focused mentoring and feedback; there is no fixed training duration. However, the average candidate should generally be competent within a two-year period assuming they implement the advice given and attend the recommended volume and level of events. The training will include:

- An assigned mentor to observe and provide performance feedback.
- Candidates and mentors / assessors agreeing areas to improve following formal assessments.
- Interim assessments at specified events by appointed assessors will take place throughout the year, it is expected that candidates will receive at least two assessments per year, assuming the candidate attends the recommended events. This is in addition to more regular verbal advice.

Continental candidates are expected to exhibit a very high standard of behaviour on and off the mat – see *Referee Professionalism*.

All assessors will be appointed by the NRC; each assessment should preferably have three assessors. Where there are only two assessors, they must both be full International level tutors.

A candidate may be removed from the programme for failing to make satisfactory progress, falling below expected performance, or for conduct, availability attitude, integrity or safety reasons the NRC or assessors deem warrants removal. In the case of the NRC withdrawing the candidate for any reason, the candidate must have been informed in writing of the reason(s).

### **Mentoring**

Mentoring is made available, but not compulsory, as part of the National A and Continental programmes. Every candidate will be offered the opportunity to have a suitable mentor by the NRC.

The purpose of the mentoring relationship is to accelerate a candidate's development and increase their likelihood of completing the programme successfully, through:

- Guiding the candidate through the course of the programme
- Prioritising areas for focus and development
- Advising the candidate on preparation for assessment and examination

Mentoring is an individual relationship, it is for the mentor and mentee to discuss what best suits them, it can be as formal or informal as is preferred. The mentee is responsible for keeping their mentor up to date on the events they are attending, the outcome of any assessments and staying in touch

The mentor is responsible for observing, guiding, and assisting their mentee and for responding to contact from them. The mentor should receive a copy of the outcome of any formal assessments from the mentee.

For referees with the potential to achieve National B, Area refereeing representatives are encouraged to develop mentoring or other development and feedback methods to help their candidates achieve this level.

### **Applications and Initial Assessment**

Application may be made via the referee's area refereeing representative or direct to the NRC. All applications must be made on the applicable form. If successful in their application and assessment, applicants will be entered onto the Continental training programme until they are ready for examination by the EJU or deemed unsuitable for any reason.

A theory assessment must be taken for every attempt at the Continental Assessment; this will be done at the same event as the practical assessment. The result of both theory and practical assessment will be delivered on the final assessment day.

Assessment events will be few due to the event level required, therefore if candidates are unavailable for applicable events, it may take considerable time to identify another event. Where a candidate has not taken the assessment within one year of approval, reassessment may be required.

The NRC reserves the right to accept high performing referees on to the training programme at its discretion, irrespective of the above criteria.

## **4.7 Continental Final Assessment**

The final assessment will normally take place at the British Championships immediately prior to the next Continental examination opportunity; however, the NRC reserves the right to use an alternative event.

Candidates will be required to pass both the theory and practical assessments at the final assessment event:

- Should the candidate be successful, following tutor feedback, the NRC will recommend to the BJA Board that the candidate be put forward for examination. Following BJA Board approval the candidate will be put forward for Continental examination by the EJU.

- If the candidate is unsuccessful, a decision will be made as to whether the level of performance warrants the candidate remaining on the training programme.

### 4.8 Transfer of Non-BJA Referee Grades to the BJA

British Judo welcomes referees of other associations to join the British refereeing system. To ensure consistency the applicable referee must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Any currently valid Continental or International referee of the IJF will be recognised by British Judo on provision of BJA membership, their original or duplicate certificate to the NRC, or by their presence on a published referee ranking list of the IJF, AJU, JUA, EJU, OJU or PJC
- Any currently valid referee who wishes to transfer to the British system up to National C level may do so based on the provision of BJA membership, their award certificate / other official document and a practical assessment by a National C tutor or higher
- Any currently valid referee who wishes to transfer to the British system at National B or A level may do so based on the provision of BJA membership, their award certificate / other official document and a full theory and practical assessment using an NRC selected event and tutors

#### Fees

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| ▪ IJF Continental and International     | No Fee  |
| ▪ Levels up to and including National C | £ 25.00 |
| ▪ National B and A                      | £ 50.00 |

It should be noted that referees who attempt a British refereeing grade may not achieve the level they are seeking; in these cases, the tutors will award the level that is most appropriate for the applicable referee, which may not be refused.

In all cases below IJF level, assessment forms should be submitted to the referee administrator along with the fee to have the referee validated within the British system. Confirmation of the BJA refereeing grade will be upon written confirmation by the BJA after NRC approval.

### 4.9 Minimum Tutors Required at Each Level to Conduct Examinations

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| ▪ <b>Club:</b>                     | 1 Regional Tutor, organiser appointed              |
| ▪ <b>Area:</b>                     | 1 Regional Tutor, organiser appointed              |
| ▪ <b>National C:</b>               | 1 Regional Tutor, organiser appointed              |
| ▪ <b>National B:</b>               | 2 National B tutors, NRC appointed                 |
| ▪ <b>National A:</b>               | 2 National A tutors, NRC appointed (3 preferred)   |
| ▪ <b>Continental Assessment:</b>   | 2 NRC appointed International tutors (3 preferred) |
| ▪ <b>International Assessment:</b> | 2 NRC appointed International tutors (3 preferred) |

The selection of examiners for Club, Area and National C examinations may be made by the organisers. Organisers must ensure that the examiners chosen are valid by referring to the published list to avoid voiding the examination. The selection of events and tutors for National B and above will be made by the NRC.

### 4.10 Tutor Fees and Expenses

All referee tutoring, teaching and mentoring is normally a voluntary activity. Volunteers are not entitled to payment or expenses from British Judo but may use the framework to deliver courses and levy the BJA award fee to account for their expenses where applicable.

British Judo recommends in the cases where the tutor requires expenses to deliver the material, that they levy the attendance fee for the material being delivered, the relevant award fees outlined in this document are to be returned in full to the BJA within 2 weeks of the date of the delivery.

