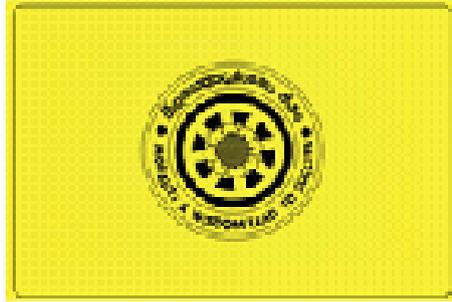


Young Men's Buddhist Association  
Colombo  
Sri Lanka



Examinations in  
Dhamma, Abhidhamma, and Pali  
(English Medium)  
Regulations and Syllabuses

Effective from 2015



4. **Certificates** will be awarded to all candidates who are successful at each level.
5. **Date and place of Examinations** : The examination will usually be held on the last Sunday in **June** each year.

The examination will be held in Sri Lanka and Abroad. The centres will be decided according to the applications received.

6. **Fees chargeable**

Fees are charged for these examinations on the following basis;

(a) Overseas Candidates - U.S. Dollars 05 per Candidate.

(b) Local Candidates - Rs. 60/- per Candidate.

Overseas payments may be made by Bank Draft.

Local payments may be made by crediting through the Inter Bank Payments Scheme to the credit of :

**Examinations Fund**

**A/C. No. 01/0061/04/2637/07**

**National Savings Bank**, Borella Branch.

or direct to the **Colombo. Y.M.B.A. Office**,

**The Dhamma Examinations Fund**

by Cheque or Money order or in Cash.

7. **Mode of application** :

Candidates may apply privately or through the institutions in which they study, such as Dhamma schools. A specimen application will be sent on written request to: **Secretary,**

**Dhamma Examinations Branch,**

**Colombo Y.M.B.A., Borella,**

**Colombo 8, Sri Lanka.**

Applications should reach the YMBA office before the end of **March 15th**, each year.

8. **Minimum marks required.**

Ordinary pass - 40% marks in each paper,

Credit pass - 55% marks in each paper,

Honours - 70% marks in each paper,

9. **Results :**

The results of candidates from institutions will be sent to the respective institution.

Private candidates will be informed individually.

10. **Prizes and Merit Awards :**

'**Suren Abeyagoonasekera Challenge Shield**' will be awarded to the Local School with the best results.

Prizes or Special Certificates may be awarded to candidates, scoring the 3 highest marks at each level.

**Further particulars can be obtained from:**

**Dhamma Examinations Branch,**

**Colombo YMBA Borella.**

**Sri Lanka.**

**Telephone : +94 011 269 5786.**

**Fax : +94 011 268 2397**

**Email : [ymbacolombo@sltnet.lk](mailto:ymbacolombo@sltnet.lk)**

**Website : [www.ymba-colombo.org](http://www.ymba-colombo.org)**

Hony. Secretary  
Dhamma Examination Branch  
Colombo Y.M.B.A. Head Office,  
Borella, Colombo 08.  
Sri Lanka.

2015.05.10

**EXAMINATIONS IN THERAVADA BUDDHA DHAMMA  
(ENGLISH MEDIUM)  
SYLLABUSES EFFECTIVE FROM 2015.  
FOR ALL LEVELS.**

**BASIC LEVEL**

One Paper 1 hour 30 minutes

Life of the Buddha and Buddha Dhamma

Life of the Buddha in brief outline from birth up to the ordination of the Chief Disciples - Select episodes may be taken up as lessons. e.g. Birth of Prince Siddhartha, Ploughing Ceremony, Life in the Palaces, Four forefathers, Renunciation, Austerities, Enlightenment and Seven weeks thereafter, Conversion of Yasa, Sending out of Missionaries, Conversion of Kolitha and Upatissa.

The Three Refuges - brief explanation.

Salutation to the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha.

Various offerings to the Buddha, (Pali Stanzas).

Five Precepts.

Ten Unwholesome Acts (Dasa Akusala Kamma).

Dana and Sila - a brief explanation.

Importance of local Buddhist Festivals, such as Vesak, Poson, Esala.

Maha Mangala Sutta - A brief introduction to the 38 "Blessings".

Salutation to the Parents.

