

Psychology

Example 10-hour bespoke programme for a pre-degree student (16-17 years old). To request an example for another age group, please [contact us](#).

These are example topics only. Exact content will depend on the expertise of the individual tutor and will be tailored to the prior knowledge, ability and interests of the student.

Module 1: The origin of emotions

- ▶ The evolutionary origins of emotion: what might emotions have evolved for?
- ▶ Emotions as social signals: building on Charles Darwin and Paul Ekman
- ▶ Emotions as a motivation to act: introducing George Mandler's interruption theory

Pre-tutorial preparation—independent learning to help you get ahead

1. Make a diary of the emotions you feel during the course of one day, and the context surrounding them (excluding any emotions that are too personal or distressing to talk about in a tutorial setting).
2. Practical activity: building chains of 'action routines' toward 'higher order goals' using paper clips

Formal submission—your tutor will give written feedback on each submission

Essay question: Compare and contrast Nico Fridja's action readiness and Katherine Peil's system theory, giving examples of contexts in which each theory fits better.

Module 2: Feelings and other people

- ▶ Emotion in relationships: making connections
- ▶ Evolution, sex and community: controversial claims about what people find attractive
- ▶ Emotion in dysfunction: abnormal psychology and psychopathology

Pre-tutorial preparation

1. Practical activity: linking chains into 'inter-chain' and 'intra-chain' connections
2. Watch [Sam Harris: Science can answer moral questions](#)
3. Carry out research into prevalence statistics of abnormal psychology

Formal submission

Essay question: "Can you love more than one partner at a time or is three always a crowd?"

Module 3: Acting on emotions

- ▶ The role of perception: the brain and the limbic system
- ▶ What is thinking: is there a difference between perceiving and acting?
- ▶ How are humans different from the rest of the animals?

Pre-tutorial preparation

1. Prepare for a discussion on the question of "Are emotions just another kind of perception, like taste and vision?"
2. Watch: [When Emotions Make Better Decisions - Antonio Damasio](#)
3. Read [Why do we want to think humans are different?](#)

Formal submission

Essay question: "If we can't distinguish higher-order and lower-order cognition, what truly distinguishes humans from animals?"