



# **Development and Retention of Autistic Staff in Hospitality**

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## **Trainer's Guide**

### **Module 5**

#### **Code of Conduct**

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### **Using the PERFORM Trainer's Guide**

The PERFORM Trainer's Guide has been designed specifically to support the delivery of the Vocational Education Curriculum developed in the context of the PERFORM project. The Curriculum constitutes a 1,5-day course, a total of 12 hours of training.

## Slide 1: Welcome to Module 5

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# DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION OF AUTISTIC STAFF IN HOSPITALITY

Project Number 2023-1-IT01-KA220-VET-000152721



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Passion for details



### Trainer's Notes:

- Introduce yourself and dedicate some time to introduce learners to the PERFORM project. Describe the learning objectives of the course as well as Module 5; learners will be educated on:
  1. The importance of a safe, inclusive work environment in hospitality.
  2. The organizational culture and behavior standards that support all employees, including autistic staff.
  3. The role, purpose, and structure of a Code of Conduct.
  4. The development and application of a clear and inclusive Code of Conduct.
  5. Practical tools to promote respectful behavior in the workplace.
  6. How inclusive workplace culture benefits both employees and guest satisfaction.
- Give learners the opportunity to introduce themselves and ask about their expectations.

## Slide 2: About the PERFORM Project

### ABOUT:

The 'PERFORM' project is about educating Hospitality Managers and HR Experts in developing and supporting Autistic Staff in the EU Hospitality Sector. It also delivers an Innovative HR Platform, for performance appraisals and employee monitoring.

### PROJECT RESULTS

- 1 Project Result 1: PERFORM HR Platform
- 2 Project Result 2: PERFORM Digital Toolkit
- 3 Project Result 3: VET Course for Hospitality Managers and HR Experts



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### Trainer's Notes:

Provide an overview of the PERFORM project, highlighting its overall objectives and target groups. Briefly present each of the Project Results, explaining their purpose, content and how they contribute to building inclusive, autism-friendly workplaces in the hospitality sector.

## Slide 3: Module overview and learning outcomes


### Module 5 : Code of Conduct

#### Module Aim


Module 5 aims to equip learners in the hospitality sector with a clear understanding of how a well-developed Code of Conduct can foster a safe, inclusive, and productive workplace. It emphasizes the importance of organizational culture and ethical behavior, while also offering practical guidance on supporting autistic employees through structured, respectful and accessible practices.

#### Learning Outcomes

- 1 Define and explain the role of a Code of Conduct
- 2 Identify key components of inclusive behavior
- 3 Learn how to develop and apply a Code of Conduct



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Briefly introduce the module's focus: workplace culture and Codes of Conduct in hospitality settings, with a special emphasis on supporting autistic employees.
- Explain that the session draws from real-world hospitality challenges and inclusive employment practices.
- Reassure participants that they will not only learn theory but practical approaches they can apply or train others in.

### Learning outcomes

- Go over each learning outcomes one by one.
- Explain that the session is both reflective and practical – learners will leave with concrete tools.
- Emphasize that one aim is to support autistic employees with predictable and respectful workplace structures.
- Ask participants to consider which of these objectives is most relevant to their own work or team.

## Slide 4: Introduction

### 1. Introduction

#### A Code of Conduct:

- Sets behavior expectations at work
- Promotes professionalism, inclusiveness and fairness
- Is especially useful in high-pressure hospitality settings
- Supports neurodiverse employees through structure
- Enhances team dynamics and team satisfaction



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### Trainer's Notes:

#### Introduction'

- Explain that Codes of Conduct are central to shaping ethical, inclusive workplace behavior.
- Mention that this is particularly important in hospitality, where employees face pressure, diversity, and fast-paced service demands.
- Highlight the dual goals: (1) professional behavior for business success, and (2) psychological safety for all, especially neurodiverse employees.
- Invite participants to briefly reflect on whether their organizations currently have a formal Code of Conduct and how it is used.

## Slide 5: What is an organizational culture?

### 2. Culture of an Organization

#### What Is Organizational Culture?

- Shared values, norms and expected behaviors
- Influences employee conduct and service quality
- Shapes how staff feel, act, and interact
- Important for conflict resolution and ethics
- Builds team trust and performance



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#### Trainer's Notes:

- Define organizational culture clearly as the 'way things are done' in a workplace -not just policies, but behaviors and attitudes.
- Provide examples from hospitality: tone of guest interactions, teamwork under pressure, communication between roles.
- Emphasize that culture affects inclusion, staff morale, and guest experience.

