



AUSTRALIAN KENDO RENMEI

Kendo - Iaido - Jodo

AUSTRALIAN KENDO RENMEI STANDARD RULES FOR DAN and KYU EXAMINATIONS (Manual of Document, Section 1, clause 1.5.3)

Effective from 17 October 2021.

1. DAN and KYU GRADES

This document must be read in conjunction with the Manual of Document (MoD) Section 1.

Kendo-grading specific rules and requirements are stated in the MoD Section 2.

The Kyu and Dan grades recognised by the Australian Kendo Renmei (AKR) comprise the following grade bands:

- Kyu grades from 6 Kyu to 1 Kyu; and
- Dan grades from 1 Dan (Shodan) to 8 Dan.

Grades must be granted by the decision of a correctly assembled Grading Examination Panel and will be in accordance with the overall ability of the candidate.

The AKR does not conduct Grading Examinations for 6 Dan and above.

2. AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT EXAMINATIONS

2.1 State and Territory Affiliated Associations

Each financial year, State and Territory Affiliated Associations (Affiliates) of the AKR are authorised to arrange the following examinations for each of Kendo, Iaido and Jodo:

- Kyu examinations; and
- No more than two Dan examinations up to and including 4 Dan.

In the case of grading examinations held by Affiliates, should the designated Grading Procedural Officer have any questions, or require clarifications in relation to any examination details these must be communicated to and confirmed by the relevant Board before the day of the examination¹. Such advice and decisions are final and not subject to deliberation under any circumstances.

2.2 AKR Boards

Each financial year, the AKR Kendo, Iaido and Jodo Boards (Boards) are authorised to conduct the following national examinations:

- One examination up to 6 Dan, for their respective art at Australian Championship events; and
- One examination up to 6 Dan, for their respective art on special occasions, such as at seminars where visiting expert sensei may be attending.

In the case of national examinations any decision or clarification in relation to any and all examination details will be made by the relevant Board on or before the day of the examination. Such decisions are final and not subject to deliberation under any circumstances.

¹ It is expected that Grading Procedural Officers appointed by Affiliates will establish communication with relevant Boards as soon as time permits.

3. GRADING PROCEDURAL OFFICER

A Grading Procedural Officer² is appointed by the Board Chairperson or an Affiliate President for the respective grading examination.

The role of the Grading Procedural Officer is to assist compliance with AKR rules, guidelines and standards. The Grading Procedural Officer may advise relevant grading examination organisers or be consulted by them on the conduct of grading examinations, rules and regulations, and procedures, and ensure that relevant requirements are fulfilled in compliance with the rules and procedures.

The Grading Procedural Officer is responsible for the following aspects of a grading examination:

- Administrative management;
- Appointment of administrative support members (Kakariins) and resource coordination in close communication with the AKR or Affiliates;
- Compliance with relevant AKR rules including guidelines and standards in communication with the relevant Board; and
- Consultation with relevant stakeholders in relation with the conduct of examination, rules and regulations and procedures.

The Grading Procedural Officer holds a pre-examination meeting with appointed grading examination members in an appropriate facility on the examination day and establish a clear shared understanding of examination requirements and relevant procedural matters, and the obligations of grading examination panel members.

The Grading Procedural Officer cannot act as an examination panel member simultaneously. Should there be a need for the Grading Procedural Officer to act as an examination panel member, the Board Chairpersons and Affiliate Presidents are authorised to appoint suitable persons as Deputy Grading Procedural Officers for relevant grading examinations. The Deputy Grading Procedural Officer must attend a pre-examination meeting and assist in managing the aspects mentioned above.

The Grading Procedural Officer must provide a report to the Chairperson of the Board within 5 working days after the grading examination is completed. The report should include, but not limited to:

- The name of a Grading Procedural Officer;
- The name of Deputy Grading Procedural Officers if applicable;
- Particulars of a grading examination (e.g. National or State/Territory Affiliate, Venue, Date);
- The art concerned (i.e. Iaido, Jodo and/or Kendo);
- A list of grading panel members appointed for relevant examinations; and
- The examination outcome.

4. CONDUCT OF EXAMINATIONS

Grading examinations must be undertaken in accordance with the rules set forth below and elsewhere in the MoD. In the case of a conflict, the rules stated in this document must override rules that may be presented elsewhere in the MoD.

Examination panel members should wear business like attire.

- An appropriate business shirt;
- A moderate-colour tie;
- A business suit; and
- A pair of dark colour socks.

² The Kendo Board appoints the Grading Manager for national examinations in accordance with Kendo specific guidelines and standards. The functions of the Grading Manager are described in the AKR Kendo Board Standard Procedural Guidelines Dan Grading Examinations (the third edition, December 2019).

5. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR EXAMINATIONS

The assessment criteria for examinations are detailed in the Kendo, Iaido and Jodo sections of the MoD.

