

Theme A: Relationships and families

Adultery

A sexual relationship between a couple not married to each other, but married to/in relationship with others (affair).

Age of consent

According to the law, the age at which a person is considered old enough to give consent to have sex.

Annulment

Cancellation of a marriage in Roman Catholic tradition, as if marriage never was.

Civil marriage

Non-religious marriage.

Civil partnership

Legal union of two people of same gender; now of equality with heterosexual marriage in all respects.

Commitment

Making a promise or pledge, in this case, in marriage.

Celibacy

Not having sexual relations.

Chastity

Sexual purity, eg not having sex before marriage.

Cohabitation

Where a couple live together without being married/in civil partnership.

Contraception

Precautions taken to prevent pregnancy and to protect against contracting/transmitting STIs (sexually transmitted infections).

Contract

A binding agreement between two sides.

Covenant

An agreement based on promises between two sides, here in marriage where the agreement is made before God (as a witness) and with God (as a partner).

Divorce

Legal ending of a marriage.

Extended family

Family unit comprising mother, father and children, but also grandparents, cousins etc.

Family planning

Planning when to have a family and how big a family to have by use of birth control practices and/or contraception.

Gender discrimination

Acting on prejudices against someone because of their gender.

Gender equality

Belief that both genders have equal status and value, so discrimination against either is wrong.

Gender prejudice

The belief that one gender is 'better' than the other.

Heterosexuality

Being physically/sexually attracted to persons of the opposite gender.

Homosexuality

Being physically/sexually attracted to persons of the same gender.

Nuclear family

Family unit made up of mother, father and their child(ren).

Polygamy

The practice of one man having several wives; legal under Shariah law (up to four wives, given specific circumstances).

Procreation

Having a child; seen as a duty in many religions.

Remarriage

Marriage for the second time, after divorce ending an earlier marriage.

Responsibility

Duties; what a person has to do as part of the agreement they have made, or role they have taken on.

Single parent family

Family unit in which child(ren) and one parent, either mum or dad, live together.

Vows

Promises made by bride and groom during marriage ceremony.