

Britain's Premier Karate Association



BCKA SCOTLAND

Information Brochure



A Combat Group Association

BRITISH COMBAT KARATE ASSOCIATION ♀

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the BCKA and I hope the following information is helpful and interesting. We've posed a series of questions that we ourselves would want answers to if we were looking to join a new association and trust that the answers are both helpful and interesting.

FAQs

Why another Karate organisation

Well, first, we are not a 'style' association, which we accept are the 'breeding ground' for nearly all Karateka, rather we are 'multi-styled' from a traditional perspective, but also 'multi-style' in respect of where an Instructor may have taken his, or her traditional roots. This could be with emphasis on the 'street' effectiveness, full contact, or freestyle competition. So we are a bridge to all of these *'variations on a theme'*.



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There are many multi-styled organisations in the U.K.

We have one of the largest and most respected multi-style organisations in the UK - the **British Combat Association (BCA)**, but this is, truly, an 'all martial arts styles' association not simply Karate, whereas the **BCKA** is a 'home' solely for Karate Instructors and their students. Even those organisations that purport to be 'all things to all people,' are seldom that, often emphasising some speciality, such as freestyle competition, or purely traditional Karate in a non-progressive environment. Few organisations have the experience we do in the '*variations on a theme.*'

Why now?

Within the **BCA** membership we have a tremendously strong Karate faction and many of the clubs are still following a traditional path, but when the BCA was formed in 1993, we



intentionally avoided linking with any national Governing body which, on the one hand has given us great independence, but equally denied students, who may still follow a traditional competitive path, with access, ultimately, to national squads.

So, the decision was taken to form a separate Karate association, a sister organisation to the BCA, but with its own

identity and now officially a member of the **English Karate Federation (EKF)** and **Scottish Governing Body (SKGB)**, now providing pathways to World Karate Federation style competitions and national squads .

Will Instructors coming in enjoy the opportunity for BCA membership

Absolutely, and this will be the great plus for Karate Instructors in that they will, if they so chose, be members of two organisations and can benefit from the great reputation that the BCA has. Also as the BCKA, like the BCA and World Combat Association (WCA) are member organisations of the **Combat Group**, the umbrella organisation of the three Associations. This opens the door to a wide, international network of martial arts groups.

Can you explain the 'variations on a theme'

Yes, of course. First we have the 'styles' and, as we know, since the late 1950's onwards, there has been a profusion of traditional Okinawan and Japanese styles, some with tens of thousands of practitioners and others with just a few hundred. Some have international governing bodies, some just have UK affiliation and others have no links whatsoever. The big split in the UK Karate scene occurred in the late 60's and early 70's when two things happened. The first was the belief that people could progress without the Japanese and that the over-controlling hand of the large style organisations no longer held sway, as clubs and larger groups felt confident in breaking away often, though, leaving them isolated from recognition, gradings, support and continuing instruction.

Was this a good or bad thing?

Both; on the one hand, the political and restrictive grip of the big associations was broken, but in the succeeding vacuum, standards slipped. Instructors, isolated from 'official' gradings, graded themselves, and despite the benefit of freedom, one downside was the lack of standards that have ensued since then.

What about the positive developments

This is the other element of the 'variations on a theme,' and that is the 'usage,' or more specifically, the emphasis we place on the teaching of Karate. When the 'lid came off,' restrictions ceased and we saw all the branches start to grow. First came the 'Full Contact Karate' competitions, closely followed by the 'Freestyle' competitions and, in the 90's, the rise of the 'practical/self defence' Instructors and groups. Another area of emphasis has been the strong interest in true Bunkai applications.

Has the BCKA something to offer all these interests

Without question. We have access to a wide range of competitions, from traditional to semi-contact international World Championships. If you have students with particular skills, either in the Kumite, or Kata arenas, our Squad training sessions will bring out the very best in them.

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The Lineup

Peter Consterdine - Chief Instructor

A **9th Dan** in Karate, with over 55 years continuous training and some 8 years on the Gt. Britain and England Karate squads. Trained to 1st dan in Wado Ryu and in 1969 was a founder member of the Shukokai Karate Union (SKU), training with one of his strongest influences Shigeru Kimura Sensei. Peter was one of very few British Karate Internationals who fought Full Contact, taking a British title in the mid 70's.

Renowned not only for his groundbreaking work on the 'practical' application of martial arts, but also for his skill and abilities in melding traditional Karate with kickboxing, Wing Chun and other combative and competitive arts. Peter's belief is that whilst the practice of karate must be aesthetic, it must also have 'content.' In other words it must have the priority of having 'impactive effect'; it must work.



