

## UNIT 1 – IDENTITY

### Writing task model answer

**“Some people believe that your personality doesn’t change over time. To what extent do you agree with this idea? Give specific examples to support your opinion.”**

The nature versus nurture debate has continued for many years. Some people claim we have our personality from birth and it does not change. However, I would suggest that personality is not fixed. It changes over time.

Studies on a variety of participants have confirmed that several variables can change personalities. It is certainly true too that when people meet again at reunions they often notice that friends or coworkers have changed as they have matured. This may be because they are influenced by other people or their own circumstances and experiences throughout their lives. These can make them more or less confident or modest, for example.

There is also evidence that people can train themselves to be different. For this reason companies often invest in training programs to make employees more extroverted, more thinking or more feeling towards others, for instance.

Other factors can also affect personality in temporary and permanent ways. For example, experiencing trauma means people tend to become more nervous, or more introverted. However, counseling and medical treatment can help reverse this, so the effect on personality is often only temporary. Other medical conditions, such as Alzheimer’s Disease<sup>1</sup>, can have a dramatic and more permanent outcome and consequences for the personalities of the sufferer and others.

In conclusion, personality is connected to our genes<sup>2</sup>, but these do not define us. Environmental factors mean that as humans we can and do change throughout our lives. Because we have scope for change, we are also able to train ourselves and improve when this is desirable.

#### Comments

**The essay answers the question well and the student presents and supports their opinion successfully. The student shows evidence of clear organization and awareness of essay structure, uses appropriate vocabulary related to personality and research, and successfully includes reflexive pronouns and various forms of *other*.**

- 1 a serious illness affecting your brain that makes it difficult for you to remember things and becomes worse as time passes.
- 2 a pattern of chemicals within a cell that carries information about the qualities passed to a living thing from its parents.