

Knowledge organiser

AQA A Level Sociology 7192 • Families & Households • L014 • v1.0

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Are relationships becoming more individualised?

Concept	Meaning
Individualisation	A process in which people must increasingly construct and manage their own biographies.
Detraditionalisation	Weakening of the taken-for-granted authority of inherited traditions.
Reflexivity	Monitoring and reconsidering action in the light of information and experience.
Late modernity	An account of intensified modern processes rather than a complete break from modernity.
Pure relationship	Giddens's model of a bond sustained for the satisfaction the relationship itself provides.
Confluent love	Giddens's idea of active, contingent love dependent on a continuing relationship.
Negotiation	Discussion and adjustment of expectations and arrangements.
Contingency	Dependence on conditions rather than guaranteed permanence.

How much choice, and for whom?

Concept	Meaning
Risk	Uncertainty about possible adverse outcomes.
Biography	The pattern and story of a person's life over time.
Constraint	A condition limiting realistically available action.
Interdependence	Mutual reliance among people.
Postmodernism	Approaches emphasising fragmentation, plurality and limits of one overarching account.
Plurality	Coexistence of multiple forms, meanings or ways of living.
Commitment	A continuing obligation or attachment to a person or relationship.
Unequal choice	Different practical capacity to exercise nominally available options.

Worked explanation

Discussion of the relationship's value fits negotiated intimacy; coordinating the job move with personal plans illustrates managing biographies. Neither establishes a completely pure relationship.

Avoid these confusions

The pure relationship is a theoretical model, not a moral judgement or a description of all partnerships. Individualisation does not imply isolation. Giddens and Beck/Beck-Gernsheim are taught as late-modern theorists, distinguished from postmodern emphases. Stacey's US research is not treated as a representative UK survey.

Retrieve later

Tomorrow: define individualisation and detraditionalisation. In one week: explain a case mechanism and one limit without notes.