The Coaching & Grading Panel

Below are the BCKA's senior coaches, grading officers and Technical Committee. These internationally recognised Instructors represent the whole spectrum of traditional and modern Karate, all having served their time coming through the traditional ranks and provide the support for Geoff and Peter in the coaching and grading tasks.

Iain Abernethy 7th Dan

Traditional, Bunkai and applied Karate exponent. Iain needs no introduction to the Karate community, renowned for his work on the functional application of traditional Kata. Iain is one of the senior Coaches of the BCA and has developed a world wide reputation for his unique skills.

Iain is in high demand not only in the UK but Internationally and is the International Chief Instructor of the World Combat Association (WCA), the overseas arm of the Combat Group.



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Lee Sansum 7th Dan

One of Kickboxing and Sport Karate superstars. Lee is also one of the Association's foremost 'combat' instructors, having taught military units, worked as an international bodyguard whilst also acknowledged as one of the UK's foremost 'martial arts motivator.'

Lee is the BCKA's Sport Karate Coach.



What about the 'politics?'

We hear modern groups talking about having 'no politics,' whereas it's seldom practiced in reality and the restrictions they place on Instructors and students are often more draconian than they were in the bad old days. We know how to do it in reality, however, as we've successfully demonstrated with the BCA over the past 27 years and which we often hear people say is one of very few the credible martial arts organisations in the UK. We place no restrictions on who you train with, grade with, or compete against.

Can you explain your comments about 'service'

Service is more than simply providing insurance cover and licence books and we see ourselves in a support role for any instructor who needs help with growing, or changing. We have some of the most commercially astute Instructors in the WCA/BCA/BCKA whose knowledge is available and all of us have massive experience with growing the business side of karate. We have mentored people through the BCA to grow to be not only household, but international names. We have helped people through the process of change as they have taken their core, traditional art and introduced other concepts and emphasis. All this skill and knowledge is available to all our people in the BCKA.

What other services are there in the Association

Below is a bullet point list at the end of FAQs, but specifically I should mention one of the more unglamorous aspects and that is administration. Ask any BCA/BCKA Instructor about the level of efficiency in the Associations and they will tell you it is the most effectively run

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organisations they have ever been with. Student licenses and insurances are back with Instructors almost by return. We measure our service levels in days, not weeks, or even months in some cases we have heard about. You will never need to make an excuse to your students as to where their membership/grading books are. Your queries are answered immediately and any help we can be in areas such as syllabus development, or marketing you only need to ask.








Where does the BCKA stand on commercialism and Karate

Lets be quite clear on the issue. The argument is that the more commercial an Instructor gets, the worse the standard gets, but it's a specious argument. There is no question, and we've all seen it, that there are organisations that are so commercially focused, with growth so driven, that standards are appalling. That, however, does not mean that all Instructors keen to succeed commercially, have poor standards; just the opposite. The two are not mutually exclusive. It's simply a matter of personal preference. One Instructor may be happy teaching two nights in a church hall whilst another operates from 5,000 sq. ft. of purpose built premises, and good luck to both, but it's just a personal choice and neither should be open to criticism. It's the quality of the product that counts.

The Bullet Points...

- ☒ Comprehensive Instructor and student Personal Accident(PA) and liability insurance
- ☒ Grading/membership book and a range of customised certificates for Instructors, Dan and Kyu grades
- ☒ Gradings and grading ratification for traditional, freestyle and full contact Instructors
- ☒ Top class competitions
- ☒ Squad training - traditional (Kumite & Kata), freestyle, and Full Contact
- ☒ Regular seminars and self protection qualifications (Combat Coach)
- ☒ Membership of the **England Karate Federation (EKF)**
- ☒ Membership of the **Scottish Karate Governing Body (SKGB)**
- ☒ Potential for joint membership of the **British Combat Association (BCA)**

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-  DBS checking facility
-  Full support for yours and your club's development
-  Entry on the BCKA's website 'Club Listing'
-  Exceptional Administration
-  A network of the very best martial artists through all 3 Associations
-  Support with syllabus construction and certification
-  Club development assistance and marketing support

Gradings

Dan Gradings (BCKA)

Within the BCKA we have generally adopted the typical Japanese approach to Kyu and Dan gradings. For instance we expect clubs grading students for Shodan (1st Dan) that they should have a minimum of six months training after receiving their 1st Kyu and a minimum of three to three and a half years training to have reached 1st Kyu.

Club Gradings

The BCA, unlike many traditional martial arts organisations has no financial interest in club gradings which is the responsibility of the club Chief Instructor. If any Instructor feels they need an additional Instructor to assist with a grading to form a panel then that arrangement is between those Instructors, but at the BCA we are happy to help to find a co-examiner if one isn't readily available.