It is recommended that when organisers are arranging referee education courses that they take into consideration the location of the tutor(s) and arrange a delivery location which is the most cost-effective solution taking projected expenses into consideration.

To assist with the distribution of expenses at a smaller rate per candidate, it is recommended that organisers should consider multiple modules being run at the same venue and time, therefore only one venue fee and a higher number of candidates, however, all modules must have a separate tutor for each module.

### **4.11 Resources**

Examination papers and education module resources are available from the NRC assessments and examinations officer upon request by a valid tutor.

## 5 ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATION SCORING

### 5.1 Assessments and Examinations

Referees will be graded against the particular level being attempted; this means one level higher than their current grade for assessments / examinations for promotion. For continuous assessment, referees will be measured against their current level:

- +2 – Excellent
- +1 – Above standard
- +0 – At standard
- 1 – Below standard
- 2 – Significantly below standard

The lead tutor has the responsibility to ensure candidates are informed of all assessment / examination details before the event to ensure they are clear on the process for the day(s).

### 5.2 Target Scores at Each Level

All candidates will be measured on the same 0-10 scale against the performance standard for their targeted award level, with a percentage score then calculated.

Level	Pass %	Score	Notes
Club Referee	40	4	No shime-waza or kansetsu-waza matches
Area Referee	40	4	Must include shime-waza and kansetsu-waza matches
National C Referee	50	5	Must include shime-waza and kansetsu-waza matches
National B Referee	60	6	Must include shime-waza and kansetsu-waza matches and be an NRC approved event
National A Referee	70	7	Must include shime-waza and kansetsu-waza matches and be an NRC approved event
Senior National Referee	70	7	Senior National ongoing assessments are based on National A level
Continental (Target)	80	8	Assessments only

A maximum variance of -2 to +2 is allowed for each component of the assessment / examination to not distort the overall result due to the odd well above or well below individual aspect.

All scores awarded must be in whole numbers only, i.e., no +/- or half points, decimals etc.

### 5.3 Example for a National C Referee Attempting the National B Referee Examination

Performance Against Component	Target Score	Score Awarded
Target + 2 = consistently above targeted level	6	8
Target + 1 = generally above targeted level	6	7

Target + 0 = at targeted level	6	6
Target - 1 = generally below targeted level	6	5
Target - 2 = consistently below targeted level	6	4

#### 5.4 Result Considerations – Examination Only

A candidate will be considered to have passed the examination upon achieving or exceeding the required pass score, provided they do not:

- Score -2 in any category - immediately unsuccessful
- Score -1 in both Scoring and Penalties - immediately unsuccessful
- Score -1 in three or more categories - immediately unsuccessful
- Experience a major safety issue during their examination which is attributed to their inappropriate action - immediately unsuccessful

#### 5.5 Examination / Assessment Form Guidelines

All sections must be completed on every form. If any form has any part incomplete, the whole form will be returned to the lead examiner / assessor for completion before processing.

#### 5.6 Criteria for Scoring / Marking Guidelines

**Voice:** Must be clear and sufficiently loud, i.e. the commands must not all sound the same and have correct pronunciation.

**Presence:** Includes physical appearance and ability to appear calm, competent and in complete control to gain respect of players, coaches and spectators. Must have good posture in tachi-waza and katame-waza, no kneeling on the mat or slouching or rounded shoulders. Referees should not adopt a stance where most of their weight is on one hip with the opposite leg out in an overly casual fashion.

**Distance:** Ability to consistently maintain an optimum distance of 2 to 3 meters from the athletes. Ability to adapt to the athlete's strategy, e.g. further distance for larger, heavy weight or faster more mobile players. Appropriate distance from katame-waza situations to better view the action. Should operate generally within the contest area, but may go outside where circumstances require it.

**Mobility:** Must position and move appropriately to accommodate the athletes' movement, the view of the judges, the position of the cameras and the position of the control table staff. Must show an ability to read the judo and therefore anticipate athletes' movements making sure the referee is in the best position for everyone to effectively evaluate actions. The pace and manner of movement will be dictated by the athletes' actions. The referee must be appropriately positioned quickly to effectively and safely control katame-waza situations such as shime-waza, kansetsu-waza and osaekomi-waza and not seriously block CARE system camera views.

**Katame-waza:** The referee must show good understanding of katame-waza by calling mate, osaekomi, toketa and ippon on time and accurately, in particular not interrupting a technique early or after a single tap. The referee must demonstrate a clear understanding of when the overall action transitions from tachi-waza to katame-waza. The referee must give athletes an appropriate opportunity to apply katame-waza actions but must also be mindful of athletes wasting time without action.

**Scoring:** The correct level of technical scoring for all actions in tachi-waza and katame-waza is paramount and must be applied consistently, scores must not pre-empt the landing, they must be real evaluations for what

has actually happened, not what the referee thinks is going to happen. An odd mistake of one level up or down on difficult borderline scores can be accepted if managed correctly with the judges if it's not a feature of that referee's performance. In cases of the referee having two or more occurrences where the evaluation is 2 or 3 levels incorrect, this will be of grave concern, but will be evaluated on its individual merit considering the complexity of the situation and refereeing level attempted.

**Penalties:** It is vital that penalties are awarded correctly and on time for the level of infringement committed. Penalties should be awarded taking into account the intent of the athlete's action, and by showing the correct signal to the athletes. It is positive where referees turn their body toward an athlete ahead of awarding a penalty, such that judges have a brief opportunity to signal 'no penalty'.

**Signals:** Should be held for approximately 2-3 seconds showing correct procedure, posture and slight rotation as required for the control table to clearly see what has happened. The referee should know where the medical team are situated and should immediately call in that direction when the medical team are required. When signalling, the referee should continue to face the athletes while holding the signal, rather than turning to the judges or returning to the starting position.

