

EXAM-DAY · 90-MIN REVISION CARD

Understanding Social Institutions

Print this · Fold it · Carry to the exam-hall gate · Revise once · Then walk in.

FORMULAS & KEY RESULTS

Social institution = a stable cluster of **NORMS, VALUES, STATUSES & ROLES** organised around a basic social **NEED** (NOT a building).

FUNCTIONALIST lens = what **NEED** does it meet? how does it keep society stable? **CONFLICT** lens = whose **INTERESTS**? how does it reproduce inequality?

Family types (structure):
NUCLEAR = parents + unmarried children |
EXTENDED/JOINT = multiple generations together.

Descent: **PATRILINEAL** = through father's line |
MATRILINEAL = through mother's line.

Marriage forms: **MONOGAMY** = 1 spouse | **POLYGAMY** = many spouses → **POLYGyny** (1 man, many wives) + **POLYANDRY** (1 woman, many husbands).

Kinship: **CONSANGUINEAL** = by **BLOOD**/descent | **AFFINAL** = by **MARRIAGE** (in-laws, spouse).

Work/economy = institution meeting **PRODUCTION** via the **DIVISION OF LABOUR** (who does which task).

Political institution: **POWER** = ability to impose one's will; **AUTHORITY** = power seen as **LEGITIMATE**; **STATE** = body claiming legitimate use of force over a territory.

Religion (Durkheim): **SACRED** (set apart, awe, ritual) vs **PROFANE** (ordinary, everyday); religion creates **SOCIAL SOLIDARITY**.

Education (Durkheim): transmits shared values; the **HIDDEN CURRICULUM** = unstated norms (punctuality, obedience, competition, gender roles).

TOP 5 PYQ PATTERNS

1 Functionalist vs conflict perspective on an institution (family/education)

6 marks · 85% of years
Define institution; functionalist = need/order; conflict = whose interest/inequality; apply BOTH to the SAME institution; synthesise.

2 Forms of marriage (monogamy / polygamy / polygyny / polyandry)

4 marks · 70% of years
Define marriage + monogamy; show polygamy as umbrella with two branches polygyny & polyandry; give a community example for polyandry.

3 Types of family + descent (nuclear/ extended; patrilineal/matrilineal)

4 marks · 65% of years
Family **TYPE** = structure not size; nuclear vs extended/joint; descent through father (patrilineal) vs mother (matrilineal).

4 Sociological study of religion — sacred vs profane (Durkheim)

6 marks · 60% of years
Sociology studies what religion **DOES**, not if it's true; Durkheim's sacred (set apart) vs profane (everyday); religion = solidarity.

5 What is a social institution? / affinal vs consanguineal kinship

2 marks · 70% of years
Institution = norms+roles around a need (not a building); consanguineal = blood, affinal = marriage. Pure recall — keep it tight.

90-MIN REVISION FLOW

0-15 min

Recite the core definitions from memory: social institution (cluster of norms/roles around a need); functionalist vs conflict lens in one line each; the four institutions (family, economy, polity, religion/ education).

15-30 min

Draw the two-lens table and fill it for the **FAMILY**: functionalist (reproduction, socialisation, support, regulation) vs conflict (patriarchy, inequality, property transmission).

30-45 min

Master the marriage typology tree (monogamy / polygamy → polygyny + polyandry) and the family/descent terms (nuclear vs extended; patrilineal vs matrilineal). Write each definition once.

45-60 min

Memorise kinship (consanguineal = blood, affinal = marriage), power vs authority vs state, and Durkheim's sacred vs profane with one example of each.

60-75 min

Take the 15-MCQ Quick Drill under a 20-minute timer. Target >= 12/15.

75-90 min

Review every wrong MCQ, re-read the matching notes slide, and re-write the religion (sacred/profane) and education (hidden curriculum) answers from memory.

Confidence, not anxiety. You've practised this all year. Trust your steps. Don't change strategy on exam morning.
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