



As a red/black belt student, you will soon be ready to begin your preparation for the Black Belt exam. Your next examination for black belt candidate (black belt / red stripe) is the first part of this process.

Before you apply for grading to black belt candidate you need to understand that this is a very significant promotion. If you are accepted as a black belt candidate then this means we consider you have the *potential* for black belt promotion and as such there will be certain expectations along the way.

Expectations

Firstly, your behaviour both in and out of class will be expected to be exemplary. We absolutely expect all black belt candidates to prove beyond all doubt that they are very serious about their training and are taking their preparations for black belt seriously.

If promoted to black belt candidate, you must understand that you are effectively now under grading conditions right up to the point of your final black belt examination, which may be many months away. You are expected to set an excellent example at all times.

Black Belt candidates are expected to be very pro-active in their approach to training. They will be given all the information and help they need, but we do not expect to drag them along, the onus is on the candidate to ask for help where required.

Preparing for your Black Belt examination

The process of testing for Black Belt is not just about the final exam, you are monitored closely in class and will be working on some personal goals for a number of months leading up to the examination. For juniors this will be a period of at least three full calendar months, six for adults. You can wait as long as you wish before applying, but in the mean time as a candidate you must attend each grading examination for a formal review of your progress. This requires an application as per a standard coloured belt grading.

We suggest that you familiarise yourself with the Black Belt requirements well in advance as you will need to decide on certain personal goals which form part of your black belt test, and you need to also decide on a thesis/project topic, all of which must be agreed with your instructor in advance of your initial application. These requirements are available to download from the Academy website.

Technical Requirements

As a Black Belt in Taekwondo, there are certain core requirements of all candidates. This will include for example ALL the Taekwondo patterns and pair work you have learned in class, along with some theory and terminology specific to Taekwondo. All this information is available from your instructor and on the Academy website. You are expected to practice these thoroughly and must remember that as a black belt candidate it is your responsibility to ask if you need help.

Membership Requirements

We will only consider a student for black belt promotion if we are confident they understand what the rank represents and they are committed as long-term martial artists. We absolutely will not consider a black belt promotion if we feel the student is only seeking it as a 'trophy' and does not intend to continue training after black belt.

For this reason when you submit your final application for black belt testing, we require all students to have a membership valid for a minimum 12 months after their examination date. This may mean you need to renew or upgrade your membership before you can apply.

If you are successfully promoted, your status will initially be probationary for a period of at least six months, and subsequently is conditional upon you maintaining regular training and undertaking periodic reviews (twice each year).

Grading Essay for Black Belt Candidate

The essay for red stripe can be on a topic of your own choice relating to your thoughts on the rank of black belt.

You can choose any topic of your choice directly related to becoming a Black Belt

For example, some previous topics have been:

- "What does it mean to be a Black Belt?"
- "What is the difference between a coloured belt and a Black Belt?"
- "Why do I want to be a Black Belt?"
- "How will I prepare for my Black Belt test?"
- "Black Belt is just the beginning.."
- One student did an interview with a number of questions to existing black belts.

It is expected that the candidate will put significant thought and effort into this essay. It will form part of their grading assessment.

Finally...

The status of Black Belt Candidate is conditional on the student demonstrating a very proactive commitment, maintaining excellent attendance and working to the very best of their ability in class.

As a potential Black Belt they should set an excellent example to others at all times. If they do not, their candidate status can be revoked at any time.

*"To wear a Black Belt
is a privilege, not a right."*