**Judgment:** The judges should watch their own mat consistently and give support to the referee as required; however, the judge must not be overly critical of the referee on close decisions and therefore try to agree with the referee if possible, as continuously interrupting the match spoils the contest. The judge must effectively manage minor treatments of the athletes off the competition area, i.e. observe the medical attention.

**Determination:** The referee must show the ability to be consistently competent in providing good quality opinions of situations, even while under pressure. The referee may request judge support in difficult situations but must not regularly defer to the judges to make the decision, the referee must positively demonstrate to everyone that they are proactively taking decisions first. The referee's performance should not dip because they have had a decision changed by the judges or jury or severe pressure from coaches or spectators.

## 6 EVENT REQUIREMENTS AND EVENT SELECTIONS

### 6.1 Number and Level of Referees Necessary at Each Event Level

Event Level	Referee in Charge	Minimum Referees per Mat	Use of Judges	CARE System	Minimum Levels
Level 1	Area Level 2 Coach	2	Optional	Optional	1 Club 1 Trainee or Level 2 Coach
Level 2	National C	2	Optional	Optional	1 Area 1 Trainee
Level 3	National B	5 <i>4 on NRC application</i>	Mandatory	Highly Recommended	2 National B 1 National C 2 Area
Level 4	National A	6 <i>5 on NRC application</i>	Mandatory	Mandatory	3 National A 2 National B 1 National C
EJU Cup	EJU Decision	6-8 recommended	Mandatory	Mandatory	National A
EJU Open or IJF	EJU or IJF Decision	6-8 recommended	Mandatory	Mandatory	Continental

Club referees or trainees at club level may not referee matches with shime-waza and kansetsu-waza. Minimum levels may be substituted with higher levels, but not vice-versa

The referee teams for the National Teams and British Championships are to comprise of at least six referees per mat and with minimum grades of: 4 x National A and 2 x National B unless dispensation has been offered by the NRC in writing.

### 6.2 Exceptions to Standard Requirements

Exceptions to the requirements listed above must be requested at the time of applying for the tournament licence. Even where exceptions are granted, there must always be a minimum standard of:

- Level 3 - 2 x National B, 1 x National C, 1 x Area
- Level 4 - 2 x National A, 2 x National B, 1 x National C

Every effort should be taken to avoid shortfalls, however, in the event of unforeseen illness or withdrawals on the day, the RIC should use their best judgement to support the running of the event.

### 6.3 Requirements for Shime-Waza and Kansetsu-Waza

When refereeing without the assistance of two judges, referees must be a minimum of Area level and over 16 years to referee shime-waza and kansetsu-waza. Area referees who are 15 years old may referee shime-waza and kansetsu-waza provided they are assisted by two judges that are at least Area level and over 16 years.

### 6.4 Event Selections

It is important to all referees, officials, athletes, coaches and the BJA that selections for events are made in a fair and transparent manner, considering the relevant constraints involved and the objectives of the BJA / NRC.

Therefore, each event needs a careful and balanced selection process. Those making referee selections should ensure that the referees have a valid membership and are valid at the level at which they are to officiate and that the minimum quantity and level of referees for each mat are provided. It is good practice to invite more than the minimum number of referees in case some are unable to attend at very short notice.

For most events the organisers are authorised to select the referee team they wish to use assuming they meet the above criteria. However, there is a list of events where the NRC selects the number of referees indicated on the “NRC Referee Selections” document, this must be observed although the NRC may not choose to use all of those places every time. The profile of referees chosen by the NRC is solely at its discretion to meet its objectives.

When examinations are taking place, additional referees need to be called to the event to professionally conduct the examinations without disturbing the competition; this may mean that the examiners cannot take on additional work such as RIC duties. It is wise to exceed the minimum number of mat referees when assessments and examinations are taking place to allow time for necessary discussions, debriefs and presenting of results to the candidates privately.

For national events managed by the BJA / NRC, referee selections will be based upon multiple criteria which include but are not limited to:

- IJF referees
- Candidates of the Continental training programme
- Candidates of the National B + A training programmes
- Placing in the ranking system for premiere events
- Special invites for other development strategies etc.
- Revalidation of national referees
- Strengthening the event team where deemed necessary to do so

### 6.5 Use of Non-BJA Referees

British Judo welcomes appropriately qualified referees from other federations who wish to officiate at British Judo events. Event organisers may make use of non-BJA foreign referees for BJA events provided that:

- The referees invited are of a suitable quality for the event (highest or second highest national levels)
- The referees are from an IJF affiliated federation
- The organiser takes full responsibility for the referees’ conduct and ability
- At all events, a maximum of one non-BJA referee may be used per mat, to ensure domestic referees a reasonable opportunity to referee

Domestic non-BJA referees refereeing regularly at BJA events are requested to transfer their refereeing grade to the BJA. Regular would be defined as 3 or more events per year over a two-year period (see 4.5).

## 7 RANKING SYSTEM AND EVENT ASSESSMENTS

### 7.1 Ongoing Performance Assessment

All referees are assessed at National level and selected ranking events. This is intended to continually improve referee standards, identify talent for progression and help those referees that may need it. The assessment process also serves as a tool to help the NRC to select the most appropriate referees for events, promote development and maintain standards.

Every effort should be made to have a National A level or above tutor on every mat for these events where referees are assessed. In cases where this hasn't been possible, it is for the organisers to ensure that at least one RIC is a National A assessor or above and this person conducts the assessments on those mats without one.

Referees who consistently perform above their level may be identified for a promotion opportunity if circumstances allow it. Referees who consistently perform below their level may be identified for additional support to help them restore their level. Referees are encouraged to discuss their performance and any concerns with their assessor on the day of the event. There is no formal appeal process for ranking scores.

### 7.2 Ranking System

Referees officiating at National level and selected ranking events will have their results entered into the published ranking system for referees. The scores are averaged over all events in that period attended to produce an overall score and ranking position.

