



# **Guidelines for Achievement Of Kumite and Kata Qualifications**

**Scottish Karate Governing Body (SKGB)**



EUROPEAN KARATE FEDERATION  
FEDERATION EUROPÉENNE DE KARATÉ  
MEMBER OF THE WORLD KARATE FEDERATION (WKF)



## **Aim**

The aim of this document is to outline the criteria for achievement of a qualification as a Karate Official, in either Kumite or Kata disciplines.

Depending on the qualification concerned the award will be made following recommendations from an Association level Refereeing Commission, the Scottish Karate Governing Body (SKGB) Refereeing Commission or the British Karate Federation (BKF) Refereeing Commission.

## **Objectives**

There are 3 main objectives outlined within this guideline document.

- Provide an explanation of current recognised Karate Officials qualifications from Association level up to World Karate Federation (WKF) level.
- Outline the criteria for achievement of such qualifications.
- Outline the structure of the SKGB Kumite Referee/Kata Judge training and development program in the main, and provide some insight into the format of higher level qualifications.

## **Introduction**

The current SKGB Refereeing development programme is the most successful ever and is organised and delivered by the SKGB Refereeing Commission. This is achieved, through the provision of a Refereeing budget from the SKGB. Development courses are provided free of charge at the present time, however on occasion a charge may be necessary for invited course providers with specific skills not available in-house.

The SKGB currently has officials qualified to National, British and European level. The aim is to maintain and hopefully increase the number of SKGB officials qualified to International level, through assessment at either European or World level. This will only be possible through continued quality training and development courses and most importantly, attendance at quality Karate competition events.

The SKGB are therefore always in need of additional qualified officials. The Refereeing Commission will be happy to help in any way possible to assist those interested in becoming Kumite or Kata officials, as without them Karate competition in Scotland will cease to be feasible.

SKGB member Associations with no Refereeing programme of their own, are of course permitted to send candidates along to any SKGB development course, whether they are experienced or not. The SKGB Refereeing

Commission will then inform the Association, when in their view, the candidate has reached a standard sufficient to be awarded an Association level qualification and eventually an SKGB qualification. In this way the Associations can continue to feed the main SKGB pool of qualified officials. This will ensure that there is always an adequate number of officials, qualified at all levels and in the process of development throughout the system. Kata in particular, is an area where the number of SKGB qualified Kata Judges consistently fall short of that required to man tatamis at major events. Since the introduction of Version 7.1 of the WKF Rules for Competition pressure has increased in this regard, as the number of officials now required for each tatami has increased dramatically with 4 Judges being required instead of 3 (excluding the need for a Referee, Kansa or Tatami Manager).

### **Currently Recognised Karate Official Qualifications**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Kumite</b>	<b>Kata</b>
<b>Association</b>	Table Official	
	Judge B	Judge B
	Judge A	Judge A
	Referee B Referee A	
<b>Scottish Karate Governing Body (SKGB)</b>	Table Official	
	Judge B	Judge B
	Judge A	Judge A
	Referee B Referee A*	
<b>British Karate Federation (BKF)</b>	Referee	Judge
<b>European Karate Federation (EKF)</b>	Judge B	Judge B
	Judge A	Judge A
	Referee B Referee A*	
<b>World Karate Federation (WKF)</b>	Tatami Manager	
	Judge B	Judge B
	Judge A	Judge A
	Referee B Referee A*	
	Tatami Manager	

Note: \* On achievement of both Kata Judge A and Kumite Referee A, the title of Karate Referee is awarded

### **Association Level –Minimum Criteria (Typical)**

A qualified Association Table Official will have attained the minimum age of 16 years, hold the minimum of a 3rd kyu grade and will have attended at least one Refereeing training course.

A qualified Association Judge ( B or A) will have attained the minimum age of 16 years, hold the minimum of a 3rd Kyu grade and will have attended two Referee training courses. He/she will also have achieved no less than 60% in a theory exam and have passed a practical assessment at a recognised Association event. This should be valid for two years minimum.

A qualified Association Referee (B or A) will have attained the minimum age of 18 years, hold the minimum of a 1st Dan grade and be qualified to Association Judge A level. He/she must also have attended two Referee training courses and have achieved no less than 75% in a theory exam, as well as having achieved a successful pass of a practical assessment at a recognised Association event. This should be valid for at least a two year period.

The qualification of an official would be recorded in his or her own personal Official's Record Book (Ref. <sup>1</sup>) as issued by the SKGB and endorsed by an Association Refereeing Commission official (or SKGB Commission official).

