

General

Why is the BJA changing the Dan Grade Syllabus?

The current scheme, introduced in 1982, is based on 67 techniques. The updated scheme introduces an enhanced curriculum encompassing the latest techniques—the 100 Kodokan, the recognised techniques of the International Judo Federation (IJF). Changes have also been necessary to align the BJA Dan Grading Policy with the International Judo Federation Dan Grading Policy.

Why have changes to kata requirements, time in grade, and number of ippon wins been made?

As a member of the IJF, the BJA has agreed to act in accordance with the IJF Dan Grade Policy. These changes have been made to bring the BJA in line with the IJF requirements.. Details of the criteria for each grade are provided below.

| Competitive Awarded By BJA | Minimum Age | Current Grade | Min Time In Grade | Competition Points | Kata Requirement BJA Level 1 |
|----------------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 st Dan | 15yrs | 1 st Kyu | 1yr | 100 | Nage-no-kata |
| 2 nd Dan | 17yrs | 1 st Dan | 2yrs | 100 | Katame-no-kata |
| 3 rd Dan | 20yrs | 2 nd Dan | 3yrs | 120 | Ju-no-kata |
| 4 th Dan | 24yrs | 3 rd Dan | 4yrs | 120 | Kime-no-kata |
| 5 th Dan | 29yrs | 4 th Dan | 5yrs | 120 | Kodokan Goshin-jutsu |

When does the new scheme start?

The new scheme starts on 1st January 2026. However, to assist a smooth and gradual transition, a “soft landing” period of 6 months will start from 1st July 2025. This will enable training to be provided and members to familiarise themselves with the scheme's online resources.

Why do the 100 Kodokan Techniques include techniques that cannot be used in competition?

These techniques have been included to honour the heritage and history of Kodokan judo. Some of these techniques are dangerous and must not be applied. For the skills examination, these techniques can be explained as needed for the examiner to verify understanding and awareness.

What are the main changes between the current scheme and the new scheme?

- The new scheme has 30 techniques that are not included in the current scheme – 22 nage-waza and 8 katame-waza.
- A specified kata is required for each dan grade
- Kata will no longer be completed at the same time as the skills examination.

- d. The time in grade has increased for each dan grade within the competitive scheme.
- e. The number of ippon wins has increased by two from 3rd dan to 5th dan.
- f. The time in grade for each dan grade in the technical scheme has been updated. It now ranges from 5 to 8 years, with a minimum of 5 years and a maximum of 8 years, reflecting the contribution made.

Do I need to pay a fee to do the Skills Examination?

The BJA does not charge a fee for the Skills Examination. However, an examiner may make a charge to cover their expenses.

Competitive

From 1st January 2026, the minimum time in grade will increase. Will my time in grade increase?

No, any player from 1st kyu to 4th dan who has completed their points and skills examination for their next grade by 31st December 2025 will not be required to complete the increased time in grade.

From 1st January 2026, the minimum points from 3rd dan to 5th dan will increase. I have gained the points for my 3rd dan. Will I now need to gain additional points?

No, any player from 2nd dan to 4th dan who has already gained the points for their next grade by 31st December 2025, will not be required to gain additional points.

I am a 2nd dan and have started accumulating points for my next grade, but I will not have completed them by 31st December 2025. Will I need to collect additional points?

Any player (2nd dan to 4th dan) who has started accumulating points for their next grade will have one year (1st January 2026 until 31st December 2026) to complete them (100). After this time, the total points required will increase to 120.

I have completed my skills examination and points for my next grade, but my next grade is not due until after 1st January 2026. Will I need to complete my skills examination again, and any additional points?

No, any player from 1st kyu to 4th dan who has completed their points and skills examination for their next grade by 31st December 2025 will not be required to complete the new skills examination or additional points.

I have completed my skills examination for my next grade, but I have not started my points yet. Will I need to complete my skills examination again, and any additional points?

You will not need to retake your skills examination. Any player who has started to accumulate points for their next grade (3rd to 5th dan) but not completed them by 31st December 2025, will have until 31st December 2026 to complete them. After this period of time, the total points (3rd dan to 5th dan) required will be 120.

Any player who has not started to accumulate points before 31st December 2025 will be required to complete the points under the new scheme.

I have completed my points, but have not completed my skills examination. Can I complete the old skills examination after 1st January 2026?

No, from 1st January 2026, you will be required to complete the new skills examination.

What are the new Points requirements?

The number of ippon wins has increased by two (20 points) for 3rd, 4th and 5th dan grades.

What are the new Time-In-Grade requirements?

The time-in-grade between 1st Kyu and the dan grades has been increased. 1st Kyu to 1st dan has increased by 6 months. 1st dan to 5th dan have each increased by one year. A detailed chart is available in the Dan Grade Syllabus (July 2025).

What are the new Kata requirements for each of the dan grades?

For each dan grade, a Level 1 Kata Certificate is required as follows:

1st dan - Nage-no-kata

2nd dan - Katame-no-kata

3rd dan - Ju-no-kata

4th dan - Kime-no-kata

5th dan - Kodokan Goshin-jutsu

Can I do my kata at any time?