#### Illustration

Rank	Forename	Surname	Level	Seminar ' 26	Seminar ' 27	National Teams	BUCS	British Schools	English Open	Pre-C/Cad	Jun/Snr	# Events	Avg. Score
1	Andrew	Alpha	Nat A	Y	Y	8.2	7.4	8.4				3	8.00
2	Beth	Bravo	Nat A	Y	Y	7.6	7.6	7.8				3	7.65
3	Craig	Charlie	Nat A	Y	Y	7.7	7.0	8.2				3	7.63
4	Daniel	Delta	Nat B	Y	N	7.6	7.4	7.4				3	7.47
5	Ellen	Echo	Nat A	Y	Y	7.4	7.4	7.4				3	7.40
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...				...	...

Referees should consider their scores versus the expected score for their level to better understand how they are performing.

All referees will have a short de-brief when the results are shared, which will include any areas that require development or opportunities for progression. IJF referees are not included in the ranking system or ongoing performance assessment as they are subject to IJF and EJU performance evaluation and ranking.

## 8 TUTORS

### 8.1 Tutor Responsibilities

Tutors have an important role to play in the development of refereeing in British Judo. Tutors deliver the training and education of referees from trainee through to International levels; provide training modules and courses that encourage members to pursue refereeing; support the ongoing improvement and upskilling of referees; act as trusted sources of advice and expertise; and are entrusted with ensuring promotions are based upon merit and that the standard of each refereeing level is upheld.

To conduct these roles in a professional and proper manner, tutors must:

- Ensure that all education modules delivered meet or exceed the defined objectives
- Engage all referees and candidates, taking great care to assist everyone at all levels, avoiding unnecessary embarrassment of candidates
- Ensure that all theory and practical assessment / examination forms are completed in full, kept confidential and submitted to the British Judo head office within two weeks of the event
- Ensure that only those candidates who fully meet or exceed the entry criteria on the day of education, assessment or examination are tutored, assessed, or examined
- Not allow candidates to 'pre-complete' elements and store them until they meet other criteria such as grade; age, membership, theory, education etc. (see exception for National events)
- Ensure that the appropriate application forms and fees are correctly administered prior to the activity

**Note:** Any education, assessment or examination which is conducted without satisfying all the applicable criteria before the start of the event may be deemed invalid.

### 8.2 Tutor Structure

All tutors must be approved by the NRC to conduct this role. In appointing tutors, consideration will be given to whether there is a need for more of that level of tutor in that Area, this is to avoid invalidation of tutors through lack of activity. Tutor levels and authority within the system are as follows:

- **Trainee Tutors** - The trainee tutor will be competent to assist a fully qualified, valid tutor to deliver Club, Area and National C levels after NRC approval for their training programme to begin. Qualified Tutors of any level being trained for the next level will be treated in the same way and must also be authorised by the NRC before training commences.
- **Regional Tutor** - The Regional tutor will be competent to tutor, assess and examine referee candidates at the Club, Area and National C levels
- **National B Tutor** - The National B tutor will be competent to tutor, assess and examine referee candidates at the National B and below levels
- **National A Tutor** - The National A tutor will be competent to tutor, assess and examine referee candidates at the National A and below levels
- **International Tutor** - The International tutor will be competent to tutor, assess and examine all British levels and tutor / assess for the Continental and International programmes.

#### Geographical Spread

Ideally each area would have a minimum of one valid Regional Tutor (preferably 2) to be able to train, develop and examine new referees coming through the system at development levels. The geographical locations of National B and above tutors are of significantly less importance as these are national roles. Considerably fewer

tutors are required at these levels and they are expected to travel dependent on the location of the applicable events and volume of candidates.

### 8.3 Authorisation

- The NRC appoints and authorises tutors at all levels
- Referees wishing to become a tutor should apply in writing on the appropriate form for every level, i.e., those who are already qualified must apply when wishing to be considered for promotion to the next level
- Tutor candidates will be assessed by supervising tutor examiners appointed by the NRC, if their application is accepted

### 8.4 Criteria for Tutor Applications

- Must have held the National A award for at least one year before application
- Preferably be recommended by their area refereeing representative
- Must be approved by the NRC
- Must be deemed of suitable character to be a tutor

### 8.5 Process for Assessment of Tutors up to National B

- Must successfully attend a training module as an assistant tutor with at least three candidates
- Must be assessed running a referees training module, by a supervising examiner with at least three candidates
- Must be assessed as an assistant examiner with at least three candidates
- Must lead an assessment / examination for National B with at least three candidates

Assessors for the training course and tutor examinations will be appointed by the NRC

### 8.6 Criteria for Tutor Application and Assessment for National A level

- Must hold the referee grade of at least Senior National Referee
- Preferably be recommended by their area refereeing representative
- Must be approved by the NRC
- Must be deemed of suitable character to be a National A tutor
- Must be assessed running a referees' module of at least National C level
- Must be assessed as a National A assistant tutor with at least three candidates
- Must successfully lead an assessment / examination for National A with at least three candidates

### 8.7 Criteria for Tutor Application and Assessment for International

- Must hold a grade of at least Senior National. In the case of a Senior National Referee taking this role they will also need to satisfy the NRC of their exceptional competence and experience
- Must have been a National Referee tutor for a minimum of one year and have conducted at least one satisfactory examination as a lead examiner
- Must be approved and appointed by the NRC
- Must be assessed by supervising IJF tutors approved by the NRC at a continental assessment
- Must lead an assessment for the Continental level with at least two candidates

## 8.8 Tutor Assessment and Examination Training and Sign off Log

Trainee tutors at any level must have their progress logged on the training log, this is to show the activity and needs during the training period.

Part of a tutor's responsibility includes the ability to accurately and consistently assess and examine candidates in a practical application environment. Trainee tutors at any level must have their progress logged on the training log in this capacity as well as education course delivery.

Trainee tutors may be deemed competent at any stage the assessing tutor decides, i.e., the minimum number of either assessments or examinations will be one and either will cover the other aspect as they are mainly the same process.

## 8.9 Full Qualification

Once all training is satisfactorily completed (tutoring and assessment / examining) the NRC will decide whether the candidate is suitable and ready for promotion based on the documented feedback and any other parameters / feedback they wish to consider.

