INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF EAST AFRICA
'Learning to Succeed'

FACULTY OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

END OF SEMESTER EXAMINATIONS - DECEMBER 2025

PROGRAMME: BBA
YEAR/SEM: YEAR 3/SEMESTER 1
COURSE CODE: MKT 3101
NAME: MARKETING RESEARCH

DATE:
TIME:

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

SECTION A

ATTEMPT ALL QUESTIONS IN THIS SECTION

Question 1:

Aqua Veritas is an online retail store that specializes in beverages and health drinks. The company is planning to launch a new beverage across Uganda and wants to understand consumer preferences before the product goes live. Additionally, Aqua Veritas recently introduced a customer loyalty program and wants to assess satisfaction levels among its members to improve engagement.

The marketing team has been tasked with conducting a marketing research study to gather actionable insights. They need to decide on sampling techniques, design a short customer satisfaction questionnaire, determine sample size requirements, and understand the impact of statistical parameters on their research.

Required: Basing on the knowledge obtained from this course;

a) Discuss the sampling techniques Aqua Veritas could use to study consumer preferences and recommend the most appropriate method for this context. **(15 marks)**

b) Based on the case, formulate appropriate research problem, objectives and hypotheses that Aqua Veritas should consider for their marketing research. **(10 marks)**

c) Design a short questionnaire with 5 questions to measure customer satisfaction with Aqua Veritas's products or services. **(5 marks)**

d) Aqua Veritas wants the survey results to be statistically significant at 95% confidence level with a margin of error of ±5%.

Given:

- Population (N) = 100,000 loyalty program members
- Expected proportion (p) = 0.60
- Confidence level = 95% (Z = 1.96)
- Margin of error (E) = 0.05

Task: Calculate the minimum sample size required. **(5 marks)**

e) Briefly explain how changes in, confidence level, margin of error, and population proportion would affect the required sample size for the survey. **(5 marks)**

Question 2:

In the early to mid-1980s, The Coca-Cola Company faced a steady decline in its market share, a trend that had begun in the late 1970s. Competitive pressures from Pepsi were increasing, especially after Pepsi's successful Pepsi Challenge campaign, which used blind taste tests to promote the idea that consumers preferred the sweeter taste of Pepsi over Coca-Cola. Internal reports and tracking research within Coca-Cola suggested that taste was likely a key driver of the company's performance challenges.

In response, Coca-Cola initiated one of the most extensive marketing research programs in its history. Over several years, the company carried out nearly 200,000 blind taste tests across different regions of the United States. The results were remarkably consistent: a majority of participants preferred a sweeter formulation that the company later named "New Coke". These findings seemed to confirm the belief that a new, sweeter product could regain lost market share. Confident in

the research results, Coca-Cola's management decided not only to introduce New Coke but also to completely replace the original formula, withdrawing it from the market.

In April 1985, New Coke was launched. However, the response was not what the company expected. Despite the strong performance in taste tests, the launch sparked a wave of public backlash. Loyal consumers expressed emotional and nostalgic attachment to the original formula something that the blind taste tests had not captured. Complaints flooded the company's offices, protests were organized, and media coverage intensified the controversy. It became clear that consumers' reactions were driven by more than taste; brand loyalty, identity, cultural symbolism, and emotional connection played a crucial role in their attachment to Coca-Cola.

By July 1985 less than three months after the launch Coca-Cola was forced to reintroduce the original formula as "Coke Classic." While the company attempted to sell both versions side by side, New Coke struggled to gain acceptance and was gradually phased out. The New Coke episode has since become one of the most famous examples of how misinterpreting marketing research results, relying too heavily on a single variable, and failing to consider emotional and psychological factors can lead to strategic failure.

Today, the New Coke case remains a powerful lesson on the importance of comprehensive research, accurate problem definition, and understanding the deeper dimensions of consumer behaviour beyond measurable attributes like taste.

Required: Basing on the knowledge obtained from this course;

a) Using the New Coke case, identify and critically evaluate Coca-Cola's original problem definition. To what extent did an incorrect or incomplete problem definition contribute to the failure of New Coke? **(5 marks)**

b) Based on the case, formulate appropriate research objectives and hypotheses that Coca-Cola should have considered prior to making the launch decision. Explain how these would shape the research design. **(15 marks)**

c) Discuss the ethical responsibilities Coca-Cola had toward its consumers when planning to withdraw the original formula entirely. How should ethical considerations influence marketing research decisions? **(10 marks)**

d) Based on the New Coke failure, recommend a more comprehensive marketing research process Coca-Cola should have followed before launching the product. **(10 marks)**

SECTION B

ATTEMPT ANY THREE QUESTIONS IN THIS SECTION

Question 1:

Marketing research is often described as the "bridge" between the organization and its marketing environment. Discuss this statement and explain how effective marketing research contributes to strategic planning, policy formulation and decision-making. Provide concrete examples to illustrate your points. **(20 marks)**

Question 2:

Examine the key steps of the marketing research process. For each step, explain a potential challenge a researcher might face and how that challenge could be mitigated. **(20 marks)**

Question 3:

a) Using relevant examples, compare and contrast three main types of research design applied in marketing research. **(10 marks)**

b) Using relevant examples, differentiate between probability and non-probability sampling techniques. **(10 marks)**

Question 4:

A research agency is hired to conduct in-home interviews about personal hygiene products.

a) Discuss the key ethical considerations the agency must address before, during, and after the data collection process. **(10 marks)**

b) What steps should be taken to ensure the research is conducted ethically and protects the rights of the participants? **(10 marks)**

Question 5:

a) Focus groups and in-depth interviews are two core qualitative research methods. Compare these two methods in terms of their

structure, moderator's role, advantages, and disadvantages. **(10 marks)**

b) Explain the main steps involved in designing and conducting a focus group discussion for marketing research purposes. **(10 marks)**

Question 6:

A well-designed questionnaire is essential for collecting accurate data." Discuss this statement by outlining the key stages involved in developing a robust questionnaire. Highlight common mistakes and pitfalls at each stage and explain how they can be avoided. **(20 marks)**

Question 7:

a) Critically assess the key challenges faced by marketing researchers during data collection and propose practical strategies to overcome each challenge. **(10 marks)**

b) Compare and contrast the nature, scope, and challenges of domestic marketing research and international marketing research. **(10 marks)**

Question 8:

a) Once data is collected, it must be prepared and analysed. Describe the key steps in the data preparation process. **(8 marks)**

b) Explain the essential components of a formal marketing research report. **(8 marks)**

c) How can a researcher ensure their recommendations are actionable and impactful? **(4 marks)**

Question 9:

a) Critically analyse how the changes in the internal and external marketing environment shape the objectives, methods, and

outcomes of marketing research. **(12 marks)**

b) Examine the factors that should be considered when designing a questionnaire for a marketing research study. **(8 marks)**

Question 10:

a) Using relevant examples, describe how data analysis and interpretation contribute to effective marketing decision-making. **(10 marks)**

b) Examine how digital technologies and online platforms have transformed the practice of marketing research. **(10 marks)**

Question 11:

Using relevant examples, discuss the classification of data in marketing research, distinguishing between primary and secondary data, and evaluating their strengths, limitations, and applications. **(20 marks)**

Question 12:

A manager is presented with a high-cost marketing research proposal. Discuss the criteria the manager should use to evaluate the research's value and justify its cost. Explain the concept of the cost versus value of information, and identify circumstances under which it may be acceptable for a manager to make decisions without conducting formal marketing research. **(20 marks)**