## Junior Part 1

### **Dhamma**

**One Paper 1 hour 30 minutes**

Important events in the life of the Buddha from Birth to Enlightenment.

The 24 great qualities of The Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha.

The history, reasons for and results of first (3) Three Theravada Buddhist Councils (Sangayana.)

Introduction to the Tripitaka. The names of books of the Sutta Pitaka, their main divisions, and names of Commentaries.

Different types of **Dana and Sila**, 10 wholesome and unwholesome deeds **Dasa Kusala and Akusala kamma**. 10 meritorious deeds - **Dasa Punyakriya**.

Maha Mangala Sutta and Karaniya Metta Sutta, by memory with the meaning of each Verse.

An introduction to the Dhammapada.

Dhammapada Stanzas - **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 13, 14, 16, 21 and 37**.

They

should be memorized and the meaning of the stanzas known.

### **Abhidhamma and Pali**

**One Paper 1 hour 30 minutes**

History of Abhidhamma, Names of Books of the Abhidhamma Pitaka and their Commentaries. Differences of the contents of Sutta and Abhidhamma Pitaka. Difference between *Paramatta Sacca and Sammuti sacca*, (Absolute and Apparent/Conventional realities), the 4 Absolute Realities - *Paramatthas*. Classification of Citta into 89 or 121 types.

*Note : The chapters referred to above are from the 'Abhidhammatta - San-*

## **Pali (Questions on Pali will be optional)**

The sections referred below are from the  
The New Pali - Course - Part 1  
by Prof. A. P. Buddadatta Maha Nayaka Thera

1. The Alphabet and Pronunciations of letters in Pali - Sections 1, 2 and 3.
2. Parts of speech Section 4.
3. Gender, Number and Case Section 5, 6, 7.
4. Declension of Nouns :  
    Masculine stem-ending in 'a' - Section 8.  
    Inflection of the above declension - Section 9
5. Conjugation of Verbs - Section 10 and 11
6. Conjugation of Root 'paca' (to cook) - Section 12 and 13
7. Different conjugations - Section 14
8. The seventh Conjugation - Section 15, 16 and 17  
    Exercises 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

### **Junior Part 11**

**Dhamma**

**One Paper - 1 hour 30 minutes**

The syllabus of Junior Part 1, and the following;  
The 6 special knowledges of the Buddha (*Shad - asadharana Nana*),  
and 10 Powers of the Buddha (*Dasa - Tatagata Bala*).  
The names of books of the Vinaya Pitaka, the main divisions, and  
their commentaries.

Important events in the life of the Buddha from Birth up to the end  
of the first 20 years after Enlightenment, with special reference to the  
following:

1. The first Sermon.
2. Ordination of Yasa and his Friends.
3. Commencement of Missionary activities.
4. The Chief Disciples.
5. Establishment of the Bhikkhuni Order.
6. The Buddha's visits to Sri Lanka.

The Buddha's lay Patrons - Anathapindika, Bimbisara, Visakha, Kosala, etc.

Lives of Venerable Ananda, Sariputta, Moggallana, and Maha Kasapa.

Bhikkhunis Khema, Uppalawanna.

Six Theravada Buddhist Councils and first writing down of the Tripitaka.

The 4 Noble Truths, with details of the Noble Eight-fold Path.

Four sublime states - *Brahma Vihara*

The Ten (10) Perfections- *Dasa Parami* with a Jataka story to illustrate each Parami.

Dhammapada stanzas - **12, 33, 41, 43, 50, 53, 60, 61, 82, 85, 109, and 204.**

They should be memorized and the meanings of the stanzas known.

### **Abhidhamma and Pali**

**One Paper 1 hour 30 minutes**

Syllabus of Junior part 1, plus a clear understanding of the 52

Mental Factors: *Cetasika* and their Classifications.

The composition of each *Citta*, *Sangahanaya*, and the identification of *Cittas* in which a particular *Cetasika* will be found - *Sampayoganaya*

Nibbana, the definition, qualities, aspects, etc.