6. APPOINTMENT OF GRADING EXAMINATION PANEL MEMBERS

Each grading examination requires examination panel members. The Board Chairpersons and Affiliate Presidents are authorised to appoint suitable members as examination panel members for relevant levels.

7. QUALIFICATION OF GRADING EXAMINATION PANEL MEMBERS

Each Affiliate has the discretion to establish its own system to manage the registration of Affiliate members who are qualified to be appointed as grading examination panel members for Iaido, Jodo and Kendo, in communication with relevant Boards.

The registered Affiliate members must attest that they meet the following prerequisites³

- AKR Affiliate members or life members of the AKR, or a member of an overseas organisation affiliated with the International Federation of Kendo (FIK);
- A current AKR member of the art being examined;
- Actively involved in training;
- Regularly participate in state, national and international events (e.g. seminars, championships and FIK managed events);
- Graded at the prescribed examiner's Dan level in the art that is being examined;
- Physically and mentally fit and able to perform the duties of a grading panel member and maintain a state of alertness and professionalism; and
- They have no other issues that might otherwise prevent them from performing relevant duties in accordance with Section 8 of this document.

The Boards and Affiliates have discretion to select suitable panel members by taking into a range of consideration including, but not limited to, resource availability and technical competencies.

Members of overseas FIK affiliated organisations, who are not members of the AKR, may be eligible for appointment as examination panel members. These members must meet qualification criteria prescribed by the AKR. In addition, they must be approved in advance by both the President of their home organisation and the AKR President after the appointment is agreed upon by the Board Chairperson.

It is noted that members of the All Japan Kendo Federation (AJKF), in addition to a request from the AKR, are required by the AJKF to personally apply for and obtain prior approval from the AJKF President to join a grading examination panel outside of Japan.

8. OBLIGATIONS OF EXAMINATION PANEL MEMBERS

Examination panel members must be impartial, fair and square at any examination level. These members must be conscious of the significance of their duties and the consequence of any misconduct which can discredit grading examinations and/or dishonour AKR, Affiliates and relevant communities.

In order to undertake these duties, appointed examination panel members are required to fulfil the following obligations:

- Must attend a pre-examination meeting;
- Must not present any behaviour or statement in a way which grading members may be suspected of partiality;
- Must not receive any form of financial or material arrangement, entertainment, treat or any other forms of benefit which can be suspected of favouritism;
- Must not enter other examination areas without legitimate reasons;

³ Additional requirements for panel members involved in Kendo grading examinations are stated in the MoD Section 2.

- Must contact the Grading Procedural Officer for procedural clarification or relevant communication;
- Must not contact Kakariins or Tachiais;
- Must abstain from conversing with other panel members in a way which fairness can be questioned;
- Must not exchange opinions before being seated, during the examination or after leaving the examination table;
- Must not interfere with other panel members or influence their decision;
- Must not interfere with Administrative Management or influence their decision making; and
- Must not present or imply his or her views to applicants or other panel members.
- In order to protect the integrity of each individual panel member, sufficient seat spacing should be secured between two adjoining panel members⁴.

Panel members are escorted by the Grading Procedural Officer for seating and exiting.

It is advised that by declaring themselves eligible to be panel members, these members may be monitored during a grading examination, and that the relevant Board and Affiliate will receive a report on their behaviour and compliance with the obligations.

A pre-examination meeting is held prior to the commencement of a grading examination. Panel members should endeavour to complete all clarification requests during this meeting.

If the Boards and/or Affiliates receive complaints from relevant stakeholders (e.g. applicants and Kakariins) regarding panel members' obligations, they must act and respond to these complaints in accordance with the Member Protection Policy.

9. OBLIGATIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

The Grading Procedural Officer, the Deputy Grading Procedural Officer and Kakariins (collectively called Administrative Management) must be conscious of the significance of their duties and the consequence of any misconduct which can discredit grading examinations and/or dishonour AKR, Affiliates and relevant communities.

In order to undertake these duties, Administrative Management is required to fulfil the following obligations⁵:

- The Grading Procedural Officer must brief examination panel members at a pre-examination meeting;
- Must control data integrity;
- Must not present any behaviour or statement or engage in communication in any way which Administrative Management may be suspected of partiality;
- Must not receive any form of financial or material arrangement, entertainment, treat or any other forms of benefit which can be suspected of favouritism; and
- Must not present or imply his or her views to applicants or other panel members.

⁵ Additional requirements for Administrative Management involved in Kendo-grading examinations are stated in the MoD Section 2.

10. GRADING PANEL OBSERVER

The Boards and Affiliates have the discretion to appoint a suitable person as a Grading Panel Observer for relevant grading examinations.

