Strathmore UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION

END OF SEMESTER EXAMINATION

BAC 4207: PUBLIC RELATIONS CASE STUDIES

DATE: 9th March 2026 **TIME: 16:00 – 18:00**

Instructions

i. Answer **question one**, 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 ONE (40 MARKS) – COMPULSORY

A Kenyan consumer goods company launched a nationwide campaign positioning itself as "ethical, transparent, and socially responsible." The campaign gained significant media attention and online engagement. However, three months later, investigative journalists revealed that the company had overstated the environmental impact of one of its flagship CSR initiatives. While no laws were broken, key stakeholders accused the company of greenwashing. Employees expressed discomfort defending the campaign, while management argued that the messaging was "aspirational rather than deceptive."

a) Define Public Relations ethics and explain why ethics is central to modern PR practice. (5 marks)

b) Using three ethical principles, analyse the ethical tensions present in this case. (15 marks)

c) Discuss the role of the PR practitioner as an ethical counsel to management in this situation. (10 marks)

d) Propose two communication responses the organisation could adopt to rebuild trust without worsening reputational damage. Justify your choices. (10 marks)

QUESTION TWO (10 MARKS)

a) "Public relations can only prove its value if it can be measured." Briefly discuss this statement using two arguments drawn from PR measurement theory and practice. (4 marks)

b) A technology start-up in Nairobi has invested heavily in PR but senior management is dissatisfied because "there are no clear results." Using the Barcelona Principles, explain any two (2) principles and show how PR value can be demonstrated beyond media coverage. (6 marks)

QUESTION THREE (10 MARKS)

A regional NGO (PASO) operating across East Africa has no formal communication policy. Different departments speak to the media independently, social media posts are inconsistent, and confidential information has occasionally been leaked. The leadership of PASO believes a policy would "slow things down" and restrict creativity.

a) Explain what a communication policy is and why it is considered a strategic document. (2 marks)

b) Outline any two (2) distinct components of a policy that PASO would benefit from. (2 marks)

c) Discuss three risks an organisation faces when it operates without a communication policy. (6 marks)

QUESTION FOUR (10 MARKS)

You have just been appointed Social Media Manager in an organisation with a weak online presence and declining public trust.

a) Explain two (2) key reasons why a social media audit is a necessary first step before developing a strategy. (4 marks)

b) Outline any three (3) components of a practical social media strategy and explain how each contributes to organisational goals. (6 marks)