1. **Identity six learner characteristics that could influence the acquisition of skills**

Various. These may be inherited or acquired and could include agility, balance, coordination, confidence, experience and personality (eg dedication, reliability, determination, flexibility, level of motivation).

1. **'Athletes are born not made.' Discuss this statement in terms of the individual characteristics of heredity, personality and self-confidence.**

Theories about natural ability consider heredity and personality as leading factors in athletic success.

Heredity refers to genetic characteristics inherited from parents. It play an integral role in supplying the necessary blueprint for success in sport. Genetics largely determines height, gender, the make-up of muscle fibres (percentage of fast twitch and slow twitch fibres), somatotype (endomorphic, ectomorphic and mesomorphic), and conceptual ability (ability to visualise a movement). For example, in the sport of rowing, anthropometric identification of athletes has been successful in producing champions at every age and level of the sport. This significance of natural ability is also evident in running events, eg the success of black athletes. On the other hand, in swimming, Caucasian athletes are more dominant in the pool than black athletes. This suggests that there may be a genetic influence in some sports.

However, genetics is not the only influence, environment can determine whether inherited potentials will be reached. A person’s ability has some genetic basis but this is largely improved by teaching, encouragement, experience and practice. The degree to which an athlete benefits from teaching is influenced by personality and self-confidence.

The personality of an athlete is important in determining success in sport. The drive for success and willingness to listen and learn together with such characteristics as enthusiasm, dedication, cooperation and reliability all play important roles in the extent to which an athlete will improve in fitness and technique.

Self-confidence also play a major part in an athlete’s success. A self-confident attitude helps in overcoming challenges and learning new skills. A self-confident person may view apparent failure as an opportunity to learn. Confidence is fostered by coaches and family and the athlete’s own self-appraisal.