WORLD KARATE FEDERATION

# WKF DAN GRADE REGULATION

**Updated April 2026**

WORLD KARATE FEDERATION

## PREAMBLE

All WKF National Federations have the authority to request WKF diplomas for Dan grades up to and including 8th Dan provided that the candidate has fulfilled the requirements to age and interval since last grading prescribed by WKF rules. Those individuals wishing WKF diplomas for their grade up to and including 8th Dan must request these to the WKF HQ through their National Federation.

For any grade above this (9th Dan onwards), it is up to the National Federation to issue higher Dan for their accomplishments on the national level – but these grades are not homologated by WKF.

Only in exceptional cases, and on recommendation of the WKF President, the **WKF EC may on its own initiative award a Dan grade above 8th Dan** for outstanding contribution to international karate on the world level. As a general principle, the **WKF is not issuing WKF Dan grades above 8th Dan based on recommendations or requests by NFs or individuals**.

## 1. THE DAN GRADE SYSTEM

1.1 The Dan Grade system is based on recognition of personal development as practitioners, technicians, instructors and exponents of karate. For Grades higher than 8th Dan the rank is a recognition of the person's contribution to karate beyond personal development.

1.2 National Federations (NF) may only give, or certify, Dan Grades for members of their own National Federation.

1.3 There are three categories of Dan Grades within the WKF:

- ***Grades from 1st up to and including 8th Dan given by a National Federation***. These may be homologated by the WKF upon application from the National Federation to the WKF HQ, upon which the homologation certificate will be issued by the WKF President for the NF President's countersignature and then sent to the National Federation HQ.
- ***Grades 9th Dan and above awarded by a National Federation*** for karate accomplishments at a national level. These are not homologated by, or require registration with, the WKF. The applicable certificate is issued by the National Federation only.
- ***Grades 9th & 10th Dan awarded by the WKF Executive Committee*** for karate accomplishments at an international level. The applicable certificate is issued by the WKF.

## 2. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

2.1 The following age and time interval requirements apply to Dan Grades within the WKF:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *1st Dan (shodan)* | *Minimum 15 years of age* | *Minimum 3 years of training* |
| *2nd Dan (nidan)* | *Minimum 17 years of age* | *Minimum 2 years since 1st Dan* |
| *3rd Dan (sandan)* | *Minimum 20 years of age* | *Minimum 3 years since 2nd Dan* |
| *4th Dan (yondan)* | *Minimum 24 years of age* | *Minimum 4 years since 3rd Dan* |
| *5th Dan (godan)* | *Minimum 29 years of age* | *Minimum 5 years since 4th Dan* |
| *6th Dan (rokudan)* | *Minimum 35 years of age* | *Minimum 6 years since 5th Dan* |
| *7th Dan (nanadan)* | *Minimum 42 years of age* | *Minimum 7 years since 6th Dan* |
| *8th Dan (hachidan)* | *Minimum 50 years of age* | *Minimum 8 years since 7th Dan* |
| *9th Dan (kyudan)* | *Awarded for exceptional lifetime achievement for karate* | |
| *10th Dan (judan)* | *Awarded for exceptional lifetime achievement for karate* | |

## 3. APPLICATION PROCESS

3.1 <u>Homologation of Grades given by National Federations:</u>

The WKF homologates Dan Grades from 1st Dan (shodan) through 8th Dan (hachidan) upon receipt of the application signed by the applicants' National Federation President and the remittance of the applicable fee as stipulated by the WKF.

The National Federation must submit its application in official letterhead to the WKF HQ, listing the candidates and stating the following information:

- Title (Mr/Mrs/... as it should appear on the diploma)
- Name (as it should appear on the diploma)
- Surname (as it should appear on the diploma)
- Dan Grade to be recognized
- Date of previous WKF Dan Grade
- Date of birth
- National Federation HQ postal address

By signing the application form, the National Federation certifies that the applicant has fulfilled the requirements of the National Federation and the World Karate Federation as reflected in section 2 above.

The WKF does not homologate honorary Dan Grades awarded by a National Federation.

The responsibility for maintaining appropriate standards for the approval or award of Dan Grades rests with the National Federations. Should a National Federation fail to conform to the homologation requirements that Federation may be subject to the denial of their members' Dan Grade homologation.

*3.2* Grades 9th & 10th Dan awarded by a National Federation:

The rules and application process of the National Federation apply. Grades higher than 8th Dan may be awarded by a National Federation for accomplishments in the development of karate within its National Federation, but they are not homologated by the WKF.

Although Grades above a 8th Dan awarded by a National Federation are not subject to WKF approval or homologation, the National Federation must follow the WKF requirements in regard to age and time intervals between the Grades as given by the WKF.

*3.3* Grades 9th & 10th Dan awarded by the WKF Executive Committee:

From time to time the WKF may, **on its own initiative,** award higher Dan Grades, 9th & 10th Dan to individuals for their accomplishments in international karate. Such Grades are awarded by the WKF Executive Committee on the recommendation of the WKF President.

The nomination has to be formulated in writing to the WKF EC stating the information required for homologation (see 3.1 above), in addition to the persons´ Grading history and the candidates´ specific accomplishments in international karate. There is no application fee charged for this category.

The WKF EC will evaluate all applications received. In case there is one or more EC members objecting to this, the Dan Grade application will **not** be approved.

## 4. DIPLOMAS

4.1 Candidates having their Dan Grade homologated by the WKF will receive at their NF HQ the WKF applicable diploma signed by the WKF President and their National Federation President.

4.2 Diplomas for 9th & 10th Dan Grades and above awarded by a National Federation are issued by the applicable National Federation only.

4.3 Persons being awarded a Dan Grade by the WKF Executive Committee will receive a diploma signed by the WKF President and the WKF General Secretary at the NF HQ.

4.4 Diplomas lost or destroyed may be replaced by the WKF by the National Federation submitting a new application, noting on the application that it is issued for the purpose of obtaining a duplicate diploma, and paying the applicable fee as determined by the WKF.