

Tomiki Aikido of the Americas Promotion Policies and Procedures

Intent: Establish the composition of the testing panel, guidelines for dan rank promotion and certification, and associate administrative fees for such promotions. The TAA is committed to maintaining consistent testing standards throughout the organization.

Testing Boards:

Any member of the Shihan Division of the TAA or the JAA/Japan has the right to test candidates for promotion, without need for other dan rank representatives being present. However, it is recommended that testing panels generally be constituted of more than one ranking instructor of the TAA. See below for specific recommendations for testing panels.

The Shihan Division consists of the senior ranking members of the TAA who have been given authorization by the JAA/Japan to promote candidates independently within the TAA. Members of the Shihan Division may appoint other senior ranking instructors of the TAA to act as their authorized representatives on special occasions.

Shodan & Nidan:

It is recommended that a testing panel should consist of three (but no less than two) TAA certified dan rank instructors. Of these panel members at least one member must be two ranks senior to the rank being tested for (e.g. a sandan for a shodan promotion, yondan for nidan, etc.)

Sandan & Yondan

A minimum panel of three TAA certified dan rank instructors is required including a member of the shihan division of the TAA or JAA/Japan. The representative of the shihan division will have the right to promote without any other member of the Shihan division present though he or she will take under consideration the recommendations of the other two members of the panel.

Godan and above

It is required that the examinee test before a panel including one or more members of the Shihan division of the TAA and/or Shihan division of the JAA/Japan although this panel could be comprised solely by any one member of the Shihan division TAA or JAA/Japan that is higher ranking than the candidate being tested. Included in this category would be highest ranking member of the TAA or their designated representative.

Grading Criteria

1. Timing, Off Balance, Posture, Presence
2. Uke should be thrown, not fall down or take a dive.
3. Speed and pacing of test can vary, as long as principles and precision are apparent.
4. Test forms will follow a uniform marking / grading procedure. Each technique will be graded as a 1 (below average), 2 (average), or 3 (above average)
 - a) The average of the total score for all techniques of an exam must be 2 or better to pass.

Dan Testing Forms and Fees

1. Test and Recommendation forms should be available from the web site and/or the business office.
2. Completed test forms will be sent to the business office to be scanned and saved for future reference.
3. Fee schedule will be posted/updated on the web site.

Dan Examination Requirements

Promotion of students to dan rank will be based on the curriculum requirements delineated in the TAA website. The minimal qualifications for consideration for promotion will be:

1. Membership in the TAA of at least two years
2. Documented training and promotion through kyu ranks consisting of at least 240 hours under the instruction of a TAA certified instructor in a TAA recognized club
3. Written recommendation from a TAA certified instructor
4. For Shodan to Yondan, **at the time of the exam**, students must submit a written paper on an aikido related subject of their choice. These may be published in the newsletter.
5. Clinic attendance recommendations

It is recommended that any candidate for dan rank promotion attend clinics as listed below. It is understood that this requirement may be waived due to individual circumstances. Such waiver will be made upon presentation of these mitigating circumstances by the recommending instructor.

- a) Between Shodan and Nidan, attend 1 Instructor's clinic + 1 other clinic.
- b) Between Nidan and Sandan, attend 1 Instructor's clinic + 2 other clinics.
- c) Between Sandan and Yondan, attend 2 Instructor's clinics + 2 other clinics.
- d) Between Yondan and Godan, attend 3 Instructor's clinics + 3 other clinics.

Candidates meeting the above minimum requirements will be required to test in front of a panel of TAA certified instructors that meet the testing board requirements. Such test will consist of, at minimum, demonstration of all physical curriculum requirements for said rank and submission of the written essay.

TAA Dan Rank Confirmation Petitioning:

An aikido practitioner holding a dan rank from another Tomiki aikido organization may petition to earn a TAA dan rank through the following rank confirmation process. This process will allow for such practitioners to earn up to a sandan rank. The applicant must meet the following requirements:

1. Paid membership in the TAA.
2. Presentation of proof of present dan rank in Aikido from another organization.
3. Passing the dan grade examination for the TAA dan rank which they are seeking to earn.
4. The examination will consist of, at minimum, a demonstration of all physical curriculum requirements for said rank.
5. At the time of the examination, submission of a written paper on an aikido related subject.
6. Must commit to working toward meeting the requirements for the next rank.

In addition, it should be noted that once a practitioner has passed such a confirmation test and has been awarded a TAA dan rank, they must then proceed to higher ranks in the ordinary way, subject to the same time requirements as all other TAA black belts after having earned the same rank. For instance, a person cannot use the rank confirmation process to earn a shodan and then immediately after receiving the shodan petition again for the chance to earn a higher dan rank. Stated differently, the rank confirmation process can only be used once.

Rank Registration Fees

Kyu rank - \$10 Registration fee for certificate plus any local club fees as set by the student's Sensei.

Dan rank: For promotions from Shodan through Yondan the following registration fees are required to be paid to the TAA after each promotion is awarded

Shodan: \$100.00

Nidan: \$200.00

Sandan: \$300.00

Yondan: \$400.00

Godan and above: The Board recognizes the continuing support, dedication and instructional efforts of individuals of these Dan designations. Upon the completion of the prescribed requirements, nomination from the technical committee after technical requirements and approval of the Board, the individual is to make a discretionary monetary contribution to the Japan Aikido Association\USA. A minimal contribution of \$500.00 is suggested.

Dan Registration options

1. A candidate must promptly pay TAA testing and registration fees to receive a TAA certificate. If financial circumstances prohibit immediate payment, contact with and approval of a payment schedule must be made with the Business Office through the sensei recommending the promotion. Failure to pay said fee in a prompt manner will result in the promotion being invalidated and no certificate being issued.
2. A candidate may also pay fees (as determined by the business office) to the JAA-Japan if the candidate wishes a Japanese Certificate (up to sandan rank).
3. It is suggested, but not required, that if the student wishes a Japanese Certificate, they should make an effort to attend an event where they can be graded by a JAA- Japan convened panel.