

Correspondence of ecclesiastical and secular classifications

Buddhist		Number of required qualities	Pāli/Sanskrit	Tibetan	Equivalent College Classification
Classification	Number				
Dharma Master	6–10	1., 2., 4., 5., 6., and an additional 1–5 from the ten	ācārya (Pāli: ācariya)	lopön (gese)	College Professor
Dharma Teacher	5	1., 2., 4., 5., 6.	guru (Pāli: garu/guru)	láma (gese)	Associate Professor
Dharma Instructor	3	1., 2. and 4., plus any fourth item from the ten listed above	upādhyāya (Pāli: upaddzshāja)	khenpó (gese)	Assistant Professor
Dharma Friend	2	1. and 2., plus any third item from the ten listed above	kalyāṇa mitra (Pāli: k. mitta)	senyen	Assistant Lecturer

In the surviving Buddhist traditions, a wide variety of qualifications and titles are in use. Taking these into account, and relying on the common Indian foundations, we have developed the designations relevant to our own training. At the same time, we naturally acknowledge similar qualifications in other traditions, and in each arising case we strive to find analogies and align them with our own classification.

In matters related to vows and monasticism, decisions may be made by the community, or within it, by the teachers, the monastic community, the community of lay practitioners, or the entire Sangha encompassing both. Our definition is a substantive definition, which we use in a modern formulation.

It is based on the Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṃkāra, which states that the ideal teacher should possess the following ten qualities. (The text relies on one of Asaṅga's works – Ratnagotravibhāga 93.3–9, Tibetan: sde dge bstan 'gyur phi 120b1–3 – in which he describes the 18 qualities of a "Teacher", i.e., the Buddha.)

1. Humble, because their discipline results from internalized moral practice.	
2. Calm, because their concentration is at a high level and their mind is tranquil.	
3. Peaceful, because their wisdom arises from a high-level realization of the Four Noble Truths, the Two Truths, and other teachings of the Buddha.	
4. Rich in the teachings inherited from the Buddha, meaning they are well-versed in all three collections of the Buddha's teachings.	*
5. Sees things as they are. Often phrased as "has realized emptiness, able to perceive phenomena and their emptiness directly and simultaneously".	
6. More knowledgeable than their students.	*

7. Teaches convincingly, using appropriate expressions, style, and tone. Adapts teachings to the circumstances, as well as the students' abilities and knowledge level.	*
8. Compassionate, showing kindness and understanding toward students and all sentient beings. Free from self-centered worldly influences: their actions are guided not by the desire for fame and praise or material gain, but by compassion.	
9. They strive tirelessly and selflessly to fulfill the task they have undertaken.	(*)
10. They do not grieve over a student's lack of understanding or slow comprehension, do not grow weary of repeating explanations multiple times, and are not discouraged by the student's uncertainty, sadness, or departure.	*