

Spring School 2014 was without doubt one of the most fun and informative Shoto Budo courses I have ever been a part of. There was a different structure to this year's course as it was the first national course since the release of the new grading syllabus. The course demonstrated the key principle of self-defence, as well as showing how to apply self-awareness within varying environments and circumstances. This was evident in the way we were set up into different groups. We were divided into four different groups in relation to grade (Kyu Grades, Brown Belts, Black Belts+1st Dans, 2nd Dans and above) each group were assigned a pair of instructors who's role was to teach an aspect of the new grading syllabus. One of the advantages to separating the grades was that it highlighted the beneficial nature of the Shoto Budo spiral model. The spiral model of development allowed the different groups to be given different layers of information that were suitable to their grade, which was great because it allowed the lower grades to receive the technical information 'How do I do this?' and allowed the higher grades to receive more in-depth detail on the concepts being taught. It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience from which we all received a fantastic amount of useful information.

It was also great to have the Fin's over for the course. For many of us it was our first time having the privilege to train with such talented martial artists. It was fantastic having the opportunity to view their skills and receive their knowledge. I am sure many martial artists have been inspired to progress themselves thanks to these guys' influence.

Paul Kelly (3rd Dan)