Encourage participants to reflect: *"How would you describe your current workplace culture in 3 words?"*



## Slide 6: Hospitality workplace culture

### Hospitality Culture

#### Key features

- ✓ Fast-paced, guest-oriented, teamwork-driven
- ✓ High sensory and emotional demands
- ✓ Clear communication is essential
- ✓ Informal culture may hide inclusion gaps
- ✓ Strong culture reduces staff turnover



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### Trainer's Notes:

Mention the importance of the workplace in the hospitality industry:

- Discuss how hospitality workplaces are unique: fast-paced, people-facing, and multi-departmental.
  - Explain that this creates both opportunities and risks: good culture can enhance service, poor culture causes stress and conflict.
  - Point out that structure, respectful leadership and teamwork are essential.
- *Invite and encourage participants to share a workplace challenge they believe was linked to 'culture' rather than a formal policy.*

## Slide 7: Autism and workplace culture

### Autism in Hospitality workplaces

- Sensory overload from noise, lights, pressure
- Need for structured tasks and written instructions
- Unclear communication causes anxiety
- Visual aids, routines, and calm spaces help
- Inclusion policies improve retention and engagement



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Explain that autistic employees may experience sensory overload or confusion in unstructured environments.
- Highlight how structured communication, predictable routines, and visual aids improve inclusion.
- Use hospitality-specific examples such as kitchen noise, strong scents, or rushed team briefings.
- Emphasize that inclusive environments help all staff, not only neurodivergent individuals.

## Slide 8: Building an inclusive environment

### Need for Inclusion

#### Why is it essential?

- Inclusive culture accepts and supports all employees
- Neurodiverse needs must be acknowledged
- Adjust communication and work styles
- Equal access to information and training
- Encourages staff loyalty and satisfaction



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Clarify that inclusion means adapting policies and behavior to support all working styles.
- Give practical examples like flexible schedules or using visual task lists.
- Discuss how inclusive leadership reduces staff turnover and increases job satisfaction.

➤ *Encourage participants to reflect on one inclusive adjustment they've seen work well.*

## Slide 9: What is a Code of Conduct?

### 3. Defining a Code of Conduct

#### What is a Code of Conduct?

- A document defining behavior expectations
- Reflects values like respect and fairness
- Clarifies rights and responsibilities
- Supports ethics and equal treatment
- Sets consistent workplace standards



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Define a Code of Conduct as a document outlining expected behaviors and responsibilities.
  - Mention that it ensures fairness, professionalism, and sets clear rules.
  - Discuss how it differs from general workplace policies -it's more behavioral and cultural.
- *Engage participants by asking them whether their current organization has a Code of Conduct and if it's used regularly.*

## Slide 10: Why a Code of Conduct matters?

### Why a Code of Conduct is important?

- ✓ Prevents misconduct and confusion
- ✓ Enhances accountability and trust
- ✓ Encourages respectful, inclusive behavior
- ✓ Supports autistic staff with clear rules
- ✓ Promotes fairness across roles



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Explain the protective role of a Code of Conduct: it prevents misconduct and fosters mutual respect.
  - Reinforce the link to autistic employees: structure and predictability reduce anxiety.
  - Give an example of how unclear expectations can lead to misunderstanding or discipline.
- *Encourage reflection: How is respect communicated in your current workplace culture?*

## Slide 11: Main components of a Code of Conduct

### Key components of a Code of Conduct

To support autistic employees in hospitality, a Code of Conduct should include:

1. Workplace behavior guidelines,
2. Equal opportunity and non-discrimination policies,
3. Support for neurodiverse employees,
4. Complaint and dispute resolution procedures,
5. Customer interaction standards



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Go through the core elements: values, behavior expectations, communication, and complaints.
- Highlight that in hospitality, guest interaction rules and appearance standards are crucial.
- Mention that inclusion and anti-discrimination clauses should be explicit.
- Encourage discussion on how each component is presented (or not) in current practice.

## Slide 12: What should a Code of Conduct contain?

### 4. Contents of a Code of Conduct

#### Structure of a Hospitality Code of Conduct

- Introduction and purpose
- Organizational values
- Expected workplace behavior
- Guest interaction and communication rules
- Anti-discrimination and inclusion sections



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#### Trainer's Notes:

- Present the key content areas a hospitality Code of Conduct should include.
- Emphasize behavior, appearance, guest interaction, technology use, and professional expectations.
- Highlight the importance of inclusion: policies on harassment, accommodations for neurodiverse staff, and diversity commitments.
- Mention that well-structured content helps employees understand expectations and feel supported.
- Ask participants: *"Which of these sections do you think is the most commonly misunderstood in hospitality workplaces?"*

## Slide 13: Drafting an accessible Code of Conduct

### Accessible and inclusive language

**To support neurodiverse employees, a Code of Conduct should:**

- Use clear, jargon-free wording
- Avoid vague or ambiguous terms
- Include visual examples if possible
- Provide translations or simplified versions
- Support autistic employees with structure



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Explain the importance of using plain, inclusive language in Codes of Conduct.
- Stress the need to avoid legal jargon or technical terms that may confuse staff.
- Suggest formatting techniques like bold headers, bullet points, and visual icons to aid clarity.
- Mention the importance of readability for autistic staff and others with cognitive differences.



