

Worksheet 1: Key terms definitions answers

Social stratification and inequality (3.1–3.2)	Definitions
Achieved status	A status that is earned by individuals through their own efforts, hard work or talent.
Ascribed status	A status that an individual is either born into or over which they have little or no control.
Culture of poverty	The idea that poor people have a set of norms and values that keep them in poverty.
Dependency culture	A set of values leading people to lose their ability to look after themselves so they become dependent, e.g. on welfare benefits.
Emigration	The movement of people from a country who wish to settle elsewhere.
Equal opportunities law	Laws that aim to prevent discrimination against minorities or oppressed groups and to give such groups the same chances as others, e.g. in education, housing, the workplace.
Immigration	Immigration means the movement of people into a country.
Intersectionality	How people experience the privileges and inequalities linked to aspects of their identity, such as their gender, ethnicity and social class.
Life chances	The opportunities people have to achieve positive or negative outcomes in areas such as education or health.
Meritocracy	A society in which individuals achieve the level that their talents, ability and effort deserve.
Modern slavery	Modern slavery refers to situations of exploitation in which a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence or deception.
Non-governmental organisations	Organisations that are independent from governments. They are typically non-profit entities, such as charities that are active in humanitarianism.
Redistribution of wealth	The taking of income and wealth from some individuals and giving it to other individuals, usually through legal means by governments to alleviate poverty.
Social mobility	Movement up and down the social strata or layers.
Social stratification	A hierarchy in which groups have different statuses and different levels of privilege.
The caste system	A closed stratification system in which people inherit their status, traditionally found in India.



Social stratification and inequality (3.1–3.2)	Definitions
Underclass	<i>A group below the working class that is effectively marginalised from the rest of society.</i>
Welfare state	<i>The way in which governments try to provide for the less well-off and reduce social inequality by providing key services.</i>