

Emotional Intelligence

A Key to Better Thinking, Learning and Wellbeing

Exploring how emotional awareness, academic success and mindfulness can help students make better decisions and achieve their potential.



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1 Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) involves recognising, understanding and managing emotions in ourselves and others. It influences how we think, make decisions, behave and relate to people, and is important for both academic and professional success.



Aim: To analyse how emotional awareness influences decision-making, evaluate the role of EI in academic success and critically examine how mindfulness and emotional regulation strategies can support learning.



2 Research Approach

A qualitative, critical review approach was used, drawing on module materials and five key academic sources: Fernández-Berrocal and Extremera (2006), Fiori et al. (2014), Hopkins and Deepa (2018), Karelaia and Reb (2014) and Six Seconds (2024). The literature was analysed to identify and synthesise key themes, including EI models and measurement, emotional awareness and judgement, mindfulness and decision-making, and the role of EI in academic stress, motivation and resilience.



Reviewed module materials and five academic sources



Analysed and synthesised key themes across the literature



Integrated theoretical models and empirical findings



Developed critical insights and practical recommendations

3 Emotional Awareness and Decision-Making

How emotions influence thinking and judgement



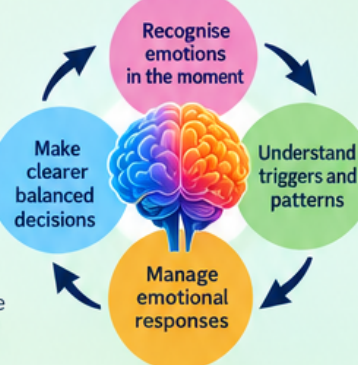
Emotions can affect attention, memory and how we interpret information.



Greater emotional self-awareness can lead to better self-regulation and more balanced decisions (Hopkins and Deepa, 2018).



Understanding our own and others' emotions can also improve communication and relationships in group work and wider study.



4 Emotional Intelligence and Academic Success

The role of stress, motivation and resilience



High levels of stress can reduce concentration, motivation and performance. Global research shows many people feel increasing pressure and risk burnout (Six Seconds, 2024).



EI can support motivation, resilience and persistence, helping students to manage challenges and stay focused (Karelaia and Reb, 2014).



Students with higher emotional skills often cope better with setbacks and are more likely to engage in effective learning behaviours.

Factors that influence academic success

- Stress management
- Motivation
- Resilience
- Positive relationships
- Improved focus and performance

5 Mindfulness and Emotional Regulation

Strategies to improve learning



Pause and breathe



Notice thoughts and feelings



Be more aware



Respond rather than react

Mindfulness can help us become more aware of our emotions, reduce automatic reactions and improve concentration. Taking short, regular breaks to pause and refocus can support calmer, more effective learning and decision-making.

Reflection on learning

I recognise emotions can affect my concentration and response to difficult study tasks. Noticing the feeling, pausing and choosing one manageable next step may help me refocus rather than react. I would judge its usefulness by whether I return to the task and sustain attention, while recognising it may not help every time.

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7 Conclusion

Emotional intelligence can help students think more clearly, make better decisions and manage the challenges of academic life. Developing emotional awareness, building resilience and using mindfulness are practical ways to support wellbeing and improve learning. While EI is not a complete solution, it is a valuable skill that can contribute to both academic success and personal growth.



Practical Implications



Be more self-aware



Manage stress proactively



Stay motivated



Use mindfulness strategies



Build resilience for long-term success

References

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