## Slide 14: Choose participants

### 5. Developing a Code of Conduct

#### Step 1: Choose Participants

- Choose Participants
- Include experienced staff from departments (Reception, F&B, Housekeeping, Kitchen)
- Engage disability inclusion consultants or autism advocates
- Ensure diversity of perspectives
- Build ownership across departments



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#### Trainer's Notes:

- Clarify that developing a CoC should involve people from different roles and experiences.
- Highlight the value of consulting HR, long-term employees and inclusion experts.
- Mention the benefit of involving autistic staff or advocacy reps in the design process.
- Prompt participants to identify who they would invite to such a working group in their setting.

## Slide 15: Analyze previous ethical issues

### Step 2: Analyze ethical issues

- Review past ethical challenges in hospitality
- Guest complaints handled improperly
- Workplace bullying, harassment, discrimination
- Dress code, punctuality, or privacy violations
- Sensory overload affecting autistic employees



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Encourage trainers to have learners think about real ethical problems their organization has faced.
- Explain how analyzing past incidents helps shape relevant and preventive rules.
- List common examples: gossip, poor handling of complaints, exclusionary humor, dress code issues.
- Discuss how issues affecting autistic staff often go unnoticed but need to be addressed explicitly.

## Slide 16: Form the outline

### Step 3: Form an outline

- Dress code and grooming standards
- Guest interaction and communication guidelines
- Equal opportunity, inclusion, and diversity policies
- Anti-harassment and bullying measures
- Sensory-friendly accommodations and privacy rules



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Walk through typical sections of a hospitality Code of Conduct.
  - Stress the importance of structure, clarity, and covering guest-facing behaviors.
  - Emphasize inclusion policies, sensory needs, and consistent disciplinary procedures.
- *Engage participants by asking them to brainstorm what sections their organization might be missing.*

## Slide 17: Gather stakeholder feedback

### Step 4: Share draft for feedback

- Consult department heads and staff representatives
- Gather feedback on clarity and practicality
- Check specific guidance for neurodiverse employees
- Adapt rules for all hospitality service areas
- Ensure realism and inclusivity



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Emphasize that drafting is not the end—feedback is essential.
- Advocate sharing the draft with staff, managers, and inclusion consultants.
- Discuss how honest feedback helps refine clarity, accessibility, and practicality.
- Encourage discussion: how can trainers ensure feedback is meaningfully collected?

## Slide 18: Finalize the Code of Conduct

### Step 5: Finalize the Code

- Write a clear Introduction (purpose and scope)
- Structure sections around specific behaviors
- Use supportive, inclusive language
- Provide hospitality-related examples
- Make it simple, visual and accessible to all




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### Trainer's Notes:

- Explain that the final Code of Conduct should be readable, visual and accessible to all.
- Encourage use of clear headings, plain language and real-life examples from hospitality.
- Highlight the importance of printed and digital formats.
- Stress that the Code should live in practice, not just on paper.

## Slide 19: Code of Conduct Template overview (Part 1)



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### Code of Conduct Template

- **Content table:** Lists all key themes included in the CoC, with page numbers.
- **Company policy and purpose:** Promote respect, professionalism, inclusivity, and support for structured environments, benefiting all, including autistic employees.
- **Dress code:** Professional grooming standards; uniforms and hygiene; minimal strong scents to prevent sensory discomfort
- **Technology use and workplace security:** Rules for using technology systems to protect guest confidentiality and operational efficiency.
- **Relationships between staff:** Expect respectful, professional communication; avoid gossip, inappropriate jokes, and exclusionary behaviors.


### Trainer's Notes:

- Introduce the template: what themes are commonly included in Codes.
- Discuss each section briefly: company values, dress code, tech use, staff relationships.
- Reinforce how these reflect core cultural norms in hospitality.
- Ask learners if any of these areas are controversial or unclear in their own workplace.


## Slide 20: Code of Conduct Template overview (Part 2)

### Code of Conduct Template

- **Workplace behavior and business culture:** Punctuality, clear communication, teamwork, and respect for neurodiverse working styles.
- **Harassment and discrimination:** Zero-tolerance for harassment, bullying, discrimination; with clear examples.
- **Workplace accommodations for neurodiverse employees:** Access to sensory-friendly spaces, written instructions, structured routines; confidential handling of requests.
- **Discipline measures:** Clear steps for breaches, from verbal warnings to formal procedures depending on the severity.



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Continue with template: harassment policies, accommodations, disciplinary steps.
- Clarify what reasonable accommodations might look like for autistic staff.
- Highlight the importance of confidentiality and fairness in discipline.
- Ask participants whether their current policies are clearly understood by all staff.