## 8.10 Tutors Continuing after Retirement from Refereeing

Tutors who retire from active refereeing but wish to remain as a tutor can do so under the following conditions:

- Have continuous membership of the BJA, Judo Scotland, NIJF or WJF
- Maintain a satisfactory performance as a tutor and approved by the NRC
- Must assess / examine at least once every two years at their highest level (NRC discretion)
- Must attend the National Referee Seminar every year unless dispensation is NRC approved

If there is cause for concern over a tutor's performance, the NRC may consider that an assessment is required. The assessment will be carried out by two personnel selected by the NRC.

## 8.11 Tutor Revalidation Criteria

All tutors will be re-validated over a two-year period on 1st January each biennial year, provided they have completed at least one education module and one examination in the two-year period.

The education module and examination must comply with the following criteria:

- The education module completed must have had at least three candidates in attendance
- The examination conducted must have had at least two candidates
- Tutors who are mat leads at National events conduct ongoing assessments at various levels; these ongoing assessments may be accepted for revalidation in exceptional circumstances upon application
- Where a tutor has not delivered a full education module, but can demonstrate effective feedback evidence through the National event assessments, this may be sufficient upon application
- Tutors of all levels are expected to attend the National Referee Seminar every year to automatically revalidate (NRC discretion)

Exceptional circumstances may apply and must be submitted to the NRC secretary in writing for consideration. Revalidation may only be automatically offered to tutors who have met the criteria up to their qualification level and the level of the events they are using for revalidation, however, the NRC may decide to revalidate tutors at its discretion.

## 9 AREA REPRESENTATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Area representatives are expected to manage their referee workforce to maintain a healthy number of referees at each level so that their area is as self-sufficient as possible and therefore cost effective. The area representative should maintain close contact with the area committee and ensure that they are included in relevant discussions and correspondence.

- To keep accurate records of all referees in their area, including their activity and contact details
- To keep accurate records of all theory and practical examinations completed in their area
- To organise appropriate education modules, assessments, and examinations to satisfy area demand
- To ensure that all referees who need to complete ongoing education modules do so at the appropriate level and correct time, this is not limited to, but should always include National Referee Seminar attendance
- To provide a report to assist the NRC on any given matter within two weeks of the request being received from the NRC / BJA
- To keep all area referees informed of important matters especially changes in systems, development opportunities, rules, and the revalidation requirements for their award
- To ensure that area events are maintained with the appropriate number and levels of referees
- To promote the development of referees within their area, including arranging courses and examinations for Club, Area and National C awards
- Act as a point of contact for the BJA / NRC to locally manage any refereeing matters that may arise.
- Work proactively with other area representatives and competition organisers to create opportunities for referees to experience a broader range of events
- To forward nominations for the National B, A, Senior National and IJF awards to the NRC. All nominations must be submitted even if the area representative disagrees with them. In cases where there is a serious disagreement for promotion of an individual, the nomination should be accompanied with a written explanation of the rationale of why the area does not support the request and the attempts made to resolve the disagreement. Areas must disclose all applications to the BJA within 2 weeks of receipt

Area representatives are appointed by the relevant area committee, in line with their own processes and are usually open-ended appointments. Discussion of potential candidates with the NRC is preferred prior to appointment.

It is expected that the BJA Areas will manage the first three levels of the system (Club, Area and National C) without any intervention from the BJA / NRC and that the NRC should only be involved in exceptional circumstances. It is preferred that all referees gain the support of their area before applying for education and / or examination at any level.

## 10 REFEREE IN CHARGE RESPONSIBILITIES

### 10.1 Referee in Charge Role

The referee in charge (RIC) has overall responsibility for the management of the refereeing team at events and for ensuring that contests are properly conducted in accordance with the Contest Rules.

The RIC is responsible for:

- Ensuring the tournament is held in a professional manner through good refereeing conduct
- Ensuring the tournament meets the standards of this Refereeing Handbook
- Ensuring the applicable Contest Rules for each event / category are applied in full
- Fielding coach queries or challenges
- Answering questions from athletes, spectators, or referees
- Providing feedback and support to other referees, alongside the mat leads
- Briefing medical teams where necessary
- Managing the refereeing team to deliver the results with the utmost integrity

The RIC is not responsible for:

- Event organisation
- Registration and weigh-in
- Method of competition and draw
- Technical officials other than referees

The referee in charge will not themselves referee at the event, so that they are able to react quickly to any situation that may arise (It is permissible, but not recommended at Level 1). For larger events, typically three mats or more, more than one referee in charge may be appropriate. When this is the case, there shall always be a 'Lead' referee in charge and in case of disagreement, the Lead RIC's decision is final.

### 10.2 Selecting a Referee in Charge

In most cases, the referee in charge will be selected by the tournament director. In selecting, the minimum requirements for the event must be met (the referee is of a suitable level). Consideration should also be given to the skillset of the referee and their ability to perform the role. For National events, the referee in charge will normally be selected by the NRC. Where this is not the case, the referee in charge must be approved by the NRC. No referee can act as referee in charge if they have been disqualified from performing this role by the NRC.

