

PNKF Iaidō Shinsa Rank Requirements

Zen Nippon Kendo Renmei Iai

11/14/23

Youth Mudansha Ranks (age 10 and below)

Perform with mogitō or bokutō (bokken) with saya; use of shinken not permitted

- 6 Kyu** 8 years of age; 6 months practice
AJKF Iai reihō and techniques #1 and #2
- 5 Kyu** 9 years of age; 12 months practice (or 6 months in previous rank)
AJKF Iai reihō and techniques #1 thru #3
- 4 Kyu** 10 years of age; 12 months practice (or 6 months in previous rank)
AJKF Iai reihō and techniques #1 thru #4

Mudansha Ranks (Adult age 18 and up; Youth age 11-17)

Perform with mogitō or bokutō (bokken) with saya; use of shinken not permitted

- 3 Kyu** 11 years of age; 12 months practice (or 6 months in previous rank)
AJKF Iai reihō and five (5) AJKF Iai shitei waza selected from techniques #1 thru #8
- 2 Kyu** 12 years of age; 12 months total practice (or 6 months in previous rank)
AJKF Iai reihō and five (5) AJKF Iai shitei waza selected from techniques #1 thru #10
- 1 Kyu** 12 years of age; 6 months in previous rank
AJKF Iai reihō and five (5) AJKF Iai shitei waza selected from techniques #1 thru #12
Written test

Yudansha Ranks (Adult age 18 and up; Youth age 13-17)

Mogitō required; shinken may be used by 3 Dan and 4 Dan candidates

- 1 Dan** 13 years of age; 3 months in previous rank
AJKF Iai reihō and five (5) AJKF Iai shitei waza within 6 minutes
Written test
- 2 Dan** 14 years of age; 1 year as 1 Dan
AJKF Iai reihō and five (5) AJKF Iai shitei waza within 6 minutes
Written test
- 3 Dan** 16 years of age; 2 years as 2 Dan
AJKF Iai reihō and five (5) AJKF Iai shitei waza within 6 minutes
Written test
- 4 Dan** 19 years of age; 3 years as 3 Dan
AJKF Iai reihō, one koryu technique and four (4) AJKF Iai shitei waza within 6 minutes
Written test

Guidelines for PNKF Iaidō Shinsa Candidates

Eligibility

- Age is the minimum as of the date of the Promotional Examination. If the applicant's birthday is within one (1) month of the Promotional Examination, the applicant will be eligible.
- Number of months of practice or months in rank is the minimum number of months. The amount of time in the previous rank must be within 15 days of the required time.
- Adult first test can be either 3 kyu or 2 kyu; however, the highest rank adult first test is 2 kyu.
- Highest rank for first test as indicated above; no jumping ranks after the first test.
- A lower kyu rank can be awarded if the candidate does not meet passing criteria for their first rank test, except in the case of Junior 6 kyu or adult 3 kyu, which are minimum starting ranks.

Allowed Swords, Medical Supports and Other Protective Gear

- All swords used in PNKF Iaidō shinsa shall meet safety criteria as defined by the exam officials.
- Medical supports and other protective gear may be worn at the candidate's discretion. Doctor's notes are not required; however, applicants may wish to include relevant medical information in their application so that the judges can be informed of any issues that might bear on a technical performance.

Required Techniques

- Kōryū selection, if required, is determined by examinee.
- Candidates may perform standing versions of required seated forms.

Technique Grading

Candidates must meet the following criteria to pass the technical portion.

- Kyū – 3 Dan Consent of 3 of 5 examiners
- 4 Dan Consent of 4 of 6 examiners

Written Exam

- Candidates must submit written answers together with test fees by the application and fee deadline.
- The written exam essay must be written with your own words and submitted in English.
- Computer processed or typed submissions are preferred. Handwritten submissions must be clearly legible; answers that are too difficult to read may be rejected or failed.
- Candidates are referred to the AUSKF Iaidō Study Guide (<https://www.auskf.org/department/iaido/iaido-study-guide>). If additional sources are used, in-text or footnote citations must be included.

Written Exam Grading

- The written examination will be graded pass or fail
- If their written exam fails, the candidate will be informed no later than the time of shinsa results posting (if passing the technical but not the written portion of the exam, their posted shinsa number will be circled); the candidate will be allowed ten (10) days to submit answers for re-grading.

Final Grade / Rank Promotion

- Rank promotion is not official until both the technical and written portions of the exam are passed.

PNKF Iaidō Shinsa Written Test Questions (2024)

Answer two questions from the group of questions for the rank for which you are testing.

First Kyu Candidates

1. List the names of all 12 techniques of All Japan Kendo Federation Iaido with English translations.
2. What is *reihō*?
3. Why are you studying Iaido? What do you hope to accomplish?

Shodan Candidates

1. *Tsuki* (thrusts) occur in five All Japan Kendo Federation Iai techniques. Name these techniques, and identify the target areas.
2. Draw a simple diagram of a *katana*, label as many parts as you can.
3. What is *kirioroshi*? Describe its use in one All Japan Kendo Federation Iaido technique.

Nidan Candidates

1. Discuss *zanshin*. Describe its use in one All Japan Kendo Federation Iaido techniques.
2. Define *hasuji* and explain its importance in Iaido.
3. What is meant by the term *Iai-goshi*? Describe its use in one All Japan Kendo Federation Iaido technique.

Sandan Candidates

1. What is *metsuke*? Describe its use in one All Japan Kendo Federation Iaido technique.
2. Describe how to clean a sword (*shinken* and/or *iaito*).
3. Discuss *jo-ha-kyu*.

Yondan Candidates

1. Describe *kokyū* (breath control) in Iaido.
2. What is meant by *jo-ha-kyū*? Describe its use in at least one All Japan Kendo Federation Iaido technique.
3. Describe the *hara* and explain its use in Iaido.

General Advice for the PNKF Iaido Shinsa Written Exam

The written exam is your opportunity to show an understanding of Iaido beyond just technical requirements. Essays are expected; please do not submit stand-alone definitions. The AUSKF Iaido Study Guide is a good starting place, but rephrase the information into your own words so the graders know that you correctly understand. We appreciate evidence of personal research and indication of increasing breadth and depth of understanding, but don't go overboard! Graders read many essays and it takes a lot of time: please observe the essay lengths recommended below. If you use additional resources beyond the AUSKF website, be sure to include citations so we understand which ideas are yours. Have fun with your research!

Recommended Essay Lengths

Please use a minimum of 1.15 line-spacing and 11-point text, or the handwritten equivalent (use the text on this page as an example of minimum font size and line spacing).

- 1 Kyu** About 5-6 sentences, but no more than one-third page for each answer
- 1 Dan** About 6-8 sentences, but no more than one-half page for each answer
- 2 Dan** About 8-10 sentences, but no more than one-half page for each answer
- 3 Dan** About 10-12 sentences, but no more than two-thirds page for each answer
- 4 Dan** About 12-15 sentences, but no more than two-thirds page for each answer