## Slide 21: Best Practice Checklist

### Best Practice Checklist

- Is the language clear and simple?
- Are neurodiverse needs addressed?
- Are all service departments included?
- Are examples realistic and practical?
- Is training linked to the Code?
- Are managers leading by example?
- Are reporting procedures confidential and easy?
- Are updates scheduled regularly?
- Is feedback collected from diverse employees?



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Use this slide to self-assess existing or draft Codes.
- Ask participants to apply the checklist to a CoC they know.
- Encourage critical thinking: Is the tone inclusive? Are examples realistic?
- Discuss whether the Code truly reflects daily hospitality challenges.
- Focus on implementation and review practices.
- Discuss how managers model behavior, and whether Codes are discussed or ignored.
- Emphasize regular reviews and updates to stay relevant.

➤ *Ask learners what simple improvements could make their CoC more inclusive.*



## Slide 22: How to apply the Code?

### 6. Application of the Code

- Reinforce the Code through daily routines
- Use it in performance reviews and feedback
- Managers must model expected behavior
- Support autistic staff with structured coaching
- Apply fairly to all employees



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Explain that a Code of Conduct is only effective if it is actively applied and visible in daily operations.
- Encourage trainers to discuss how the CoC should be used during onboarding, performance evaluations, and conflict resolution.
- Emphasize the importance of consistency: all staff should be held to the same standards regardless of role or seniority.
- Highlight the role of supervisors and managers in modelling behavior and using the Code as a reference tool.
- Discuss how autistic employees benefit from predictability — structured support and consistent application of the Code are essential to reduce stress and misunderstandings.
- Invite participants to share how their workplace communicates and reinforces behavior standards — and whether the CoC is something they refer to regularly or only when problems arise.

## Slide 23: Workplace behaviour standards

### 7. Workplace culture and behavior standards

#### Importance of workplace culture in Hospitality

- Culture shapes employee experience and service quality
- Strong culture promotes respect, professionalism, teamwork, inclusivity.
- Clear communication standards support autistic employees.
- Written instructions and visual aids improve accessibility.
- Teamwork values different strengths, including attention to detail.
- Structured support helps in guest interactions and service recovery.



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#### Trainer's Notes:

- Review the six core behavior standards listed on the slide and explain their relevance in the hospitality setting.
  - Emphasize how clear expectations improve team performance, service consistency, and workplace morale.
  - Link respectful communication and punctuality to guest satisfaction and internal harmony.
  - Highlight the importance of flexibility and understanding toward neurodiverse staff — e.g., using alternative communication or allowing sensory adjustments.
  - Encourage participants to reflect: "Which of these standards is most often overlooked or inconsistently enforced in your workplace?"
- *If time allows, use real or hypothetical scenarios to illustrate proper vs. poor adherence to these standards.*

## Slide 24:

### Establishing and maintaining behavior standards

- Clear standards define acceptable communication, appearance, teamwork.
- Zero-tolerance for bullying, harassment, discrimination.
- Supervisors must model expected behaviors daily.
- Sensory-friendly adjustments (quiet spaces, flexible breaks) support inclusion.
- Regular staff engagement and inclusivity training refresh culture.
- Positive culture attracts talent and improves guest experiences.



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Introduce the idea that behavior standards must be clear, consistent, and aligned with company values and customer service goals.
- Highlight the importance of outlining expected behaviors in communication, appearance, punctuality, teamwork, and conflict handling.
- Emphasize that clear standards help autistic employees by reducing ambiguity and promoting structure.
- Discuss the role of supervisors in modelling behavior and ensuring accountability through training, feedback, and reinforcement.
- Address the need for a safe and respectful work environment: zero-tolerance for harassment, and provision of sensory-friendly spaces or flexible breaks when needed.

## Slide 25: Module summary and closure

### Summary Module 5

- A Code of Conduct sets the foundation for safe, inclusive workplaces.
- Positive workplace culture supports all employees, including autistic staff.
- Clear communication and behavior standards minimize conflict.
- Inclusive adjustments promote employee engagement and service excellence.
- Codes must be living documents, evolving with organizational growth.
- Investing in inclusion strengthens hospitality success long-term.



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### Trainer's Notes:

- Recap the key themes of the module, reinforcing how a Code of Conduct supports both employee well-being and business outcomes.
  - Emphasize that inclusion and neurodiversity aren't "add-ons"—they are essential to a healthy, effective workplace culture.
  - Remind participants that real impact comes when Codes are not only written but lived through daily behavior.
- *Encourage learners to reflect: "What's one idea you're taking from this module that you can bring into your own work environment?"*
- *Close by acknowledging that behavior change starts with awareness and leadership—and that trainers have the power to influence both.*



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