### **Pali (Questions on Pali will be optional)**

1. The Past Tense.
2. Conjugations of 'Paca' (to cook) - Past Indefinite Active - Section 18, 19 and Exercise 6.
3. Personal Pronouns - Section 20, and Exercise 7.
4. Future Tense - Conjugation of 'Paca' - Section 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 and Exercises 8 and 9.
5. Declensions of the Masculine nouns ending in 'u' - Section 29

## Senior Part 1

**Dhamma**

**One Paper - 2 hours**

Important Events in the Life of The Buddha from Enlightenment to Parinibbana. Kamma and Vipaka, Proof of Rebirth, and the 5 Natural laws - *Panca Niyama Dhamma*.

*Nivarana* - 5 Hindrances, *Dasa Sanyojana* - 10 Fetters.

General Knowledge of 40 Objects of Meditation in **Samatha Bhavana** and the Results.

Social ethics of Buddhism based on Parabava, Singalovada and Vyaggappajja Suttas.

Dhammapada stanzas - **19, 24, 35, 54, 56, 62, 63, 76, 80, 94, 99, 100, 104, 105, 129,**

They should be memorized and the meaning of the stanzas known.

**Abhidhamma and Pali**

**One Paper - 2 hours**

Syllabuses of Junior Levels, plus;

Analysis of the 28 kinds of qualities of matter - *rupa samuddesa*. Their classification into 8 categories etc. - *rupa vibhago*. Formation of matter - *rupa samutthana*. Grouping - *rupa kalapa*. Occurrence of matter, in different planes, times and classes of beings - *Rupa Pavattikkamo*. (See chapter 6)

Classification of Citta according to Feelings - *Vedana*, Roots - *Hetu*, and Functions - *Kicca*..

### Pali (Questions in Pali will be optional)

1. Declensions of Feminine Nouns - Section 31, 32 and 33  
Exercise -11.
2. Declensions of Feminine Stems ending in 'i', Section 34, 35 and 36, Exercise - 12.
3. Feminine Nouns ending in 'u' - section 37, 38 and 39.  
Exercise - 13
4. Neuter Gender - Section 40 to 44. Exercise - 14 and 15.

## Senior Part 11

**Dhamma**

**One Paper - 3 hours**

The syllabus of Senior Part 1 and the following:

37 Bodhipakkiya Dhamma - 37 Constituents of Enlightenment, 4 stages on the path of Nibbana, Pattecasamuppada - Dependent origination, 3 Signata Tilakkhana, Meaning of the verses in Ratana Sutta, and a summary of Dhammacakka Pavattana Sutta.

Contribution made to the Buddha Sasana by H. S. Olcott, and his associates. Buddhist Approach to Discerning Truth.

Dhammapada Stanzas - **64, 65, 67, 68, 81, 90, 92, 97,**

**103, 112, 113, 121,**

**122, 127, 145,**

They should be memorized and the meaning of the stanzas known

### **Recommended Text Books in Dhamma**

Buddha and his Teachings by Narada Maha Thera

Dhammapada translation by Narada Maha Thera.

Buddhist Meditation in Theory and Practice by Paravahera Vajiranana Maha Thera.

**Abhidhamma and Pali**

**One Paper 3 hours**

Senior Part 1 Syllabus plus Classification of *Citta* according to Doors - *Dvara*, Objects - *Arammana*, and Bases - *Vattu*. Analyses of Thought processes - *Citta vithi*, through sense doors and mind door, according to individuals and planes - *Puggala* and *Bhumi Bhedo* and death proximate thought process - *Maranasanna citta vithi*.

### Pali (Questions on Pali will be optional)

1. Classification of Nouns and Pronouns - Section 45 to 48.

Exercise - 16

2. Declension of Demonstrative Pronoun - 'Ima'. Section 49.

Exercise 17

3. The Verbal Adjective or Participles - Section 50 to 52. Exercise 18.

4. Past Participles - Section 53 and 54. Exercise 19 and 20.

5. Adjectives - Section 55. Exercise 20.

## Diploma

Dhamma

One Paper - 3 hours

Syllabuses of Senior Levels and the following :

A summary of The *Maha Satipatthana Sutta* and *Culla - kamma Vibhanga Sutta*.

A general knowledge of *Vipassana Bhavana*, (Insight Meditaion), 7 stages of Purity - (*Satta Visuddhi*),

Uniqueness of The Buddha and His teachings. Difference between **Theravada** and **Mahayana** Buddhism.