### 10.3 Prior to the Event

- Allowing time for alterations, check that the number and levels of referees called are appropriate for the applicable event
- Ensure that there is a suitable room / area for the referees briefing
- Ensure adequate refreshment arrangements have been made for the referee team
- Prepare referee briefing notes
- Prepare referee mat allocations for the event, balancing levels, and referees home areas as evenly as possible across the mats
- Ensure adequate provision has been made for any referee assessments or examinations
- To ensure that the Tatami is in good condition, laid correctly, of appropriate standard and size (complying with the Tournament License)

- That an appropriate medical team is in attendance prior to starting the tournament
- Ensure the RIC can sit and watch all the mats with a clear view

### 10.4 During the Event

- Ensure that all referees are wearing the approved dress code
- Check the venue suitability and that the mats remain in good condition and appropriately positioned
- Check to ensure that there are no safety issues which may cause danger to contestants or others
- Ensure that the size of the contest and safety areas complies with the BJA competition pathway
- For events below Level 4 to have at least two Blue and two White belts per mat available
- Ensure scoreboards are suitable and not interfering with the competition area
- Ensure that chairs are available for accredited coaches and judges
- Where necessary, ensure that the CARE system is available and fully operational
- Ensure that the referees' attendance form is completed and given to the Tournament Director
- Check the estimated time of starting and finishing, advise the referee team in the briefing
- Deliver briefing advice ensuring enough time is allowed to answer questions
- Ensure the medical team are aware of the procedures relating to judo competition
- Sign the Tournament License at the end of the day
- Return the referee record cards appropriately completed to the referees
- Manage refereeing related complaints, recording details of any unresolved or serious complaints
- Approve expense claim forms where requested to do so (may be an event organiser doing this)
- Obtain any reports regarding injuries and complaints/incidents as required
- Allocate referees for the final block (if any) in line with their performance
- Conduct a de-brief if it is felt necessary to do so

### 10.5 Referee Briefings

The refereeing briefing is expected to include:

- Welcome and thank referees for attending the event
- Complete a roll call, to ensure attendance and so that mat allocations can be verified
- Confirm the event level, categories, and age bands
- Confirm the rules that apply to the event, particularly contest duration, shime-waza and kansetsu-waza and technical restrictions
- Key technical points for explanation and questioning
- Ask the referees to support technical officials
- Confirm medical locations
- Advise referees of the expenses procedure providing forms if necessary
- Explain arrangements for refreshments, breaks and expected time of start and finish
- Deliver mat allocations for the referees including identification of mat leads
- Off-duty arrangements to be communicated
- Transportation where necessary
- Details of any opening ceremonies
- Accurately provide any other area or national information, or other pertinent information
- Multi-day events – de-briefs / further briefings location and time
- Details of any examinations / assessments
- How to request feedback
- Invite relevant questions
- Thank referees

## 10.6 Coach Briefing

While not mandatory, it is recommended that the referee in charge provides a short briefing to coaches before the competition starts. Typically, this meeting should cover:

- A brief welcome
- The key rulesets being used at the event
- The rules for coaching athletes between *mate* / *hajime* or unlimited
- In the event of recent rule changes, a brief summary of the key changes
- The method for coaches challenging refereeing decisions
- Any particular areas of focus or concern
- Wish all a good event

Ideally, this briefing should finish with sufficient time to allow coaches to return to their athletes with time to allow them to prepare for the first contests.

## 10.7 Use of Personal Video Footage

Only the CARE system can be used by the judges and referee in charge to review refereeing decisions. Spectator, coach, athlete, or other third-party footage may not be used to make or change refereeing decisions.

If the referee in charge believes it may help to settle or diffuse a situation, they may advise the coach that they will review their footage *after* the contest has finished but that it will not change the outcome of the contest - right or wrong. If a refereeing error is identified using personal footage, the RIC can inform the referee and judges of the error to help prevent future incorrect decisions. The RIC may also offer an apology to the coach.

## 10.8 Handling Challenges to Refereeing Decisions

Referees in charge should handle coach challenges or complaints in a calm and professional manner but, in turn, referees should expect to be treated with similar respect by coaches.

When a referee in charge is called to a *tatami*, they should listen to the coach who has raised the challenge to quickly understand their concern. Depending on the situation, it is often good practice that the other coach is also given an opportunity to understand the challenge and share their version of events before the referee in charge reaches a decision, particularly if the challenge is contentious or unclear.

The referee in charge should then briefly discuss the situation with the refereeing team and review the CARE system where it is available and of benefit. The coaches may not participate in this discussion.

Finally, the referee in charge should make their decision based upon the evidence available and the explanations given, in accordance with current rules and their interpretations. RICs should avoid unorthodox solutions to common errors, but where unusual situations arise which aren't covered by the rules, they should consider how these situations (or similar ones) have been handled in the past, and act in the clear interest of both athletes and the spirit of judo. Where there is clear doubt about a significant decision, a positive benefit of this doubt should be given to the athletes.

As an example, if there is clear doubt whether blue or white scored *ippon*, it would often be better to cancel the score entirely and allow the athletes the opportunity to continue the contest, than to make a marginal decision favouring blue or white.

While the CARE system is a tool for referees, the judges or RIC may (but are not obliged to) show the coach the CARE footage to confirm the basis for the decision made if this would help resolve a disagreement. This should be balanced with the need to not delay the competition schedule.

### 10.9 Incidents and Complaints

Incidents or complaints arising at an event involving the referee team should be referred in the first instance to the referee in charge of the event. It is expected that the RIC will satisfactorily resolve most matters at first touch without further steps being required. The tournament director may be invited to contribute. If the incident or complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the RIC on the day, or it is particularly serious, they will record brief details on the Tournament License.

If a formal complaint is likely to follow or the incident is serious, the referees involved in the incident should make written statements of what occurred and any action they took and provide these to the RIC on the day. These statements may be called upon by the tournament director, NRC or Conduct and Complaints Commission.

Where a serious complaint remains unresolved and a complainant clearly wishes to take the matter further, the complainant should be advised to address their complaint in writing to the NRC. The NRC may choose to refer non-technical complaints to the Conduct and Complaints Commission, based on their severity.

### 10.10 Removing a Referee

As athlete safety is of primary concern, in rare situations, a referee in charge may remove a referee from the mat where they are unfit to referee the level of judo. The primary reasons for doing this would be:

- Reacting too slowly to dangerous situations
- Repeated serious errors of judgement
- Breach of Code of Conduct

RICs should take care in exercising this option, as it will be distressing for the referee concerned and an explanation should be provided for the decision.

## 11 DRESS CODE AND AWARD BADGES

### 11.1 Current Referee Award Badges

All British referees must wear the correct badge matching the refereeing award they hold. Only the current version should be worn, as shown below. Previous versions or substitutes / additions are not to be worn without prior agreement from the NRC in writing.