Yes, under the new scheme, your kata does not have to be completed at the same time as your skills examination.

A BJA Senior Examiner, BJA Kata Examiner, or BJA Senior Kata Examiner will be able to examine kata. Details of the kata they can examine are available in the Dan Grade Syllabus (July 2025).

I am a 3rd dan working towards my 4th dan. I know that I will have to complete a specified kata for my 4th dan. Will I also have to complete the kata for 1st to 3rd dan?

No, you will only be required to complete the kata specified for the grade you are working towards.

I will have completed the kata requirements for my 6th dan by 31st December 2025, but not my time in grade. Will I need to complete any additional kata?

No, kata evidence (minimum Level 1 Nage-no-kata and Katame-no-kata) will be accepted.

I am a 6th dan working towards my 7th dan, but my time in grade will not be completed until after 1st January 2026. What kata evidence will I need?

You will need evidence of 6 kata: a minimum Level 1 Kata Certificate for Nage-no-kata and Katame-no-kata, and either Attendance Certificates (dated before 31st December 2025) or a minimum Level 1 Kata Certificate for the other 4, which are detailed in the Dan Grade Syllabus (July 2025). Attendance Certificates will no longer be available from 1st January 2026.

Any Kata evidence (Attendance Certificates or minimum Level 1 Kata Certificates) gained before the 31st December will be accepted.

Technical Grade

Why has the number of years for each grade within the Technical Scheme increased

To recognise the contribution made by those active in promoting and developing the sport of judo, four categories, A, B, C, and D, have been applied (recognition of contribution), which will determine the years required in grade e.g. category 'A' 5 years and category 'D' 8 years. Recognition will be awarded to candidates actively involved in technical and official roles, such as referees, officials, coaches, and examiners. Details of the criteria for each grade are provided below.

| Technical Awarded By BJA | Minimum Age* | Current Grade | Min Time In Grade* | Competition Points | Kata Requirement BJA Level 2 |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 st Dan | 20, 21, 22, or 23yrs | 1 st Kyu | 5, 6, 7, or 8yrs | N/A | Nage-no-kata |
| 2 nd Dan | 25, 27, 29, or 31yrs | 1 st Dan | 5, 6, 7, or 8yrs | N/A | Katame-no-kata |
| 3 rd Dan | 33, 33, 36 or 39yrs | 2 nd Dan | 5, 6, 7, or 8yrs | N/A | Ju-no-kata |
| 4 th Dan | 35, 39, 43, or 47yrs | 3 rd Dan | 5, 6, 7, or 8yrs | N/A | Kime-no-kata |
| 5 th Dan | 40, 45, 50 or 55yrs | 4 th Dan | 5, 6, 7, or 8yrs | N/A | Kodokan Goshin-jutsu |

* Categories to reduce the time in grade for a Technical promotion

| Categories | Years Required | Competitor | Referees | Officials | Coaches | Examiners |
|------------|----------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------|---|
| A | 5 | Medal OG/WC | IJF/EJU | IJF/EJU | Level 4 | IJF Kata Judge |
| B | 6 | Senior National Team | National A & B | Competition Controller | Level 3 | BJA Kata Judge, Senior Kata Examiner, Senior Examiner |
| C | 7 | Medal at Senior BC/IN/Area | National C, Area/Club | Contest Recorder | Level 2 | Kata Examiner |
| D | 8 | Other | Other | Other | Other | Other |

If I have completed my technical skills examination by 31 December but my grade is not due until after 1st January 2026, will my time in grade change?

If you have previously completed your technical skills examination or will complete it by 31st December 2025, the time in grade criteria (5 years) will be honoured. If you have started but not completed your technical skills examination by the 31st December 2025, you will need to complete the new Technical Scheme.

What are the new Kata requirements for each of the dan grades?

For each dan grade, a Level 2 Kata Certificate is required as follows:

1st dan - Nage-no-kata

2nd dan - Katame-no-kata

3rd dan - Ju-no-kata

4th dan - Kime-no-kata

5th dan - Kodokan Goshin-jutsu

With the technical system, is there a limit to the grade that I can achieve?

Yes, the Technical Grading Scheme is an alternative pathway enabling players to progress from 1st to 5th dan.

If I move from a competitive grade to a technical grade, how long do I need to wait before I can grade?

This depends on your competitive grade. For example, a competitive 3rd dan moving to a technical 4th dan will need 4 years in grade. All subsequent promotions will be based on your level of activity, A, B, C & D, which will determine the years required in grade, e.g. category 'A' 5 years and category 'D' 8 years.

Where can I get help and Support

You can get help and support by contacting a Support Team member via email. Details are provided below:

Dave Horton- Jones – email: dave.hortonjones@britishjudo.org.uk

Dave Clark – email: nhcChair20@gmail.com

Kim Tilley – email: kimothy2812@gmail.com

Derek Paxton – email: gradings@sajudo.org.uk

Also, through social media:

"Bjagradings" on Facebook and Instagram.