Dhammapada Stanzas 75, 89, 123, 135, 146, 191, 202, 216, 239, 240, 276, 277, 338, 365, 366.

They should be memorized and the meaning of the stanzas known.

**Abhidhamma and Pali**

**One Paper - 3 hours.**

Syllabuses of Senior Levels, plus  
Abhidhamma Categories

The law of Dependent Arising. *Paticcasamuppada* and the Law of Causal Relations - *Patthana* - The 24 conditions. *Uddesa* and *Trirasiya*

**Pali (Questions on Pali will be optional)**

1. Numerals - Section 57 and 58. Exercise 21
2. Ordinal Numerals Section 61. Exercise - 22
3. Adverbs - Section 62. Exercise - 23
4. Syntax - Section 63.
5. Order of Sentences - section 64.
6. Concord - Section 65 and 66. Exercise - 25.
7. Passive Voice - Section 67 to 70. Exercise - 71 to 73.
8. Passive Participles - Section 71 to 73. Exercise - 27 and 28.

## Recommended Text Book

YMBA Publications :

Guide to the Study of Theravada Buddhism  
Book : Life of the Buddha and Dhamma - Basic Division,  
Book 1, Book 2, Book 3, Book 4, Book 5.

Books recommended for further reading.

Life of the Buddha by Gnanamoli Thera  
Manual of Buddhism by Narada Maha Thera  
Buddhist Dictionary by Nyanathiloka Maha Thera  
The Dhammapada by Acariya Buddharakkita Thera  
Guide to the Tipitaka by U Ko Lay.

Analysis of The Tipitaka by Russel Webb - No. Wh:217.220  
BPS.

A Manual of Insight - Ledi Sayado Wh 31/BPS

The Seven Factors of Insight by Piyadassi Thera - Wh BPS.

The Foundation of Mindfulness - Wh 19 BPS

The Four Noble Truths - Francis Story - Wh 34/35 BPS

Nibbana - Dr. P. Vagiranana Thera - Wh 165/166

The Requisites of Enlightenment (*Bodhipakhiya Dipani*)

Wh 171/174 BPS.

*Note :* Most of these books can be purchased from :

*Sambuddhathwa Jayanthi Mandiraya,*

*No. 32, Sambuddhathwa Jayanthi Mawatha,*

*Colombo 07,*

*Sri Lanka. Tel : 2559601*

*YMBA Office Book stall, Borella, Colombo 08.*

## ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN BUDDHA DHAMMA

**Buddha Dhamma**

**One Paper - 3 hours.**

1. Pre-Buddhist Indian philosophies - in outline.
2. Social and Political background of India at the time of the Buddha.
3. Cardinal Doctrines of Theravada Buddhism - An analytical Study of Four Noble Truths, Dependent Origination (*Paticcasamuppada*), Nibbana and way to Nibbana. Characteristics of the Stream Enterer (*Sotapanna*), Once-Returner (*Sakadagami*), Non- Returner (*Anagami*), and the Arahant. Karma and Re-birth, Concept of the Universe, Samatha Bhavana (Tranquillity Meditation), Vipassana Bhavana (Insight Meditation), Doctrine of Tilakkhana (Three Characteristics) with special reference to *Anatta* (No-Soul). The Requisites of Enlightenment (Bodhpakkhiya Dhamma) .
4. Buddhist Monastic Discipline (*Vinaya Pitaka*) in Outline.
5. Buddhist Ritual with special reference to *Paritta*
6. Buddhist Social, Political and Economic Philosophy.
7. Buddhist Ethical Philosophy.
8. Planes of Existence with special reference to Gods (*Deva*) and Ghosts (*Peta*).
9. ~~Brahmajala Sutta (DN), Ariya Pasiyasa Sutta (MN).~~  
A preliminary study of the following Suttas:  
Samannaphala Sutta (DN) Agganna Sutta (DN).  
Kalama Sutta (A.N). Madhupindika Sutta (MN)  
Mahatanhasankhaya Sutta (MN). Vimansaka Sutta (MN).  
Dhammika Sutta (SN). Cakkavatti Sihanada Sutta (MN)  
Kutadanta Sutta (DN). Maha Satipattana Sutta (DN). List-  
ing of the Suttas should be according to Nikaya Books.
10. Non - Theravada Schools of Buddhism - Origin, Development, and Doctrines; Mahayana, Vajirayana, Zen, Tibetan.