The first badge, badge bracket and tie at every level will be issued to successful candidates after completion of the practical examination, at no additional cost. If additional or replacement blazer badges, mounting brackets or ties are required, these will be available for a small fee, every badge is issued without an additional fee when the award is achieved.

### 11.2 Referees Dress Code

Referees must wear the official referee uniform complying with the following requirements:

- **Navy blue or black blazer** – Navy blue or black V-necked sweater may be worn by Club referees
- **White collared shirt or blouse** – Club referee only, may wear a plain white polo shirt
- **Mid to dark grey trousers** – Skin-tight trousers are not acceptable
- **Official Tie:**
  - **Official BJA Tie** – for all BJA referee levels, club referees may referee without a tie
  - **Official IJF Continental or International Tie** – for IJF referees (IJF may also wear the BJA tie)
  - **Special event ties** may be worn if written authority from the NRC is gained prior to the event. In these cases, all referees must be given and wear the same style tie.
- **Black shoes**
- **Black socks or over socks**

### **11.3 Referees Alternative Dress Code – Levels 1 and 2**

At Levels 1 and 2, referees are recommended to wear a polo shirt or T-shirt. A pullover, hoody or zip-up jacket may be worn in cold conditions. Other elements of the attire remain the same.

The polo shirt or T shirt worn at each event by each referee are to be the same colour and design, but may vary between events. The event organiser may define the polo shirt or T-shirt type and colour for their events.

Markings on the polo shirt or T-shirt are permitted provided they are similar for each referee and that there is nothing which could be deemed offensive. For example, if a referee wishes to have their name on the shirt, this would be acceptable provided all officials at that event have their name in the same place, size and colour.

### **11.4 Referee Dress – Hot Weather**

The referee in charge may instruct referees to remove their jackets in hot weather. Referees should not remove their jackets without first being given permission to do so by the RIC. In the case of uncomfortably high heat, the referee in charge may further instruct referees to remove their ties and allow the shirt to be open necked. All mats should wear the same dress for presentation purposes.

## 12 SPECIAL NEEDS AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED REFEREES

### 12.1 Adaptive – Referees

Adaptive referees must comply with the following to remain valid as an adaptive referee:

- Must meet the mainstream revalidation criteria for their referee grade
- Must undergo appropriate training approved by the NRC
- Must be a minimum of National C referee
- Must have more than 1-year experience as a National C referee
- Must be approved by the NRC to be a Special Needs Referee
- Must successfully complete the Special Needs training course
- Must be successfully assessed in the special needs refereeing environment

### 12.2 Visually Impaired – Referees

Visually impaired referees must comply with the following to remain valid as a visually impaired referee:

- Must meet the mainstream revalidation criteria for their referee grade
- Must undergo appropriate training approved by the NRC
- Must be a minimum of National C referee
- Must have more than 1-year experience as a National C referee
- Must be approved by the NRC to be a Visually Impaired Referee
- Must successfully complete the Visually Impaired training course
- Must be successfully assessed in the Visually Impaired refereeing environment

### 12.3 Selections and Management

Given the additional skill set required, the selection of referees for these events will be made by the NRC in all cases. By agreement, this may be a sign off or amendment to a list proposed by the organisers.

Any referee who wishes to take part in these events must apply in writing to the NRC. The NRC will advise whether their application is successful and arrange any required bespoke training and advice.

SN and VI referees must request NRC permission to referee outside of Great Britain. At this time, no funding is available from our funding partners for SN refereeing.

## 13 SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE AND / OR SERVICE TO REFEREEING

### 13.1 Certificate of Refereeing Excellence

The refereeing structure appropriately awards a referee their position and status for achieving levels of competence. It also places responsibility on those officials to conduct their duties in an honest, fair, and consistent manner. However, some referees go well beyond the call of duty in the execution of their roles and consistently perform at very high levels, further develop refereeing, and enhance the discipline overall.

The BJA / NRC will in exemplary cases recognise such consistent effort and performance by awarding a long-term achievement award. There are no exact criteria for the award; each application will be considered following a proposal from another member with a clearly documented rationale.

Some of the elements that will be considered are:

- Length of continuous service as a qualified referee (minimum 25 years and circa 300 events)
- The amount and levels of events attended in the service period
- Performance of other refereeing duties such as tutoring, examining and assessing
- Mentoring of other referees including the results of that mentoring
- The refereeing level attained by that individual
- The disciplinary record of the individual
- The observed conduct and general behaviour exhibited by that referee

### 13.2 Honorary Refereeing Awards

British Judo recognises that broader, very meaningful, contributions to refereeing can be made beyond those which are captured by examination and assessment. As such, honorary referee grades may be awarded for any refereeing level but are typically National A, Senior National, Continental, and International, against a corresponding level of merit in the development and promotion of refereeing, or judo more broadly.

Anyone wishing to submit an application for an honorary award should initially contact the NRC to discuss the application and request an application form. Applications for honorary awards may be made by the individual or a sponsor. All applications should clearly state the rationale and give supporting evidence. The application should include a full judo CV, stating the dates and activity of the individual in their various disciplines. Major judo achievements will be of great benefit, as will exemplary performance in advancing refereeing in Great Britain, by themselves or through the development of others.

Generally, honorary refereeing awards will only be granted when it is no longer possible, or impracticable, for the individual concerned to obtain the award through the ordinary pathway.

Honorary awards for Senior National and below will be considered by the NRC. Honorary awards for IJF Continental or International levels will be initially considered by the NRC and then the BJA Board, before then being submitted to the EJU or IJF who will make the final decision.

Honorary referees are afforded the same status and rank as the award they receive; however, event selections will be based upon actual refereeing performance. EJU and IJF event selections are not available to honorary referees.

Honorary and Continental and International applicants will be required to retire from refereeing upon receipt of the award, but may continue to fulfil the roles of RIC, tutor and assessor.

Honorary awards do not require revalidation. However, to continue refereeing, the individual will need to satisfy the revalidation requirements for the level they wish to referee at which at a maximum will be their highest examined level.

