

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE & ACADEMIC SUCCESS



Hasibull Khandeker, 2423897, LCLM5006, Dr Chinomso Nwagboso

Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognise, understand and manage emotions and use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour. Salovey and Mayer (1990) established its importance in understanding emotions and their influence on reasoning. In education, EI can help students cope with pressure, maintain motivation and make better decisions. However, emotions are not always beneficial: their effects depend on how they are understood and managed.

Method

This poster uses secondary research from academic literature on emotional intelligence, stress, mindfulness and learning. Key findings were compared and applied to common student experiences, including examination anxiety, procrastination and low motivation. Personal reflection is used to consider the practical benefits and limitations of emotional regulation strategies.

Analyse Emotional Awareness

How much do emotions influence thinking and decisions?

Emotions can strongly influence attention, memory and judgement. Stress may narrow attention and make complex questions harder to process, while anxiety can lead students to doubt their abilities or avoid difficult tasks. Positive emotions can increase curiosity and creativity. However, emotions do not determine every decision; reasoning, experience and the situation also matter.

How can emotional awareness improve self-regulation and judgement?

Recognising an emotion helps a student pause before reacting. For example, identifying frustration during revision can prevent giving up and encourage taking a short break before trying again. Emotional awareness can be developed through journalling, identifying emotional triggers and reflecting on decisions. These strategies support more considered responses rather than impulsive reactions.

Reflection on Personal Experience

To what extent can mindfulness and emotional regulation improve learning?

Mindfulness involves paying attention to the present moment without immediately judging thoughts or feelings. Short breathing exercises before studying may reduce distraction and help students notice anxiety before it escalates.

Emotional regulation strategies, such as positive self-talk, breaks and reframing mistakes, can make learning feel more manageable.

In my learning experience, these techniques could be particularly useful during demanding revision periods by helping me recognise stress, regain focus and approach difficult questions more calmly. However, their effectiveness varies between individuals, and mindfulness alone cannot remove external pressures or replace adequate preparation. Their greatest value is as part of a wider routine involving planning, sleep and active revision

Emotional Intelligence in Academics

Which emotional factors contribute to academic success?

- Stress management: Moderate pressure may encourage preparation, but excessive stress can impair concentration and recall.
- Motivation: Clear goals and personal purpose encourage consistent effort, particularly when tasks become difficult.
- Resilience: Treating mistakes as opportunities to learn helps students recover from setbacks.
- Self-regulation: Managing distractions and emotions supports planning, persistence and effective revision.

How can EI manage procrastination, anxiety and low motivation?

A student who procrastinates can identify whether the cause is fear of failure, overwhelm or boredom, then break work into smaller tasks. Exam anxiety can be managed through slow breathing, realistic preparation and challenging catastrophic thoughts. When motivation is low, setting achievable goals and rewarding progress can help rebuild momentum. EI is not a substitute for effective study habits, but it can make them easier to maintain.

Conclusion

Emotional intelligence can contribute to academic success by helping students understand their emotions, respond constructively to challenges and maintain motivation. Emotional awareness, mindfulness and self-regulation can improve learning, but they work best alongside sound study strategies and realistic goals.

References

- Salovey, P. and Mayer, J.D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, 9(3), pp. 185–211.
- Gross, J.J. (1998). The emerging field of emotion regulation: An integrative review. *Review of General Psychology*, 2(3), pp. 271–299.
- Dweck, C.S. (2006). *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. Random House.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2003). Mindfulness-based interventions in context: Past, present, and future. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 10(2), pp. 144–156.