

Northern Free-Style Karate Association

Black Belt Grading Policy

General rules

NFKA students will be eligible to grade providing they have fulfilled all technical requirements, hold a current AMA NFKA licence and record book and have appropriate permission from their club instructor. This license book must be available for the technical committee's inspection and endorsement.

They must train at least twice per week at a NFKA club, with an approved NFKA instructor.

If a student misses regular training at a NFKA club for any time over three months the student's minimum training time must be extended by the same time, e.g., three months missing regular training at a NFKA club minimum time extended by three months.

Transfer of Grades

The NFKA do not recognise any grades from other associations or National Governing Bodies any transfer will be at a 10 Kup level, unless negotiations take place at association level.

Grading students from other associations

The NFKA technical committee can grade students from associations outside the NFKA these students will have to provide their home styles syllabus and kata or pattern technical specifications. Prices will be negotiated on application.

Technical requirements

The technical committee will ask the student to undertake a rigorous examination of basics, sparring forms, pad work and sparring. They also have to provide a project and undertake a written examination.

It must be emphasised that regular training at a NFKA club and attendance at seminars is intended to prepare students for their grading and that the most important factor is the examinee's quality of performance.

Project and exam requirements

Grade	Project	Exam
1 st Dan any age	Bones and muscles	Bones and muscles
2 nd Dan	Knee Joint and anatomy	Knee Joint and anatomy
3 rd Dan	5 Martial arts of the world	Knee Joint and anatomy
4 th and above	None required	

Cadet Black Belt rules

Junior Dan grades can be attempted following training for a minimum of three years in NFKA training a least twice a week at a NFKA club, there is no minimum age.

If a student is awarded their 1st Dan cadet prior to their 12 birthday they may apply for their 2nd Dan when they are 16 years old. Other students not making this timescale will take their power test at 16 to become a senior Black belt 1st Dan.

Dan Grading Rules

The minimum period between 1st Kup and 1st Dan is 6 months.

Permission to take a Dan grading must be obtained from the student's club instructor.

Club instructors wishing to take any Dan grading must obtain permission from their NFKA instructor with whom they train on a regular basis.

4th Dan grading and above may only be taken with permission from the technical committee six months prior to any application.

All gradings up to 4th Dan are physical and above 4th Dan can be either physical or honorary, but follow the same selection criteria as all other Dan gradings.

The date will be determined by taking the following criteria into account:

- Number of years training regularly at NFKA clubs (Based on the minimum timescales outlined below)
- Precedent - relating to the time-scales of other senior students
- The record of how the applicant has demonstrated their dedication to giving back to the NFKA, to students, to instructors, seminar attendance, attendance at Kup grading to support students, by sharing their expertise by sharing their skills with students during class training sessions and supporting their club instructor as assistant instructor
- Acting a club instructor at own NFKA club
- Competition participation as a NFKA student or instructor
- If the student trains in another style, how they bring knowledge back to the NFKA to enhance the association
- For club instructor's demonstration of their dedication to the NFKA by regular judging at Kup gradings.

- For club instructors teaching at association seminars.
- Teaching people to Blackbelt and “giving Back” to the association.

Minimum timescales

The minimum timescales and ages described below are for student who fulfil the criteria above and are training at a NFKA club at least two sessions per week.

For clarity minimum means: “the least quantity or amount possible, assignable, or allowable”.

The usual or average time may be very different from the timescales outlined below.

Adult Grades	Minimum Time	Honorary or Physical
Beginner to 1st Dan	3 years	P
1st Dan to 2nd Dan	2 years	P
2nd Dan to 3rd Dan	3 years	P
3rd Dan to 4th Dan	4 years	P
4th Dan to 5th Dan	5 years	P or H
5th Dan to 6th Dan	6 years	P or H
6th Dan to 7th Dan	7 years	P or H
7th Dan to 8th Dan	8 years	H
8th Dan to 9th Dan	9 years	H
9th Dan to 10th Dan	10 years	H

Some people think that they deserve to apply for high Dan grades due to time in the system. But, being a Black Belt where they do as little as possible to advance the NFKA cannot ever be considered true support of the association. Many students accept the challenge to “give back.” Over a period of time, not just being around, not training at their grade.

Students who have been missing from the NFKA without good reason, such as illness, pregnancy, or studying, preferring to spend their time undertaking a different activity, will have to approach the technical committee for permission to regain their Dan grade in assessment and to restart their timescale of progress to their next grade.

Students have to demonstrate integrity and decide the value of their training. Without developing the desire to see fellow students in the association train and grow, they pay little more than lip service to this value and respect for the art of karate. Many would call that obtaining a certificate for self-glorification. This policy is to prevent this situation from occurring and outlines the Dan grading policy.