### **Scottish Karate Governing Body (SKGB) – Minimum Criteria**

Before an Association official may be assessed to SKGB level they must first hold a valid Association qualification. This qualification would normally be at least one level above that being sought at SKGB level. . An Association Refereeing Commission official or Head of Association (where a Refereeing Commission does not exist) must endorse their development to SKGB level. This endorsement will be dependent on the efforts made by that individual in assisting at Association/SKGB events. Where an Association does not have a Refereeing Programme the SKGB Refereeing Commission may make recommendations to the Head of Association.

### **Insurance Cover**

SKGB Refereeing Officials are covered by the SKGB's insurance at all SKGB sanctioned events only. At other non-SKGB/BKF events it is advisable therefore that Judges/Referees have arranged their own adequate insurance to cover their risk at such events. This is normally achieved through the PPI cover which accompanies Sports Coach UK membership for example, although other options are available.

### **Table Official Criteria**

A qualified SKGB Table Official would have attained the age of 16 years, hold the minimum of a 3rd kyu grade and would have attended at least one of the Referee/Table Official training courses.

### **Judge Criteria**

A qualified SKGB Judge should hold the minimum of a 1<sup>st</sup> Dan grade and have attended two relevant SKGB training courses achieved no less than 80% in a theory exam and have passed a practical assessment at a recognised SKGB event.

A practical assessment will also form part of the Kata Judge Assessment for Judge A level only. For this assessment a candidate will require to perform a maximum of 2 Katas of his/her choice and be prepared to answer questions relating to the chosen Kata, its Bunkai and/or other Kata rule issues.

These Kumite /Kata qualifications will be valid for a period of three years, after which time renewal will require successful completion of a relevant theory test along with proof of relevant attendance at core National and International events.

### **Referee Criteria**

A qualified SKGB Referee B should hold the minimum of a 1st Dan grade and be qualified to SKGB Judge A level. Also required would be attendance at 2 relevant SKGB training courses, achievement of no less than 90% in a theory exam and pass a practical assessment at a recognised SKGB event. This would be valid for a period of three years, after which time renewal will require successful completion of a relevant theory test along with proof of relevant attendance at core National and International events.

A qualified SKGB Referee A would hold the minimum of a 1st Dan grade and be qualified to SKGB Referee B level. Also required would be attendance at 2 relevant SKGB training courses, achievement of no less than 90% in a theory exam and pass a practical assessment at a recognised SKGB event. This would be valid for a period of two years, after which time renewal will require successful completion of a relevant theory test along with proof of relevant attendance at core National and International events..

For qualification upgrade the normal minimum period between each level of achievement will be one year and will also depend on proof of reasonable attendance levels at both Association and SKGB events. Awards are normally made at completion of the annual SKGB National Championships (for either Kumite or Kata). In special circumstances the SKGB Refereeing Commission reserves the right to endorse upgrades over and above these events/timeframes.

### **Development Record and Maintaining Qualifications**

The qualification of an SKGB official would be recorded in his or her own personal Official's Record Book (Ref. <sup>1</sup>), as issued by the SKGB and endorsed by an SKGB Refereeing commission official.

SKGB qualifications will remain current as long as the official continues to be active and has attended at least one SKGB event in any two year period, otherwise reassessment and possibly a theory test pass would be required.

### **British Karate Federation Referee/Kata Judge**

A qualified BKF Referee/Kata Judge must hold a valid SKGB Referee A/Kata Judge A qualification and the SKGB Refereeing Commission must endorse their development to BKF level. This endorsement will be dependent on the efforts made by that individual in assisting the SKGB at national events.

The responsibility for award of these qualifications lies with the BKF Chief Referee and will be based on adequate performance at BKF events as reported by relevant Tatami Chiefs/Chief Referee. The qualification of a BKF official would also be recorded in his or her own personal Official's Record Book (Ref. 1), as issued by the SKGB and endorsed by a BKF Refereeing official.

The title of 'BKF Karate Referee' will be attained once both BKF Kumite Referee and BKF Kata Judge qualifications are obtained.

BKF qualifications will remain current as long as the official continues to be active and has attended at least one BKF event in any two year period. Their SKGB qualification would also require to be current, otherwise, reassessment and possibly a theory test pass would be required.

### **European Karate Federation (EKF) Judge B**

To be eligible to attempt an EKF qualification a candidate will require to have attained the age of 25 years, hold a minimum WKF recognised grade of 2<sup>nd</sup> Dan and must hold a valid BKF Referee/Kata Judge qualification.

