Death rates and life expectancy

Distinguish death rates from life expectancy and explain UK change since 1900 with attention to inequality and population age structure.

Core knowledge

- Death rate measures deaths in relation to population; life expectancy estimates average years lived.
- A crude death rate can be affected by the population age structure, so interpretation needs care.
- Recent ONS life expectancy estimates are about 79.1 years for males and 83.0 for females in the UK.

Studies / perspectives

- Public health explanation: Sanitation, vaccination, nutrition and healthcare reduce mortality risks.
- Material inequality: Class, region, gender and ethnicity can shape exposure to risk and access to resources.
- Epidemiological transition: Causes of death shift from infectious disease towards chronic and age-related conditions.

Assessment focus

- Analyse two reasons why life expectancy has changed in the UK. [10 marks]
- Build claim → evidence → mechanism → evaluation → judgement.

Indicative guidance: reward accurate definitions, explanation of the mechanism, application to family life and evaluative qualification of evidence.