

Theories of Romantic Relationships – Mark Scheme

Q1.

[AO1 = 2]

2 marks for a clear, coherent outline of the term with some elaboration.

1 mark for a limited or muddled outline.

Content:

an economic model of relationships based on the idea of fairness for each partner; emphasises the need for each partner to experience a balance between their cost / effort and their benefit / reward.

[2]

Q2.

[AO1 = 3]

1 mark for a correctly named stage (intra-psychic, dyadic, social; grave-dressing)

Plus

2 further marks for a clear and coherent outline of the named stage:

- intra-psychic stage partners express their feelings and plans to save the relationship are considered
- dyadic stage partners assess each other's behaviour and evaluate the costs of withdrawing
- social phase partners engage in activities aimed at getting over the relationship breakdown and announce they are splitting
- grave-dressing partners questions their decision and then consider how the break-up has impacted their social network.

Q3.

[AO1 = 1]

1 mark for any of the following: satisfaction, commitment, comparison with alternatives.

Q4.

[AO2 = 4]

Level	Marks	Description
2	3 – 4	Knowledge of the relevant phases of Duck's model is mostly clear and accurate. The knowledge is applied

		appropriately to both cases. The answer is generally coherent with effective use of terminology.
1	1 – 2	There is limited/partial knowledge of relevant phase(s) of Duck's model. There is some appropriate application. The answer may lack coherence. Use of terminology may be either absent or inappropriate. OR one relevant phase of Duck's model is covered at Level 2.
	0	No relevant content.

Application (and selection) of relevant phases:

- intrapsychic phase – one person is privately dissatisfied with the relationship, considering ending the relationship, worrying about problems to come, considering expressing dissatisfaction to partner
- Barbara is in the intrapsychic phase because she wants to end it and is worrying about telling partner who is unaware of how she feels
- social phase – the breakdown has happened, other people are told/it becomes public, there is negotiation about practicalities, eg division of assets, childcare responsibilities etc
- Jamima is in the social phase – friends and mum know, they are taking steps to arrange for children and sort out money.

Q5.

Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO3 = 10

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge is accurate and generally well detailed. Discussion / evaluation / application is thorough and effective. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	9 – 12	Knowledge is evident. There are occasional inaccuracies. Discussion / evaluation / application is apparent and mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used effectively. Lacks focus in places.
2	5 – 8	Some knowledge is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any discussion / evaluation / application is only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge is limited. Discussion / evaluation / application is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either

		absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Please note that although the content for this mark scheme remains the same, on most mark schemes for the new AQA Specification (Sept 2015 onwards) content appears as a bulleted list.

AO1

A variety of theories can be relevant to the maintenance of romantic relationships. Economic models such as social exchange theory, equity theory and investment models focusing on rewards and costs of relationships are all relevant. The matching hypothesis could also be relevant. A similar argument applies to evolutionary approaches; these can be relevant to maintenance of relationships.

AO3

For each of the major models, such as Rusbult's investment model, there is some research support that can be used effectively; in turn some of these studies can be criticised as lacking ecological validity and generalisability. Economic models also suffer from a restricted view of people and what they look for in relationships, ignoring concepts such as fairness. Also relevant is the ability of different theories to explain e.g. people who stay in abusive relationships, the maintenance of gay and lesbian relationships, or gender differences in attitudes to long-term relationships.

Alternative theories may be used to evaluate the target theory, but may receive credit only if used as part of sustained and effective evaluation and not simply discussed in their own right.

Other relevant evaluative points might include cultural differences and biases. Research has been mostly conducted from a Western point of view, ignoring factors more relevant to less developed societies, gender differences and biases, and ethical issues / socially sensitive research.

Q6.

Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO3 = 10

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge is accurate and generally well detailed. There is reference to at least two theories. Discussion / evaluation / application is thorough and effective. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	9 – 12	Knowledge is evident. There are occasional inaccuracies. There is reference to at least two theories. Discussion / evaluation / application is apparent and mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used effectively. Lacks focus in places.

2	5 – 8	Some knowledge is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any discussion / evaluation / application is only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge is limited. Discussion / valuation / application is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

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AO1

Theories of romantic relationships include: social exchange theory, equity theory and Rusbult's investment model of commitment, satisfaction, comparison with alternatives and investment.

One issue that may arise is the description of particular factors, such as proximity, without an overall 'theory'. If several factors are presented in this way, they could either be considered as aspects of a relevant theory and assessed together, or, if no other relevant material is presented, the two factors best outlined should be considered as two theories.

Economic theories, such as social exchange and equity, can account for both formation and maintenance. Such theories can receive credit insofar as the emphasis is on relationship formation rather than maintenance. Similarly, evolutionary approaches may receive credit if the focus is on relationship formation.

AO3

Depending upon the theories outlined, relevant research evidence should be a key source of evaluative discussion. General commentary could include the quantitative nature of economic approaches and the failure to address the emotional side of relationships. On the positive side some theories have generated much subsequent research.

Cultural and gender issues are also central to this area, as is the general failure to consider the variety of romantic relationships. Alternative theories may be introduced, but may gain credit if used as part of sustained and effective commentary.

Issues that might be discussed include gender and cultural issues; ethics; free will / determinism etc.