Blackbelt Grading Preparation – What happens next!

Below is an outline of what has happened in the past during the build-up to previous students Blackbelt grading. This should hopefully give you an idea of what to expect, however, this is only a rough guide based on previous grading and each grading will differ. To keep up to date with what is happening at your grading you need to check the PUMA and NCTKD websites regularly for any late changes.

**Building-up to your grading**

* Following your successful promotion to Blackstripe you will need to start training hard for your pre-grading. At the earliest your Blackbelt grading will be between 6 to 9 months after your Blackstripe grading.
* During this period you must train as often as possible. Previous successful students have trained up to four nights per week. You must also have attended at least 2 Squad and 2 Senior Grades sessions in the 6 months prior to your Pre-grading.
* Blackbelt gradings are held in the Spring and Autumn. The date varies every year due to other TKD events in the calendar. Gradings are usually held in the Swindon region. Your instructor will inform you of the venue or check the PUMA website. Most recently the gradings have been held at the Oasis Leisure Centre, North Star, Swindon.
* Before you can go for your grading you will have to pass your Blackbelt pre-grading. This is an examination designed to assess whether you are ready to be placed in front of the national examining panel.
* The pre-grading will be held locally on the same day as the senior grade training. These are usually held in the Summer and Winter before the main grading. You will be notified of the time and venue nearer to the day.
* An appraisal form will be sent to you, this needs completing and emailing back to your Instructor before the pre-grading.
* Before you can take the pre-grading you will need to complete a Taekwon-Do history form for the 12 months leading up to the pre-grading (this period will vary for Dan grades). By Taekwon-Do history I mean senior grade training, seminars, camps, courses etc. (a list of what you have done outside of your own School).

This list along with a self-assessment form should be emailed to your Instructor for verification, it will then be forwarded to the area grading panel. Both documents need to be with your Instructor no later than 2 weeks before the pre-grading.

* If the area grading panel feels you are ready to pre-grade, you will be required to complete an online application form (PUMA Website). The grading Fee is £20 made payable to P.U.M.A. using your name as the file/doc name.
* You will be told the following week if you have passed the pre-grading by telephone.
* Once you have passed your pre-grading you will be emailed an essay title to answer. The length of the essay is up to you but it will need completing andemailing to Master Gayle (using your name as the file/doc name) as soon as possible. You should now step up your training attending as many lessons/squads/senior grade lessons as possible. Only when you can show your Instructor that you are as good as you can be both with your Taekwon-Do skills and Physical fitness will he give the final go-ahead.
* The grading cost varies depending on your belt grade. Your Instructor will notify you of the fee.
* Usually, on the Wednesday and Thursday before the grading, Master Gayle will host training sessions for students who are grading. This is usually held near to the grading venue (often Swindon leisure centre). This often starts at 10am and finishes at 3pm. Payment for this can be in advance or on the day. This is an excellent way to prepare for the grading and should not be missed.
* The grading venue and date will be announced several months before the grading. Students are advised to check [www.puma-uk.co.uk](http://www.puma-uk.co.uk) for any late changes to the grading.

**The Grading Itself**

* The grading usually takes place over a weekend. Blackstripes on the Saturday and Blackbelts on the Sunday.
* You will be told of your grading start time the week before your grading.
* Students are recommended to arrive a minimum of 1 hour before their grading time.
* At the venue there will be a training room available to warm-up prior to your grading.
* Students are advised to wear smart clothing (shirt, tie and shoes) when arriving at the venue.
* White suits are to be used on the grading, no jewellery, rings removed or taped over.
* Remember, you are on your grading the moment you arrive at the venue.
* Check you have full safety equipment before you leave home, better still, check 1 week prior to your grading.
* After completing the grading, all students are gathered together to complete a “spirit test.” This is held outside, whatever the weather, so take along sportswear (tracksuit/shorts/T-shirt). Something that you can get dirty.
* Your Instructor will notify you of the result by telephone on the following Tuesday. You are asked to refrain from talking about results on the social media until at least Friday, this gives everyone chance to digest their result.
* The presentation evening is the formal event that is held in the month after the grading. This is when you are presented with your Blackbelt. This is often held at the oasis leisure centre in Swindon. The venue time and date will be given out at the grading. It’s a great night, don’t miss it!!

See below for:

* **P.U.M.A. Blackbelt grading guidelines and requirements.**
* **Pre-Grading, Self-Assessment.**
* **Taekwon-Do Training Record. (Continue on a separate sheet and attach if necessary).**

**P.U.M.A. Blackbelt grading guidelines and requirements:**

Expectations & guidelines

For 1st Kups:

* To attend minimum regular training. Plus extra classes, perhaps attending other instructors and other schools lessons if possible.
* Students should concentrate on their own training at this stage and have a responsibility for their own training, i.e. not be spoon fed.
* Need to have a positive helpful attitude, assisting in club to aid personal development.
* Should have good technical knowledge and good etiquette

For 1st Degrees:

* Minimum training is not enough. Extra regular training is required.
* 100% effort required at each lesson, as they are now a role model
* Need to be understanding techniques
* Needs to be a black belt presence at club activities, and need to be attending local gradings and demos.
* We would like them to attend seminars
* Should be taking part in at least one area, e.g. first aid, assistant instructors, umpires

For 2nd Dans

* Necessary to attend competitions to assist
* Better techniques and improved basics
* To attend seminars
* More knowledge of philosophy and history
* Up levels of assistance e.g., referees, instructors course etc.

