



SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION

END OF SEMESTER EXAMINATION

BAC 2203: INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC RELATIONS

DATE: 19th March 2026

TIME: 13:30 – 15:30

Instructions

- i. Answer **question 1**, and any other 2 questions.
- ii. Use the booklet provided for your answer. Each main question **MUST** be answered on a separate page.
- iii. Clearly **paragraph** your work by leaving a line between arguments.
- iv. Each answer requires a comprehensive introductory statement.

Question 1: Compulsory (40 marks)

A fast-growing Kenyan fintech company recently received negative attention on social media after customers complained about delayed transactions and poor customer support. In response, management instructed the communication team to “push positive stories to the media” and increase online advertising to drown out criticism. Internally, employees were unsure whether the issue required a communication response, an operational fix, or both. They actually complained that they were learning about developments from social media rather than internal channels. Civil society groups demanded accountability, while senior management insisted that “good publicity will calm the situation.” Trust in the organisation continued to decline.

- a) Define Public Relations and distinguish it from advertising using the context of the case. (6 marks)
- b) Using the case, explain how any four functions of Public Relations could be applied to manage the situation. (8 marks)
- c) Using any two PR models by Grunig and Hunt, analyse how the organisation is currently communicating and explain the implications of this approach. (10 marks)

- d) Identify and analyse four key stakeholder groups in this case. (8 marks)
- e) Explain any two reasons why treating all stakeholders the same would be ineffective. (4 marks)
- f) Based on the lectures on Fathers of PR, discuss one, and show their contribution to modern Public Relations. (4 marks)

QUESTION TWO (10 MARKS)

A multinational manufacturing company operating in Kampala Uganda under the name 'KALE' claims that "PR is just media relations." As a result, KALE has no stakeholder engagement plan, no crisis preparedness, and minimal internal communication structures.

- (a) Using two (2) characteristics of Public Relations, critique this understanding of PR. (4 marks)
- (b) Critically analyse three (3) things that could go wrong, using examples from the case. (6 marks)

QUESTION THREE (10 MARKS)

A regional NGO working in environmental conservation has strong community programmes but limited media coverage. Its leadership believes journalists are "biased" and has decided to stop engaging the press altogether.

- a) Explain the role of newspapers and traditional media in Public Relations beyond publicity. (2 marks)
- b) Using your knowledge of newspaper structure and placement, discuss any 4 ways in which the NGO could strategically engage/use the media to shape public understanding of its work. (8 marks)

QUESTION FOUR (10 MARKS)

- a) Public Relations practice has evolved significantly over time. Briefly mention two (2) ways PR has changed from traditional practice to contemporary practice. (2 marks)
- b) Define the terms reputation, perception, and communication and explain their relationship with Public Relations. (6 marks)
- c) How can PR can be used to build and sustain trust with key publics? Discuss two (2) ways. (2 marks)