It is the sole prerogative of the SKGB Refereeing Commission to propose the candidate in the first instance and their decision is final. Thereafter their Association Chairperson must endorse their development to EKF level.

A candidate for progression to this platform must pass both a theory and practical assessment as set down by the EKF. The progression route is the same as for all other preceding award bodies ie Judge B, Judge A, Referee B, Referee A and Kata Judge B, Kata Judge A. However once Referee A and Kata Judge A have been attained the title of 'Karate Referee' is awarded.

EKF qualifications can only be attempted once a year and only at EKF Regional Championship events throughout Europe. Normally the process requires being abroad for 5-6 days allowing for courses, theory examinations, practical examinations and the competition event itself.

The qualification of an EKF official would be recorded in the EKF record book provided on achievement of that qualification.

Anyone wishing to know more about the process for attainment of EKF qualifications should contact a member of the SKGB Refereeing Commission.

### **World Karate Federation (WKF) Qualifications**

These are recognised by all as the most prestigious of Karate official's qualifications. However due to the very high standard of competition (particularly Kumite) at European level the EKF Kumite Referees and Kata Judges are commonly perceived as being of a similar high quality.

A candidate for progression to this platform must pass both a theory and practical assessment as set down by the WKF. The minimum age and grade is as for EKF qualifications and the progression route is the same as for all other preceding award bodies i.e. Judge B, Judge A, Referee B, Referee A and Kata Judge B, Kata Judge A. Again, once Referee A and Kata Judge A have been attained the title of 'Karate Referee' is awarded.

These qualifications can only be attempted once a year and only at WKF Senior Championship world events. Normally the process requires being abroad for 7-10 days allowing for courses, theory examinations, practical examinations and the competition event itself.

### **Structure of the SKGB training program:**

The central point of contact for the SKGB Refereeing Commission is Kirsten Bonar, the SKGB Referee Commission Secretary. Kirsten can be contacted by E-mail at [skgbrefcom@gmail.com](mailto:skgbrefcom@gmail.com).

The training program developed by the SKGB generally consists of two 4-hour seminars per year. Each seminar would be further broken down into 3 parts.

1. Rules presentation.
2. Kumite Practical exercise.
3. Kata judge development exercise.

The Referee Commission reserves the right to modify this format in relation to specific training needs at the time, e.g. the publication by the World Karate Federation (WKF) of a revised rules document. The rules presentation will generally be delivered as a classroom presentation on PowerPoint. The intention is to assist the student with any technical questions that have arisen from their pre-reading of the WKF rules (Ref.<sup>2</sup>).

The Kumite practical exercise and the Kata Judge development exercise will take place in the Dojo and a Karate Gi will be worn by all for the Kata session

With Kumite the student will be shown how to develop their verbal Refereeing commands, hand signals, flag signals and decision making, as situations arrive during a bout. With Kata various Kata will be practised with the criteria for decision and other valid points being explained.

Specific feedback to each official undergoing training is paramount to the success of the SKGB training program. This feedback will be given by SKGB Refereeing Commission members and/or Tatami Managers at every opportunity.

### **Training Delivery**

Training delivery will be carried out by one of the SKGB Refereeing Commission members, or by invited trainers from outside the SKGB where appropriate.

### **Current Refereeing Commission Officials and their present qualification:**

**Rab McQueen** - European Karate Federation Kumite Referee A, European Karate Federation Kata Judge A

**Grant Bonar** - European Karate Federation Kumite Referee B

**Charlie Lindsay** - British Kumite Referee/Kata Judge

Secretary:

**Kirsten Bonar** - European Karate Federation Kumite Judge B

### **Timescales for Progression**

Progression as a Kumite/Kata Official is solely dependant on the ability of the individual and the degree of effort put in during attendance at various training and competition events. These qualifications are not something which can be achieved overnight and any candidate must be prepared for a gradual progression through the ranks.

It is not sufficient just to attend all events, as confidence on the Tatami, correct decision making and knowledge of the rules is paramount for progression and will take time to achieve. Individuals should therefore expect different rates of progression through the ranks.

### **.References**

1. *SKGB Official Record Book*. This can be ordered via the downloadable form available on the SKGB website (Refereeing Section) at a cost of £5:00.
2. *WKF 'Kata and Kumite Competition Rules', Revision 9.0. (Effective from January 2015)*. Downloadable from various sources (including the SKGB website, (Refereeing Section).