Dan Gradings

Throughout the year we hold Black Belt grading panels and these are announced via our mailing system. Given the wide diversity of the styles and systems practised within the BCA we may, on occasions, have to grade individuals separately to the panels and this can be arranged as and when required. We have a set grading fee for all Dan Grades (see below) and grading intervals are in line with traditional Japanese Budo gradings, i.e. 4yrs between 3rd Dan and 4th Dan etc.

Dan Grading Options & Costs

We have 3 options for Dan gradings within the Combat Group Associations.

Option 1. Dan Grade 'Recognition'

Where a Dan grading has been awarded outside of the BCA by an organisation, or grading examiner we approve, we are happy to 'recognise' that grading and issue a 'Dan Grade Recognition' certificate to that effect. The cost of this is just £25 to include an A4 certificate*.

Option 2. 'Time-Served Award'

Where we have an Instructor or club Black Belt who has genuinely reached 4th Dan with a physical grading and is now due on a time-served basis for 5th Dan, say, (or higher), then within the Combat Group Associations we do not expect these to be physical gradings unless the individual so desires. The cost of this is £75 to include an A4 certificate*.

Option 3. A Physical Grading

As outlined above, we hold both panel and individual Black Belt gradings across a wide range of martial art disciplines. The cost of this is £125 (for all Dan grades) and includes an A4 certificate*.

**where an individual requires an A3 certificate add £25 to all the above three costs.*

Kyu Grade Certificates

BCKA Kyu grade certificates, customised with the club logo, are available at a cost of £2.50. Customised BCKA certificates are a service we offer, but are not compulsory and, unlike many organisations, the BCKA does not charge Instructors for Kyu grade registrations.

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What are the membership costs?

We have tried to make the costs of membership to the BCKA very competitive, (by contrast with the large, traditional style organisations), and are as follows;

🕒 **Group/Club Registration** - This fee also includes the Chief Instructor's personal membership of the BCKA.....**£50**. **N.B.** (Not repeated at renewal if a minimum 25 students are registered within a year.

🕒 **Senior Student (+15 yrs)**.....**£16** (includes the Licence/Record Book for new students*)

🕒 **Junior Student (-15 yrs)**.....**£13** (includes the Licence/Record Book for new students*)

* Student membership fee includes Personal Accident insurance and 'member to member' liability cover.

NOTES (Optional Costs)

☒ **UK Governing Bodies (EKF/SKGB)**

🕒 Depending on where students live they can be licensed with either the **Scottish Karate Governing Body (SKGB)** or the **English Karate Federation (EKF)**. The cost of this affiliation is....**£3 SKGB and £3 EKF**

☒ **Joint British Combat Association (BCA) membership;**

🕒 **Instructors** in the BCKA can affiliate to the BCA and receive a BCA Instructor's Certificate and Licence/Record book at a cost of.....**£6**

🕒 **Students** can also affiliate at a cost of.....**£2** (includes BCA Licence/Record book)

🕒 A BCKA badge is available at a cost of.....**£2.50**

☒ The student membership application form, clearly indicates the core cost of membership and additional optional charges.

☒ Visit the BCKA website to see the range of products available for Instructors and students.

Insurance

For details of the BCKA student and Instructor insurances - Personal Accident and Liability please contact; info@britishcombatassociation.com

Instructors are required to keep recognised current qualifications in First Aid, Coaching, Health & Safety, Child Protection and their DBS up to date.

How do I proceed with an application?

At this stage all we need to assess the application for Group/Club membership simply fill out the application form. Any supporting documentation that can be supplied with the application is welcome as, eventually, should you wish to proceed with the application we will need to have seen all supporting evidence of grades and a DBS standard disclosure before endorsing the application.

Club and Associate Instructor application forms are available from info@britishcombatkarate.co.uk - Complete and get this back to us and we will let you know what additional documentation we may need.

Alternatively, download the form from the BCKA website under the 'About' heading. Fill it in and post it back to us with any copy documentation you have to help us get a good picture of what you have done and where you hope to go with yourself and your group in the future.

Payment can be made securely through PayPal, bank transfer, over the phone with a credit/debit card, or by cheque if you are posting everything off to us

If you are looking for an Association that will put yours and your students interests first, run by people with the highest respect not just within UK martial arts circles, but internationally, then the BCKA is for you.

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So, pick up the phone, write, email, or simply fill in the application form to be a part of the most progressive and prestigious Karate organisation in the UK.

Peter Consterdine

Chairman and Chief Instructor

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