## 14 REFEREEING OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

### 14.1 National Referees Officiating outside Great Britain

Referees wishing to referee outside of Great Britain must apply and be approved to do so on each occasion prior to attendance. In reviewing the application, the NRC will consider the level of event alongside the grade and standing of the referee and the support available to them. Generally, applications from less experienced referees should be supported by an experienced referee also attending.

Referees are advised to apply at least two months in advance of the event and not make any firm bookings before receiving approval. Applicants should allow two weeks for response to applications. Applications are to be made using this [international event online form](#).

### 14.2 International Events (BJA Selected)

For international events, referee selections will be based upon multiple criteria which include but are not limited to:

- The available budget will be the overall governing factor for BJA funded events
- The need to revalidate current IJF referees
- Selections from the EJU
- Selections from the IJF
- Development events for referees to reach NRC targets

### 14.3 International Events (Self-Funded)

IJF referees wishing to attend events at their own cost upon application using this [online form](#). Referees are advised to apply at least two months in advance of the event using the application form and not to make any firm bookings before receiving written approval.

Once approved, the referee must make arrangements themselves including requesting Judo Base entry, unless invited to participate in a BJA group entry.

Self-funded applications for the next calendar year cannot be made until the annual event selection process has been completed (the full details of which will be circulated separately each year).

### 14.4 International Event Reports

Referees on international duty (funded or self-funded) must submit a report within 14 days of the event or the classification being available, using the report template. These reports are used for better understanding of current interpretations of rules and the British referees' contribution. At the NRC's discretion, referees who fail to submit a satisfactory report will not be permitted to attend further events (funded or not) until the outstanding report(s) have been submitted.

Referee reports should be sent to: [refereereports@britishjudo.org.uk](mailto:refereereports@britishjudo.org.uk).

### 14.5 Uniform for IJF Referees Travelling with British Judo Delegations

IJF referees travelling on funded events must wear the official GB uniform (tracksuit) supplied.

When the referee is travelling on a self-funded event and no other British athletes or officials are travelling, the referee may choose not to wear the uniform although it is preferred to show British presence.

## 15 REFEREE PROFESSIONALISM

To progress through the refereeing awards and uphold high standards of conduct, it is necessary to consistently display a professional image and demonstrate qualities that engender good working relationships. These requirements apply to all referees. Furthermore, referee examinations will include criteria that a referee must be seen to exhibit to be eligible for promotion.

Tutors will observe referees both on and off the tatami, which may include activities outside of the competition venue, as conduct before and after competitions also affect the way in which referees are perceived and perform. The following guidelines will be considered by the assessors and specific feedback given to the candidates as required.

### **Dress**

The referee must maintain a high standard of dress fully conforming to the dress code at all events that the referee officiates at, this includes footwear and the wearing of the authorised tie and badge. Referees need to wear appropriately fitting clothes.

### **Coach / other non-official Interaction**

The referee must be courteous toward others at all times, whether or not they have been courteous to them. The referee must be professional and use appropriate language to discuss situations. In cases of a major disagreement, the referee must ensure they engage the RIC to help resolve the difficult situation.

### **Feedback**

The referee should always understand the technical reasons for their own actions. If a coach or other responsible person requests feedback, the referee should give that feedback at the next available opportunity but may first need to complete to their assigned contests. If the situation is not resolved, the referee should refer the person to the RIC to resolve the matter. It is recognised that some situations will not end with agreement, but every situation should be handled with respect and professionalism.

### **Conduct off the Tatami**

The referee must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times to maintain the confidence of the public, coaches and athletes. We recognise that socialising is an important aspect of refereeing and can create a stronger refereeing team. However, referees should refrain from any conduct which could impair, or reasonably be perceived by others to impair, their ability to concentrate, referee safely and competently. As examples, this could include such things as excessive alcoholic intake, drug use or retiring so late as to have insufficient sleep. Referees as well as athletes need to be in good physical condition on competition day to perform to the best of their ability.

### **Working as a Team**

In cases where there are difficulties with other officials at competitions, it is expected that those officials are dealt with in a manner that encourages good relationships. This is mostly concerning other referees, technical officers and other mat side staff, but is not limited to them. Referees are not expected to request that their refereeing team is changed or they are moved to another team for any reason, referees must rise above differences they have with others for the good of all concerned.

### Expression of Opinion

It is expected that referees do not openly criticise others, including on social media . While referees hold their own opinions being seen to criticise others can cause serious dissatisfaction or upset which reflects negatively on refereeing and the BJA.

### Conflicts of Interest

Referees and tutors must ensure that they do not place themselves in situations in which either an actual or perceived conflict of interest may arise. Conflicts of interest are, but not limited to, engaging in activities such as competing, coaching or other official duty at the same event in which they are refereeing, or assessing / examining others who have friend, family or club connections.

It is important that referees adhere to this rule and are therefore not exposed to potential criticism, whether justified or otherwise, as it may have a damaging effect on both the credibility of the referee concerned and the wider referee community, as well as calling into question the validity of any outcome.

At Development level events only, the organisers may authorise the referee to take on multiple roles.

## 16 FEEDBACK

The referee structure is intended to improve over time, based on feedback from referees and other stakeholders and as part of periodic reviews.

Anyone wishing to provide feedback or ideas to improve our system is most welcome and may do so simply by email, identifying:

- Specifics of the area that could be improved
- How it might be improved
- Name and contact details

Feedback is to be emailed to the NRC secretary and will be acknowledged.

## SUPPORTING FORMS / DOCUMENTS

These documents are published online in the refereeing resources section.

- List of Valid Tutors / Assessors
- Tutor Application & Assessment Pack
- Practical Assessment and Examination Form
- Assessment Key Points
- Multiple Examinations / Assessment Summary
- National A Continuous Assessment Form
- National B Continuous Assessment Form
- Theory Examination Answer Papers
- Honorary Awards Application Form
- International Trip Request Form – [online form](#)
- International Trip Report