## Recommended Reading

Colombo YMBA. is not yet ready with a comprehensive Text Books which covers the prescribed syllabus. In the circumstances, the following Reading List is recommended with a view to providing some guidance to the prospective candidates:

1. Outlines of Indian Philosophy by Hiriyana.
2. Buddhist India by T. W. Rhys Davids.
3. What the Buddha Taught by Dr. Walpola Rahula.
4. Buddhist Meditation in Theory and Practice Dr. Parawahera Vajiranana.
5. Buddhist Monastic Discipline by Dr. Jotiya Dhirasekare.
6. The Buddhist Ritual of Paritta by Dr. Ariyapala Perera.
7. Economic Philosophy of Buddhism by Dharmasena Hettiarachchi.
8. Buddhist Political Philosophy by Dr. Piyasena Dissanayake.
9. Gods in Early Buddhism by Dr. M. M. J. Marasinghe.
10. Zen Buddhism.
11. Ethics of Buddhism S. Tachibana.
12. Mahayana Buddhism.
13. 2500 Years of Buddhism - Government of India Publication.
14. Buddhist Encyclopedia - Government of Sri Lanka Publication- Relevant Articles.
15. English translations of Tripitaka Texts for the Prescribed Suttas;
  - (a) Digha Nikaya - Dialogues of the Buddha - P. T. S. Edition by Prof. Rhys Davids.
  - (b) Majjhima Nikaya - Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha by Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi.
  - (c) Anguttara Nikaya - Numerical Sayings P. T. S. Edition.
  - (d) Sutta Nipata - Translation by Dr. N. A. Jayawikreme.

## Abhidhamma

## One Paper 3 hours

Since the Abhidhamma Syllabus from Junior Part 1 to Diploma Level is based on the contents of the Abhidhamma Text-Abhidhammatthasangaha excluding only the last Chapter (*Kammattthana sangaha*), the Abhidhamma Syllabus of the Advanced Diploma Level is based on the original texts of the Abhidhamma Pitaka selecting a few topics from a number of important texts, as given below;

1. The significance of Abhidhamma in the teachings of the Buddha.
2. The contents of the books of the Abhidhamma Pitaka in outline.
3. Based on Dhammasangani.
  - i. The Abhidhamma Matrix.  
The Matrix of the Triads, and  
The Matrix of the Dyads  
(Tika Matika and Duka Matika).
  - ii. Characteristics of Consciousness (Citta) and  
classification according to Dhammasangani.
  - iii. Classification of Corporeality (Rupa) according to  
Dhammasangani.
4. Based on Vibhanga - Classification of the following:
  - (a) The Five Aggregates (*Khandha Vibhanga*).
  - (b) The Twelve Bases (*Ayatana Vibhanga*).
  - (c) The Eighteen Elements (*Dhatu Vibhanga*).
  - (d) The Twenty two Faculties (*Indriya Vibhanga*).
  - (e) The Modes of Dependency (*Paccayakara Vibhanga*).
5. Based on Puggala Pannathi  
Niddesa Varo : (i) Ekaka Niddesaya (ii) Duka  
Niddesaya
6. Based on Dhatu Kata: The first chapter - Inclusion, and  
non - Inclusion. Sangraho, Asangraho, Pada Niddeso.
7. Circumstances that led to the compilation Katha Vattu.
8. Patthana: (a) Twenty four conditions  
(b) Three groups (Three Rasi) in detail.

## **Recommended Reading List**

1. Manual of Buddhist Psychological Ethics (English Translation of Dhammasangani) by Ven. Nyanaponika Thera.
2. Points of Controversy (English Translation of Kathavatthu).
3. Expositor (English Translation of Dhammasangani Commentary Atthasalini).
4. Guide through Abhidhamma Pitaka by Ven. Nyanatiloka.
5. Buddhist Encyclopaedia - Relevant Articles.
6. Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma by Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi.
7. Path of Purification (*Visuddhi Magga*)

The Secretary  
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Colombo YMBA  
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