

Lancashire Aikikai

Grading Form

Name _____

Present Grade _____

1 Correctness of techniques _____

2 Effectiveness of techniques _____

3 Posture _____

4 Maai _____

5 Kokyu Ryoku _____

6 Flowing and Flexibility (Relaxation) _____

7 Zanshin _____

8 Spirit _____

9 Ukemi _____

10 Manner and Attitude _____

Total _____

Comments _____

Awarded _____

Signed _____

Date _____

After a grading students receive a copy of their results on a Grading Form, on this form are ten areas and at the side of each area is a mark< out of ten, this is awarded according to the student's performance in that area.

Many beginners and lower grades often look puzzled afterwards and tend to ask what does "MAAI" or "ZANSIN" mean. To try and help them understand I will set down the criteria and meaning of each area.

1. **Correctness of Technique** :- I look for position of hands and feet. Are you doing the correct body movement (Tenkan, Irimi)? Are you projecting to the correct side?
2. **Effectiveness of Technique** :- Has the technique worked? How efficiently was it carried out? Did the UKE go for you or was he effectively projected?
3. **Posture** :- Is the student standing in the correct posture? Right or left foot in front, good balance; knees bent; distributing the body weight evenly, high or low posture; etc.
4. **Maa** :- Is one of the most important elements in AIKIDO. It means distance in Relationship to your opponent.

To judge the correct Maai many factors have to be considered. Size of persons involved, number of opponents, the space available Are weapons involved? Maai is constantly changing through the action created by attack and defence. Its exact distance cannot be measured or taught in a fixed form, but has to be developed through experience and practice.

5. **Kokyu Ryoku** :- This is what we refer to a "KI" which is "THE UNIVERSALLY GREAT POWER" that can be generated when body and mind are linked to become "ONE".

Certain techniques of breathing also produce "KI". Kokyu = Breath: Ryoku = Power. Therefore I look for exhalation at the end of a technique.

6. **Flowing and Flexibility** :- Look for jerky movement, this means your mind and body are not flowing. Nice large movements, are encouraged, circular movements and continuity of technique are all being observed.
7. **Zanshin** :- 'OBSERVING YOUR OPPONENT AFTER EXECUTING A TECHNIQUE'. Physical technique finishes when one executes the technique but action still goes on in the consciousness thinking about what will happen next. A bridge between one technique and the next.
8. **Spirit** :- Are the actions positive? Is there confidence in carrying out the technique? Is there natural instinct in movements? Do you have a fighting instinct?
9. **Ukemi** :- This is a method of protecting oneself against throwing techniques. There are various methods of doing UKEMI according to the the technique and conditions. I look for smoothness of movement and ability to land safely in a fighting posture.
10. **Manner .and Attitude** :- As it says I look at your manner and attitude both on and off the mat. Are you using Aikido to show off? Are you using AIKIDO to pick on the weaker? Do you care what you do on the mat? Do you try to hurt others? These are some of the questions you must ask yourself.

I hope the explanations will help in your future gradings and get rid of the puzzled faces when you receive your grading forms in the future.