

CUET PG 2026 Buddhist Studies Question Paper with Solutions(Memory Based)

Time Allowed :1 Hours 30 minutes	Maximum Marks :300	Total Questions :75
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General Instructions

1. The exam lasts 90 minutes (1 hour 30 minutes).
2. There are 75 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) to be answered.
3. +4 marks for every correct answer. -1 mark (negative marking) for every incorrect answer. 0 marks for unanswered or un-attempted questions.
4. For any discrepancy in questions, the English version is considered final (except for language-specific papers).
5. Click one of the four options to choose an answer.
6. You must click "Save & Next" to confirm your response. Only saved answers are considered for evaluation.
7. Use "Mark for Review & Next" to flag a question for later. You can unselect or change your answer using the "Clear Response" button.
8. All calculations must be done on the Rough Sheets provided at the centre. These must be returned to the invigilator after the exam.

1. Who is the author of the famous Sanskrit text Buddhacarita?

- (A) Kalidasa
- (B) Ashvaghosha
- (C) Banabhatta
- (D) Nagarjuna

Correct Answer: (B) Ashvaghosha

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The *Buddhacarita* (Acts of the Buddha) is a seminal Sanskrit epic poem (Mahakavya) written in the early 2nd century CE. It serves as one of the most complete and poetic biographies of Gautama Buddha.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The author, Ashvaghosha, was a Buddhist philosopher and poet who lived in Northern India. He was a key figure in the court of the Kushan King Kanishka and is often credited with bridging the gap between early Buddhist thought and the developing Mahayana tradition. While Kalidasa is known for Hindu epics, Banabhatta for court chronicles, and Nagarjuna for Madhyamaka philosophy, Ashvaghosha is specifically recognized for this masterpiece on the Buddha's life.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The *Buddhacarita* was authored by Ashvaghosha.

💡 Quick Tip

Ashvaghosha is traditionally considered the first Sanskrit dramatist. If a question asks about the transition from Pali to Sanskrit literature in Buddhism, he is the key figure to remember.

2. In which city was the Third Buddhist Council held under the patronage of Emperor Ashoka?

- (A) Rajgir
- (B) Vaishali
- (C) Pataliputra
- (D) Sarnath

Correct Answer: (C) Pataliputra

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

The Buddhist Councils were historical assemblies organized to preserve the purity of the Dhamma and resolve disputes within the Sangha. Each council was held under the patronage of a different king.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The Third Buddhist Council took place around 250 BCE at Pataliputra (modern-day Patna). It was convened by Emperor Ashoka of the Maurya Dynasty and presided over by the monk Moggaliputta Tissa.

The primary goal was to purge the Sangha of heretical factions and corruption.

A major outcome of this council was the finalization of the *Abhidhamma Pitaka*, the third part of the Pali Canon.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The Third Buddhist Council was held in Pataliputra.

💡 Quick Tip

Use the acronym **R-V-P-K** for Council Locations: Rajgir (1st), Vaishali (2nd), Pataliputra (3rd), and Kashmir (4th).

3. What is the literal meaning of the term 'Pratityasamutpada' in Buddhist philosophy?

- (A) Path of liberation
- (B) Dependent origination
- (C) Cycle of rebirth
- (D) Ultimate truth

Correct Answer: (B) Dependent origination

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Pratityasamutpada is often called the "Heart of Buddhism." It explains the metaphysical nature of how all things come into existence and subsequently cease.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The word is derived from *Pratitya* (meaning "having depended") and *Samutpada* (meaning "arising" or "origination").

This doctrine states that no phenomenon exists independently; every event arises in dependence on causes and conditions.

It is most famously detailed in the "Twelve Nidanas" (links), showing how ignorance leads to suffering through a chain of dependent causes.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The literal meaning is Dependent Origination.

 Quick Tip

This concept is the Buddhist answer to the question of "creation"—nothing is created from nothing; everything is a link in a chain of cause and effect.

4. Which section of the Tripitaka contains the rules and discipline for the monastic order?

- (A) Sutta Pitaka
- (B) Vinaya Pitaka
- (C) Abhidhamma Pitaka
- (D) Dharma Pitaka

Correct Answer: (B) Vinaya Pitaka

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The *Tripitaka* (Three Baskets) is the collection of primary Pali scriptures. Each "basket" serves

a specific purpose in the preservation of the Buddha's teachings.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. **Sutta Pitaka:** Contains the discourses and sermons of the Buddha.
2. **Vinaya Pitaka:** Contains the code of discipline for monks (Bhikkhus) and nuns (Bhikkhunis). It includes the *Patimokkha* (list of 227/311 rules).
3. **Abhidhamma Pitaka:** Contains philosophical and psychological systematization of the teachings.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The Vinaya Pitaka is the section containing monastic rules.

 Quick Tip

Think of "V" in Vinaya as Value-based conduct or Rules. It is the first "basket" to be recited at the first council.

5. What are the 'Three Marks of Existence' (Tilakkhana) in Buddhism?

- (A) Dharma, Sangha, Buddha
- (B) Suffering, Desire, Ignorance
- (C) Impermanence, Suffering, Non-self
- (D) Birth, Death, Rebirth

Correct Answer: (C) Impermanence, Suffering, Non-self

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The *Tilakkhana* are the three characteristics that describe the nature of all conditioned reality. Realizing these three marks is considered essential for liberation.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The three marks are:

1. **Anicca (Impermanence):** Everything is in a state of flux; nothing lasts forever.
 2. **Dukkha (Suffering):** Because things are impermanent, clinging to them results in unsatisfactoriness.
 3. **Anatta (Non-self):** There is no permanent, unchanging soul or "I" in any phenomenon.
- Option A refers to the Three Jewels; Option B refers to elements of the Four Noble Truths.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The Three Marks are Impermanence, Suffering, and Non-self.

💡 Quick Tip

Remember the Pali terms: **Anicca, Dukkha, Anatta**. These are the fundamental descriptors of the physical and mental world in Buddhism.

6. Which Buddhist school is known for the doctrine of 'Sunyata' (Emptiness) as propounded by Nagarjuna?

- (A) Theravada
- (B) Mahayana
- (C) Vajrayana
- (D) Hinayana

Correct Answer: (B) Mahayana

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The doctrine of *Sunyata* (Emptiness) is the cornerstone of Mahayana philosophy, specifically the Madhyamaka school founded by Nagarjuna.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Nagarjuna (c. 150–250 CE) used the concept of *Sunyata* to explain that all phenomena are empty of "intrinsic nature" (*svabhava*) because they arise dependently.

While early Buddhism used emptiness to describe the lack of a "self," Nagarjuna expanded it to mean that all concepts and objects lack independent existence.

This school is a major pillar of the **Mahayana** tradition.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The Mahayana school is associated with Nagarjuna's doctrine of Sunyata.

💡 Quick Tip

Nagarjuna is often referred to as the "Second Buddha" in the Mahayana tradition due to the profound impact of his dialectical reasoning.

7. What is the name of the future Buddha who is currently residing in the Tushita Heaven?

- (A) Avalokiteshvara
- (B) Maitreya
- (C) Manjushri
- (D) Amitabha

Correct Answer: (B) Maitreya

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Buddhist cosmology describes various realms and a timeline of multiple Buddhas. The era of the current Buddha (Gautama) will eventually fade, leading to the arrival of a new Buddha.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Maitreya is recognized by nearly all Buddhist sects as the successor to the historical Shakya-muni Buddha.

He is currently believed to be a Bodhisattva residing in the *Tushita* Heaven, a realm where enlightened beings dwell before their final birth on Earth.

Avalokiteshvara (Compassion), Manjushri (Wisdom), and Amitabha (Infinite Light) are other significant figures but are not designated as the "Next Buddha" of our world system.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The future Buddha is Maitreya.

 Quick Tip

In art, Maitreya is often depicted sitting "western-style" on a chair, symbolizing his readiness to step down to Earth.

8. The concept of 'Alayavijnana' (Storehouse Consciousness) is a central tenet of which philosophical school?

- (A) Madhyamaka
- (B) Yogachara
- (C) Theravada
- (D) Vaibhashika

Correct Answer: (B) Yogachara

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Alayavijnana is a sophisticated psychological concept used to explain the continuity of karma without a permanent soul.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The **Yogachara** school (also called *Vijnanavada* or Mind-Only school) was founded by Asanga and Vasubandhu.

They introduced the idea of an 8th layer of consciousness called the "Storehouse Consciousness."

It stores the "seeds" (*Bijnas*) of past actions, which ripen into future experiences. This resolved

the problem of how karma carries over across lifetimes when there is no permanent "self."

Step 3: Final Answer:

The concept of Alayavijnana belongs to the Yogachara school.

💡 Quick Tip

Associate "Yoga" with the "Mind" or "Consciousness." Yogachara focuses on the internal psychological state, whereas Madhyamaka focuses on external "Emptiness."

9. Which mudra (hand gesture) did the Buddha perform at the moment of his Enlightenment?

- (A) Dharmachakra Mudra
- (B) Abhaya Mudra
- (C) Bhumisparsha Mudra
- (D) Dhyana Mudra

Correct Answer: (C) Bhumisparsha Mudra

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Mudras are symbolic hand gestures in Buddhist art that represent specific episodes in the Buddha's life or particular spiritual qualities.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The **Bhumisparsha Mudra** (Earth-Touching Gesture) depicts the Buddha sitting with his right hand reaching down to touch the ground.

This happened when Mara challenged his right to sit under the Bodhi tree. The Buddha called the Earth to witness his lifetimes of merit.

1. *Dharmachakra*: Turning the wheel (First Sermon).
2. *Abhaya*: Fearlessness/Protection.
3. *Dhyana*: Deep Meditation.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The Bhumisparsha Mudra was performed at the moment of Enlightenment.

💡 Quick Tip

"Bhumi" means Earth and "Sparsha" means Touch. This is the most iconic image of the Buddha in Bodh Gaya.

10. In which town did Gautama Buddha deliver his first sermon, known as Dharmachakrapravartana?

- (A) Bodh Gaya
- (B) Kushinagar
- (C) Sarnath
- (D) Lumbini

Correct Answer: (C) Sarnath

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The *Dharmachakrapravartana Sutra* (Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion) marks the beginning of the Buddhist Sangha and the first public teaching of the Four Noble Truths.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

After attaining enlightenment at Bodh Gaya, the Buddha walked to the Deer Park in **Sarnath**, near Varanasi.

There, he met his five former ascetic companions and delivered his first sermon.

- Lumbini: Birth.
- Bodh Gaya: Enlightenment.
- Kushinagar: Death (Parinirvana).

Step 3: Final Answer:

The first sermon was delivered at Sarnath.

 Quick Tip

Sarnath is one of the four main pilgrimage sites. The Ashoka Pillar and the Dhamekh Stupa are located there to commemorate this event.

11. What is the name of the dialogue between the Indo-Greek King Milinda and the monk Nagasena?

- (A) Dhammapada
- (B) Milindapanha
- (C) Suttanipata
- (D) Mahavamsa

Correct Answer: (B) Milindapanha

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The text represents a unique fusion of Greek philosophy and Indian Buddhist thought, occurring in the 2nd century BCE.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The **Milindapanha** (Questions of Milinda) is a non-canonical Pali text.

It records the debate between King Menander I (Milinda), a ruler of the Indo-Greek Kingdom, and the Buddhist sage Nagasena.

The king poses difficult philosophical questions (like the nature of the soul and reincarnation), which Nagasena answers using brilliant similes, most notably the "Chariot Simile" to explain non-self.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The text is the Milindapanha.

💡 Quick Tip

"Panha" means question. So, the title literally means "The Questions of Milinda."

12. Which category of the Eightfold Path includes Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood?

- (A) Wisdom (Prajna)
- (B) Ethical Conduct (Sila)
- (C) Mental Discipline (Samadhi)
- (D) Meditation (Dhyana)

Correct Answer: (B) Ethical Conduct (Sila)

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

The Noble Eightfold Path is the practical guide to ending suffering. It is divided into three groups: *Prajna* (Wisdom), *Sila* (Ethics), and *Samadhi* (Concentration).

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. **Sila (Ethical Conduct):** Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood. These deal with external behavior and morality.
2. **Samadhi (Mental Discipline):** Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration. These deal with internal mental training.
3. **Prajna (Wisdom):** Right View, Right Resolve. These deal with correct understanding.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The three components fall under Ethical Conduct (Sila).

💡 Quick Tip

Ethics (Sila) is the foundation. Without clean conduct (no lying, stealing, killing), the mind cannot be calm enough for the higher stages of meditation (Samadhi).

13. What are the five 'Skandhas' (Aggregates) that constitute a sentient being according to Buddhism?

- (A) Dharma, Sangha, Buddha, Karma, Nirvana
- (B) Form, Sensation, Perception, Mental formations, Consciousness
- (C) Birth, Death, Suffering, Desire, Ignorance
- (D) Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Space

Correct Answer: (B) Form, Sensation, Perception, Mental formations, Consciousness

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The five *Skandhas* explain what a "person" is. Buddhism argues that we are not a single soul, but a collection of five changing processes.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

1. **Rupa (Form):** Physical body and matter.
2. **Vedana (Sensation):** Feelings of pleasure, pain, or indifference.
3. **Sanna (Perception):** Labeling and recognizing objects.
4. **Sankhara (Mental Formations):** Volitional acts, habits, and prejudices.
5. **Vinnana (Consciousness):** The awareness that recognizes sensory input.

Option D refers to the elements of nature, while Option B refers to the constituents of a living being.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The five Skandhas are Form, Sensation, Perception, Mental formations, and Consciousness.

💡 Quick Tip

To remember: think of **R-V-S-S-V** (Rupa, Vedana, Sanna, Sankhara, Vinnana). Each is "empty" of self.

14. Which ancient Indian university was a world-renowned centre for the study of Mahayana Buddhism?

- (A) Takshashila
- (B) Nalanda

- (C) Vikramashila
- (D) Ujjain

Correct Answer: (B) Nalanda

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Ancient India was famous for its monastic universities, which were massive complexes of learning.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Nalanda University (Bihar) was the primary global hub for Mahayana Buddhist studies from the 5th to the 12th century CE.

It was patronized by the Guptas and later Harsha. It attracted scholars like Xuanzang and Yijing from China.

Vikramashila was famous for Vajrayana (Tantric) studies, and Takshashila was an older center for diverse Vedic and early Buddhist studies.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Nalanda was the world-renowned center for Mahayana study.

 Quick Tip

Nalanda is often called the "Oxford of Ancient India." It had a library so large (Dharmaganja) that it was said to contain millions of manuscripts.

15. Who is known as the 'Light of Asia' in modern literature related to the Buddha's life?

- (A) Edwin Arnold
- (B) Rabindranath Tagore
- (C) Max Muller
- (D) T. W. Rhys Davids

Correct Answer: (A) Edwin Arnold

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

"The Light of Asia" is a specific literary title that became synonymous with the Buddha in the West during the late 19th century.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Sir Edwin Arnold wrote the epic poem *The Light of Asia* (or *The Great Renunciation*) in 1879.

The book narrates the life of Prince Gautama and his journey to enlightenment. It was highly

influential in bringing Buddhist philosophy to the English-speaking world.

While the others were great scholars (Max Muller, Rhys Davids) or poets (Tagore), only Arnold is uniquely identified with this specific title.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Edwin Arnold is known as the author of 'The Light of Asia'.

 Quick Tip

The poem is based on the *Lalitavistara Sutra*, a Mahayana text. It remains one of the most popular English books on the Buddha's life.