

Knowledge organiser

AQA A Level Sociology 7192 • Families & Households • L005 • v1.0

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Is there a 'normal' family?

Concept	Meaning
Family diversity	Variation in family forms, relationships, practices and experiences.
Statistical normality	Using normal to mean common in a specified population.
Normative judgement	A claim about what ought to be or what is considered desirable.
Norm	A socially expected rule or pattern of behaviour.
Family form	The composition or arrangement of a family under a stated definition.
Family practice	What people do in family relationships, such as caring or deciding.
Household	One person living alone, or people sharing an address and the required facilities.
Denominator	The total used as the base for a fraction or percentage.

Evidence and interpretation

Concept	Meaning
Life course	A person's changing experiences and relationships over time.
Snapshot	Evidence describing a population at a particular time.
Cross-sectional study	A study of people or groups at one point in time.
Longitudinal study	A study that follows change over time; some designs follow the same people.
Operational definition	A stated rule for deciding what will be counted or measured.
Generalisation	A claim extending beyond the cases directly studied.
Within-group variation	Differences among members placed in the same category.
Social construction	The shaping of meanings and categories through social processes.

Worked explanation

Cases A and B share a family form but differ in the division of unpaid care. A structural category describes membership; an additional measure is needed to compare practices. Neither case supplies evidence of how common its arrangement is.

Avoid these confusions

Common does not establish correct. A one-family household is not necessarily a married couple with children. Household percentages cannot be read as percentages of people. Categories do not reveal relationship quality. A snapshot does not show every individual's transition.

Retrieve later

Tomorrow: distinguish common from correct and identify a denominator. In one week: explain one difference between a snapshot and a life course.