For 3rd Degrees:

* Being involved in teaching and have a willing attitude to teach
* Be expected to attend and support puma events

For 4th Degrees:

* To help at camps.
* Visible support for association
* Be an ambassador for the association rather than just at club level
* Have emotional maturity
* Not to be selfish in your training
* Have a spirit of giving to others
* Should be known by their presence
* If not already done so live and breathe their martial art

For 5th Degrees and above:

* To be a source of inspiration
* To be approachable
* To be training and attending other seminars to continue learning and being able to pass that information to others.

**Blackbelt Grading Requirements effective from January 2014:**

Please remember minimum training periods are just that, few students reach the required standard in minimum time.

Grading to 1st Degree:

Minimum since last grading 6 months

New Century Taekwon-Do (P.U.M.A. North) also requires 1st Kup students to attend at least two squads and two SGT’s (senior grade training) in the six months prior to your pre-grading.

Continued below

Grading to 2nd Degree:

Minimum Age 14

Minimum training period since last grading 2 years

Attend at least 1 national black belt training session/technical seminar or camp per year \*

New Century Taekwon-Do (P.U.M.A. North) also requires 1st Degree students to attend at least two squads and two SGT’s (senior grade training) per year.

Grading to 3rd Degree:

Minimum training period since last grading 3 years

Qualified Umpire and should be officiating regularly (a couple of times per year)

Attend at least 2 national black belt training sessions/technical seminars or camps per year \*

New Century Taekwon-Do (P.U.M.A. North) also requires 2nd Degree students to attend at least two squads and two SGT’s (senior grade training) per year.

Grading to 4th Degree:

Minimum Age 24

Minimum training period since last grading 4 years

Qualified Assistant Instructor (and teaching regularly even if not running their own school)

Qualified Referee (and still officiating regularly)

Attend at least 2 national black belt training sessions/technical seminars or camps per year \*

Please apply to the P.U.M.A. panel for permission to grade.

New Century Taekwon-Do (P.U.M.A. North) also requires 3rd Degree students to attend at least two squads and two SGT’s (senior grade training) per year.

Grading to 5th Degree

Minimum training period since last grading 5 years

Qualified Assistant Instructor (and teaching regularly even if not running their own school)

Qualified Referee (and still officiating regularly)

Attend at least 2 national black belt training sessions/technical seminars or camps per year \*

Must be invited to grade by the panel

New Century Taekwon-Do (P.U.M.A. North) also requires 4th Degree students to attend at least two squads and two SGT’s (senior grade training) per year.

Grading to 6th Degree

Minimum training period since last grading 6 years

Qualified Assistant Instructor (and teaching regularly even if not running their own school)

Qualified Referee (and still officiating regularly)

Attend at least 2 national black belt training sessions/technical seminars or camps per year \*

Must be invited to grade by the panel

New Century Taekwon-Do (P.U.M.A. North) also requires 5th Degree students to attend at least two squads and two SGT’s (senior grade training) per year.

\* National black belt training sessions/technical seminars do not include local area sessions, only those organised by PUMA centrally with black belt training days also counting. The sessions must be completed each year as opposed to doing 5 one year and none the next for example.

Pre-Grading Self-Assessment.

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|  | **Excellent** | | **Very Good** | | **Good** | | **Satisfactory** | | **Improvement desired** | | **Improvement essential** | |
| Technical Ability |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Use of power |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Knowledge of Patterns |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Free Sparring |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Self Control  regarding free sparring |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Set Sparring |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Kicks |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Self Defence |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| TKD Theory |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Fitness |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Rate your support for**  **the following:** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Your TKD School |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| For P.U.M.A. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Squad |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Seminars |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Puma events |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tournaments |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

***Taekwon-Do Training Record***

In preparation for your next grading you need to demonstrate to the pre-grading panel your commitment to TKD outside of your own school training.

1st kups require 12 months Taekwon-Do history up to your pre-grading.

1st/2nd Dan requires 2 years Taekwon-Do history up to your pre-grading. 2nd/3rd Dan requires 3 years.

3rd/4th Dan requires 4 years. 4th/5th Dan requires 5 years and permission to grade from PUMA.

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| **Name** |  | **ID Number** |  |
| **TKD School** |  | **Date of 1st Kup** |  |
| **Dob** |  | **Date of Degree** |  |
| **Instructor** |  | **Pre-grading Date** |  |

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| **Year One** | | | | | |
| **Training Dates** | | **Instructor Signature** | **Training Dates** | **Instructor Signature** | |
| **Area/ National Squad** | | | | | |
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| **Gradings** | | | | | |
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| **Competitions** | | | | | |
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| **Senior GradeTraining** | | | | | |
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| **National Seminars** | | | | | |
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| **Camps / Demonstration** | | | | | |
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| **Year Two** | | | | | |
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| **Area/ National Squad** | | | | | |
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| **Gradings** | | | | | |
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| **Competitions** | | | | | |
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| **Senior Grade Training** | | | | | |
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| **National Seminars** | | | | | |
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| **Camps / Demonstration** | | | | | |
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| **Additional Training / Courses Attended** | | | | | |
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| **Year Three** | | | | | |
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| **Senior Grade Training** | | | | | |
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| **Year Four** | | | | | |
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| **Senior Grade Training** | | | | | |
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| **Year Five** | | | | | |
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| **Year Six** | | | | | |
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| **Senior Grade Training** | | | | | |
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| **Camps / Demonstration** | | | | | |
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| **Additional Training / Courses Attended** | | | | | |
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