

JKS England Black & Brown Belt Open Training Course April 2026

The latest JKS England Black and Brown Belt Course was held on 26th April at Long Eaton and saw a very busy dojo line up ready for the session. It was to be Matt Price Sensei, 7th Dan, JKS England Squad Coach who would put the class through their paces in a very targeted session. The seminar would cover a huge variety of content with the aim of understanding what is required in the delivery of, as well as the instruction for students attempting their shodan grading.



Following the comprehensive warmup, Matt Sensei covered how to execute the long stepping punch which starts the basics element of the syllabus. Driving and controlling the rear leg position was something Matt Sensei spent time demonstrating in order to allow students to appreciate how the structure needs to be co-ordinated properly to land in a position where the first punch is delivered sharply and dynamically. The hip, body and shoulder action would then be explained with how to maximise energy for the first punch but also ensure this is done for the second two, even with the feet

remaining static.

Matt Sensei would continue to be succinct throughout the session, as is the nature of his instruction and in line with the teaching delivered at the Headquarters in Japan. All the shodan grading combinations would be demonstrated and then practiced. With no stone left unturned, Matt Sensei was thorough in clarifying all of the fundamentals needing to be present to achieve the shodan grade and therefore be successful on their grading day. These points were echoed by Alan Campbell Sensei, 8th Dan Head of JKS England who was also on hand to give individuals tailored advice as they practiced.

Matt Sensei explained the importance in not collapsing the stance at any point as correct form is needed to deliver strong strikes and blocks. Matt Sensei detailed when the bracing of the legs could be intentionally softened for transitions when adjusting the weight distribution. Matt Sensei covered the salient points which grading examiners are looking to be present, reiterating much of what students hear in their home dojos but refining this further with sufficient time designated to prepare all of the students in the most complete manner possible. Matt Sensei covered how many of the combinations can be rushed before each technique and stance is set. The progression through the combination needing the foundation of stance to be managed decisively, in order to deliver dynamic techniques and prevent the sequence from being rushed, losing any vital qualities being assessed.



Matt Sensei never lost sight of the most basic prerequisites such as hikite and hip rotation even when the concentration moved to more detailed and demanding portions of the grading combinations. All the combinations, covering a wealth of techniques, were featured, with Matt Sensei often reiterating how completion of the first move correctly is essential for the rest of the combination to be performed and if not present, that what may then follow cannot fulfil the necessary attributes needed to pass the grading.



After a break, students then moved on to the kata section where Matt Sensei kept up the high focus on the technical and performance aspects. Detailing not only what should be done, Matt Sensei continued to cover common mistakes and how to train the body or timing to address them. Matt Sensei had also throughout the day, continued to allude to the mentality needed with how to approach the grading from start to finish, spending much of this time on the kumite section which students would practice next. After Bassai-Dai had been covered in particular, students were encouraged to ask any questions that they had with Matt Sensei able to explain any of the current JKS standardisation.

Students would next be paired as the dojo became filled with kiais, explosive attacks and swift, measured counters. Matt Sensei examined the jiyu-ippun very thoughtfully, helping students to understand the importance that half of what is being examined is the attacks, where on grading day, sometimes students try to conserve energy for when they defend or lack the conviction which should elevate them above the peers to impress the table, ultimately deciding the grading result. Matt Sensei covered how to adjudge correct distance to make certain the attack would have hit the target if not for the response of the defender.

Matt Sensei had delivered the perfect session for brown belts to appreciate things that they need to improve and also how to go about this. The whole syllabus had been scrutinised closely with students able to increase their knowledge on the things to concentrate on to help them in joining the dan ranks sought by every martial arts practitioner.

