



MN5406 – Consumer Behaviour and Marketing Research

MODULE TYPE/ SEMESTER: Core (20 credits), Semester 1

MODULE CO-ORDINATOR: Dr Boyka Bratanova

CONTACT DETAILS: bab20@st-andrews.ac.uk

AIM:

Understanding, influencing, and predicting human behaviour requires an appreciation of multiple factors operating at individual, social, societal, and situational level. Consumer behaviour is no exception. This module aims to provide a framework for thinking systematically and critically about consumer behaviour. It also introduces the essential empirical toolkit for consumer research, including statistical analysis. The module will further demonstrate that principles of consumer behaviour should inform methodological design in consumer research.

The module introduces the contemporary conception of the consumer by examining key cognitive and social processes and their implications for consumption. The role of human cognition in understanding consumption is fundamental: the way humans learn, store, and recall information about products and brands directly influences consumer decision making and behaviour. Similarly, consumption is a major way for constructing and expressing social identities, and is often influenced by the way individuals relate to others and fit in the broader society. Finally, the situation in which consumption occurs also exerts a powerful influence on consumers. Sources of such situational influence can be proximal, such as cost of living crisis, loud music, sales, and time pressure, or more distal, such as perceived (in-)stability of the economy. Interwoven with these topics, are observations of consumer research methods; the module will pay particular attention to survey, experimental, and qualitative methods.

METHOD OF TEACHING & LEARNING:

- Interactive lectures and discussions;
- In-class exercises on research methods and statistics;
- Group and independent study.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Formulate appropriate study designs to address common research problems in marketing and consumer behaviour

- Use SPSS to carry out essential statistical analyses utilized in marketing and consumer behaviour research, such as t-test, correlation, regression, mediation, and moderation.
- Understand the basic cognitive principles of consumer behaviour
- Understand the social-psychological processes that can influence consumer behaviour
- Identify and critically evaluate situational factors influencing consumer decision environments

INDICATIVE TOPIC OUTLINE:

Lecture Topics per week:

- Week 1: Overview of the main topics; Research methods in consumer behaviour
- Week 2: Perception, learning, and memory
- Week 3: Attitude and behaviour change
- Week 4: Introduction to SPSS and essential analyses
- Week 5: Qualitative methods with HelloFresh™
- Week 6: *Independent Learning Week*
- Week 7: Decision-making
- Week 8: Social and group processes
- Week 9: Macro-societal influences on consumer behaviour
- Week 10: Group presentations
- Week 11: Conclusion and revision

ASSESSMENT:

- Final exam (50% of Module mark)
- Course work (25% of Module mark)
- Group presentation (25% of Module mark)

Further details will be provided in the first session.

READING LIST:

The core textbooks for the course are:

Szmigin & Piacentini (2022; 3rd Edition). *Consumer behaviour*. Oxford University Press.

Avery, Kozinets, Mittal, Raghubir, Woodside (2021; 5th Edition). *Consumer behaviour: How humans think, feel, and act in the marketplace*. Open Mentis.

For further material, students are encouraged to browse relevant journals in marketing and psychology:

- Journal of Consumer Research
- Journal of Marketing Research
- Journal of Consumer Psychology
- Judgment and Decision Making
- Journal of Behavioural Decision Making
- Journal of Economic Psychology
- Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes
- Management Science

There is also related material in the following more general psychology journals:

- Psychological Science
- Journal of Personality and Social Psychology
- Journal of Experimental Psychology
- Current Directions in Psychological Science provides good, succinct reviews of the current state of the science. It is peer reviewed, yet written in an accessible form—and articles are short (2500 words).

A more detailed weekly reading list will be provided in the first session of the course.

Organisation of courses may be subject to change without notice.