New Zealand Ju-Jitsu Federation (NZJJF)

Black Belt Verification Policy

BACKGROUND

Dan ranks were transferred to martial arts by Kanō Jigorō (1860–1938), the founder of judo. Kanō started the modern rank system in 1883 and he adopted the custom of having his yūdansha wear black obi (belts) in 1886.

In 1907, Kanō invented the modern keikogi (white practice uniforms), and belts in white for mudansha and black for yūdansha. And although the dan system is distinctly Japanese, it has been adopted by many other martial arts styles.

In many styles, achieving a dan rank means that, while one is no longer considered a beginner, one is not yet necessarily an expert. Rather, it indicates a high degree of competence across a reasonable range of techniques. The total number of dan ranks can be style-specific (1st through 10th is common in Ju-Jitsu).

The lower dan grades (1st through 5th) are normally attained through a grading examination or sometimes through competition. The higher dan grades (6th through 10th) usually require years of experience and contribution to Ju-Jitsu. There is no set achievement level that is universal, but it is recommended that High Dan Grades of 8th through 10th are awarded according to the NZJJF High Dan Grade Policy.

PURPOSE

The NZJJF seeks to ensure that consistent practice and standards are maintained with regards to the award of Black Belt grades within Ju Jitsu in New Zealand.

We respect that Ju-jitsu is diverse and full of rich traditions, but we hope that this document will encouraging our Ju-Jitsu members, instructors and leaders to employ the highest standards and ethical practice in support of the development of their students and themselves.

OVERVIEW

The Black Belt Register, together with the Instructors Register, makes up the Public Register of Ju-Jitsu Instructors and Black Belts.

The Black Belt Register is kept for the purpose of assuring the public that black belt grades claimed by ju-jitsu practitioners in New Zealand are **valid** and **reasonable**.

NZJJF provides verification of Ju-Jitsu Black Belts awarded.

Black belt members of the NZJJF may apply to have their grades recognised by NZJJF and entered on the Public Register.

APPLICATION

Application is made by downloading the Application Form from the NZJJF website and submitting the appropriate information and fee with the completed form to the NZJJF Registrar.

http://www.nzjjf.org.nz/jujitsu/downloads/Black_Belt_registration_form.pdf

A first-time applicant submits the completed form to the NZJJF along with:

- a copy of their latest grading certificate
- a copy of their 1st Degree grading certificate
- contact details of examiners for the two gradings
- a list of all ju-jitsu gradings along with dates
- NZJJF fee ($25 for first application, $15 for subsequent)

The application is then assessed by the Registrar for Validity and Reasonableness.

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VALIDITY OF GRADE

Validity means that the details on the applicant's grading certificates are valid, or real. To verify validity, NZJJF contacts the examiner using the contact details provided by the applicant, or by other means. Where gradings are very old, certificates cannot be provided, or the examiner cannot be contacted validity may be established by other means. In some instances, publications recording the grading may be relied on. NZJJF has discretionary powers in this matter.

Note: Gradings by NZJJF-convened examiners are automatically recognised and filed as such.

REASONABLE

Reasonable means that the applicant's black belt progression has been at a rate held to be reasonable by a cross section of the martial arts community. Two factors are considered: the amount of time passing between each successive black belt grading, and the applicant's age.

The following sets out the minimum time elapsing between grades considered to be reasonable by NZJJF.

Yudansha Grade	Time to achieve	Cumulative years from 1st Degree
To get 1st Degree	4 years	N/A
1st to 2nd Degree	2 years	2 years
2nd to 3rd Degree	3 years	5 years
3rd to 4th Degree	4 years	9 years
4th to 5th Degree	5 years	14 years
5th to 6th Degree	6 years	20 years
6th to 7th Degree	7 years	27 years
7th to 8th Degree	8 years	35 years
8th to 9th Degree	9 years	44 years
9th to 10th Degree	10 years	55 years

Age is taken into account where minors are applying for recognition as black belts. It is unlikely that black belts under the age of 16 will be recognised.

SUBSEQUENT APPLICATIONS

Black belts already recorded in the Public Register need only have new grades verified. A reduced fee is charged for verification of promotions only.

DISPUTES

Where it is likely that an application will be declined the applicant is to be contacted by the Registrar so the matter can be discussed.

They may provide other information to prove the validity of their grade or may accept that insufficient time has elapsed between their last grade and have a lower grade recognised by NZJJF.

A 'catch-up' grade may well be accepted if evidence of a long period of continual training before their prior grade can be proved.

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	A requested NZJJF convened grading panel, as per NZJJF Grading Panel policy, can be used to verify an awarded grade.
REPORTS	Following consideration of the validity and reasonableness of the application by the Registrar a summary report is to be made at the foot of the application form or attached to the application form. This will state either that the applicant's grade has been found to be valid and reasonable, or lays out the reason for a recommendation to decline. Where evidence has been sought through unconventional channels, that too is noted in the report.
AUTHORITY	Authority for recognition of black belt grades to the Public Register solely rests with the NZJJF committee. The committee considers the recommendation of the NZJJF registrar and authorises the application to be approved or declined. Decisions of the committee are minuted.
FILING	The completed application form - approved or declined - has the header filled out and signed by the NZJJF registrar and is filed alphabetically in the cloud Black Belt Register repository. All supporting documentation are kept with the completed application form.
NOTIFICATION	The applicant is notified of the final outcome of their application. The details of successful applications are updated in the Public Register of Ju-Jitsu Instructors and Black Belts on the NZJJF website and published in the next NZJJF Newsletter. http://nzjjf.org.nz/NZJJF/jujitsu/black-belt-register/

Appendices

The following form for Black Belt verification can be found on the NZJJF website at the following link.

http://www.nzjjf.org.nz/jujitsu/downloads/Black_Belt_registration_form.pdf

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Appendix 1 – NZJJF Black Belt Application Form

NEW ZEALAND
JU JITSU FEDERATION

Name	.....
Approved Grade	.....
..... / ..... / 20.....	Signed .....

Office use only

APPLICATION FOR RECOGNITION OF GRADE

1. Personal Details

Name ..... DOB ..... / ..... / .....

Address .....

.....

Phone ..... Mobile ..... email .....

Organisation .....

Club .....

Please supply:

- ***NZJJF fee; $25 for first application, $15 for subsequent applications. By cheque made out to NZJJF or by bank transfer into the account 03-0179-0280064-000*** ☐

Fee Paid	☐

Office use only

2. Validity

Last Grade ..... Degree

Date ..... / ..... / .....

Examiner(s) .....

Certificate	☐
Confirmation	☐

Office use only

Please supply:

- ***Copy of current dan grade certificate*** ☐
- ***Contact details of lead examiner*** ☐

3. Reasonableness

Date began ju-jitsu ..... / ..... / .....

Date of 1st Degree ..... / ..... / .....

Examiner(s) .....

Certificate	☐
Confirmation	☐
List	☐

Office use only

Please supply:

- ***Copy of 1st Degree grading certificate*** ☐
- ***Contact details of lead examiner*** ☐
- ***List of gradings and dates*** ☐

NZJJF Comments: