

**Buddhism – Exam Questions.**

1 Explore the teachings of the Buddha about suffering. (8)

Include: 3 Marks of Existence (focussing on Dukkha mainly); Four Noble Truths: Tanha; 3 Poisons. Also refer to different types of dukkha.

2 Assess the importance of the Four Sights. (9)



Discuss:. The effect seeing the four sights had on Siddhartha. What this led him to think/believe/ do. Refer to the first three sights regarding suffering and compassion and the fourth to his later spiritual journey.



3 Assess the significance of the Tipitaka as a source of wisdom. (9)

Discuss:. The different parts of the Tipitaka but with a focus on the sutta and the abidharma. There should be a reference to the Vinaya, but as a way to aid the wisdom of monastics, through their lifestyle etc.



4 (a) Explore different types of meditation. (8)

Include:. Metta, Vipassana and Samatha, with a reference to one-pointedness and the Jhanas.

1. (b) Analyse the significance of meditation as central to the Noble Eightfold Path. (20)

Discuss:. All parts of the Eightfold Path, but focus on how far meditation links them all together, e.g. how does meditation aid morality and making moral decisions. You could also discuss whether or not a different section of the Path is central. Make sure you include examples to ‘prove’ and develop your points.

1 Explore the key beliefs of Mahayana Buddhism. (8)



1 Explore key beliefs of Theravada Buddhism. (8)

2 Assess the significance of Buddha’s enlightenment. (9)

2 The Vinaya Pitaka is the most important sacred text for the monastic sangha. Assess

this view. (9)

3 Assess the significance of the Four Noble Truths. (9)

4 (a) Explore the concept of anatta. (8)

4 (b) Analyse the significance of the Noble Eightfold Path as a source of morality. (20)

These are examples of questions you may get on the exam paper. As you can see there is much more focus on evaluation, assessment and analysis rather than more straightforward ‘explore/explain’. However, the knowledge and examples are important to learn as you will need to refer to this to ‘prove’ your points in your answers.

Preparing a plan for each of these essays would be very beneficial as it will make you review the information you have learnt and give you a sound starting point if you are faced with any of these questions.

Check the level descriptors in the back of your booklet, to understand what the expectations are for good results for each type of question.