The Grading Panel Observer, if appointed, monitors grading panel members and makes an assessment of the members' compliance with their obligations at arm's length. The Grading Panel Observer will be required to attend a pre-examination meeting in the capacity of an independent observer.

Upon completion of the examination, the Grading Panel Observer must provide the appointing Board or Affiliate with a report on his or her findings. The report should include, but not limited to:

- Particulars of a grading examination (e.g. National or State/Territory Affiliate, Venue, Date);
- The art concerned (i.e. Iaido, Jodo and/or Kendo);
- A detailed description of observations made;
- The name of a grading panel member(s) considered non-compliant; and
- Comments on compliance(s) and/or non-compliance(s) observed with supporting objective evidence.

The appointing Board and/or Affiliate must review the report to determine if further actions are necessary. These actions may include, but not limited to, interview, underperformance notices, performance review, and panel cancellation. Action planning and implementation must be coordinated between the relevant Boards, Affiliates and the National Executive.

11. EXAMINER'S DAN LEVEL, REQUIRED NUMBER OF EXAMINERS AND CONSENT CRITERIA

All appointed panel members are equal in consent. The minimum panel member requirements and pass consent criteria are presented in **Table 1**. For Kendo grading examinations for 4 Dan and above, the number of panel members required may be reduced from 6 to 5⁶ if the minimum requirement presented in **Table 1** cannot be met⁷. In this instance, the minimum of 4 examiners must be required to satisfy the relevant minimum pass consent criterion.

Table 1: Minimum Examination Panel Requirements

Level to Be Examined	Art	Minimum Grading Panel Qualification	Minimum Number of Panel Members Required	Minimum Pass Consent Criteria
Kyu	Iaido and Jodo	2 Dan and above	3	2
	Kendo	3 Dan and above	3	2
Shodan (1 Dan)	Iaido and Jodo	3 Dan and above	3	2
	Kendo	4 Dan and above	5	3
2 Dan	Iaido and Jodo	4 Dan and above	3	2
	Kendo	5 Dan and above	5	3
3 Dan	All arts	5 Dan and above	5	3
4 Dan	Iaido and Jodo	6 Dan and above	5	4
	Kendo	6 Dan and above	6	4
5 Dan	Iaido and Jodo	7 Dan and above	5	4
	Kendo	7 Dan and above	6	4

⁶ This accords with Article 5 of the FIK Standard Guideline for Dan/Kyu Examination (Available at http://www.kendo-fik.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/STANDARD-GUIDELINE-FOR-DANKYU-EXAMINATION_Kendo_Iaido_Jodo_English.pdf. Last viewed on 16 June 2020).

⁷ Affiliates are requested to discuss relevant circumstances with the Kendo Board prior to the commencement of Kendo grading examinations.

12. APPLICANT

Applicants must be valid Affiliate members or life members of the AKR or a member of an overseas FIK affiliated organisation. Overseas FIK members may be subject to approvals. The applicant must satisfy the prescribed periods of practice (Table 2) before lodging applications with the relevant Affiliate. Years for the time in grade for Dan applicants will be calculated from the date of the last grading to up to a maximum of 14 days before the completion of the requisite time in years⁸ (e.g. 1st Dan received 1st June 2000, eligible to grade from 18th May 2001 onwards).

Applicants must also maintain continuity of training and membership for the entire period between grades. The Specifics of this requirement are outlined in *MoD Section 1, clause 1.4.2 Grading Examinations*.

To be eligible to sit their first grading, a person must have trained for 3 months or more at the time of grading, and must be registered as an AKR member (with an AKR number) at the time of submitting the grading application.

Table 2: Prescribed Periods of Practice and Minimum Age Conditions

Level to Be Examined	Period to Be Elapsed Prior to Examination Applied for	Minimum Age Condition (at the date of examination)
Kyu	3 months or longer	Not applicable
Shodan (1 Dan) (Iaido and Jodo)	3 months or more after granting of 1 Kyu	13 Years
Shodan (1 Dan) (Kendo)	5 months or longer after granting of 1 Kyu	13 Years
2 Dan	1 year or longer after granting of Shodan	Not applicable
3 Dan	2 years or longer after granting of 2 Dan	Not applicable
4 Dan	3 years or longer after granting of 3 Dan	Not applicable
5 Dan	4 years or longer after granting of 4 Dan	Not applicable

13. FEES

Grading application and registration fees are specified in the MoD Section 1.

14. RESULTS

Grading examination results are effective as of the date of the examination.

15. REGISTRATION

When registering the result of a grading examination, Affiliates must inform the AKR of:

- The Dan or Kyu grade granted for each applicant examined; and
- The name and Dan of all grading examiners.

Grading examination results that do not comply with this document or relevant MoD sections will not be registered by the AKR.

⁸ A request for special consideration must be made through the Affiliate to the relevant Board, and the Board will make a determination and communicate the decision to the Affiliate and inform the National Executive.