Neurodiversity and Process Control Skills Acquisition in Britain: An Examination of Inclusive Training and Selection Practices

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Received:July 15, 2026 Accepted: August13, 2026 Published:August 20,2026
doi:10.65343/erd.v2i3.119 URL: https://doi.org/10.65343/erd.v2i3.119

Abstract

Purpose: This paper examines neurodiversity issues in the selection, training and skills development of process control trainees in Britain. The emphasis is on autistic, ADHD and dyslexic trainees, and the question is what kind of training and work arrangements need to be considered in order not to treat neurodiverse employees as a monolithic entity.

Design/methodology: This paper draws on current evidence on workplace neuro-inclusion, employment guidance for Britain, and process-control training literature to inform conclusions on recruitment, simulator-based training, feedback, and workplace adaptations.

Findings: British process control training requires a neuro-inclusive approach that incorporates relevant assessments, clear communication, sensory and working-memory support, debriefing, and reasonable adjustments for individuals. Case- and simulator-based approaches may be helpful when used alongside psychological safety, clear task prompts, and competence outcomes. Given the required training outcomes, it is imperative that trainers consider other individual differences, including neurodiverse conditions and English as a second or additional language, within the defined training procedures.

Practical implications: Trainers should audit the selection, scenario design and feedback processes to enable trainees to demonstrate competence through diverse communication and problem-solving approaches. Given the required training outcomes, it is imperative that trainers consider other individual differences, including neurodiverse conditions, within the defined training procedures.

Originality/value: There is a research gap regarding the lack of clear guidelines for training neurodiverse trainees. This paper offers suggestions relevant to British industries and comparable international contexts. Policymakers should consider access to adjustments and career progression.

Keywords: individual differences, process control training

1. Introduction

Understanding neurodiversity and its influence in the workplace is important for cultivating an inclusive environment. That is, environments should be created to support all employees, enabling them to thrive and contribute effectively. However, promoting effective selection procedures for neurodiverse individuals is vital to creating inclusive workplaces, and these procedures must account for applicants' diverse communication styles and cognitive strengths. In this way, organisations can better support neurodiverse applicants and leverage their strengths. This aspect of selection is discussed in this paper.

This should also include a discussion of training for process control operators that is relevant and engaging. This may mean tailoring communication methods and providing practical, hands-on learning experiences that accommodate individual differences. The relationships between some of these factors and neurodiversity are discussed, as this is important when creating neurodiverse environments and working practices. Case studies are a useful tool for illustrating the real-world application of neurodiverse considerations in training. This can help all trainers, including those who are neurodiverse, understand the practical benefits of accommodating trainees with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism and dyslexia. Scenarios highlight individuals' strengths and the accommodations or adjustments in the training process, leading to successful outcomes and more effective training in a more inclusive environment. This may be achieved through various strategies so that the

case studies resonate with trainees and encourage critical insights. Feedback support is discussed because it may help trainees apply insights.

The focal phenomenon of this review is a discussion of the training types and strategies used in the process control industry. It further discusses how such procedures could be developed to enhance the training of neurodivergent trainees.

To narrow the scope, this review uses Britain to refer to the British workplace context in which neurodivergent applicants and trainees encounter recruitment, workplace learning and reasonable-adjustment processes. Evidence from the UK shows that neuro-inclusion is not only an equality issue but also a training and retention issue. ACAS (2025) frames neurodiversity at work as a policy-practice gap requiring manager capability, and CIPD (2024) states that UK employers need clearer and practical systems for neuro-inclusive work design. A recent review also identifies a continuing gap between neurodiversity research and human capital management practice (Rollnik-Sadowska & Grabińska, 2024). For process control, this means that selection, simulator training and feedback should be treated as organisational learning systems rather than as one-off individual accommodations.

2. Process Control Industries

Process control systems are used to monitor and automatically adjust manufacturing processes. These systems ensure that variables such as temperature, pressure, and flow rate remain within predefined limits, thereby optimising production efficiency and maintaining product quality.

Training is essential for operators due to the need for precision, such as understanding how systems function, which helps reduce errors in settings and enhances the efficiency required by operators who control systems. Engineers need to stay informed about new developments in artificial intelligence (AI) to troubleshoot and improve processes. Nevertheless, trainees will require knowledge and understanding of how systems function, as this will reduce errors in settings and lead to more reliable products.

Process control has a relatively long history, and Bequette (2019) summarised this: "*While some chemical engineering departments had instrumentation and control courses by the 1940's, process control textbooks with a theoretical basis did not appear until the mid-1950's, yet by 1950 there was already a concern about a theory vs. practice gap." The focus then turns to a flipped classroom, where students view screencasts, read textbook material, and take an online quiz before class, a practice implemented in a process dynamics and control course. The class periods involve brief lectures summarising what they have studied, as well as discussions and advanced problem-solving.*

A potential concern is that such procedures could lead to high dropout rates among trainees who are not well suited to them. Organisations that favour modernised training methods and opportunities for personal development need effective strategies to support the transfer and retention of skills. Training is accessible through various resources, including books, videos, and on-the-job training, such as that provided by Honeywell Forge (2026). The company states that trainees need to acquire knowledge of different types of engineering, including chemical, mechanical, electrical and computer systems.

To facilitate this, trainers might, for instance, ask trainees to control the flow of liquids by manipulating valves. Honeywell Forge, for example, promotes the use of advanced modelling and control engineering techniques that may be essential for improving fault detection. The skills required for this typically depend on the accuracy of judgement. This paper argues that individual differences among trainees influence their response speed to faults and their ability to acquire knowledge once solutions are identified. Such solutions may result from trial and error or from tested practices that lead to correct outcomes. This paper contends that trainees' neurodiversity, along with other individual differences such as cognitive and learning styles, affects fault-finding and problem-solving. There is growing interest in creating training environments that support neurodivergent trainees and acknowledge their learning needs. The first point is to consider the selection process and how it could affect neurodiverse applicants entering the industry.

Selection practice in Britain should be organised in line with the requirements of the role, not with narrow assumptions about eye contact, rapid verbal processing or conventional interview performance. The Buckland Review of Autism Employment observed that autistic people in the UK continue to face barriers in recruitment and selection, including low disclosure and limited awareness of workplace adjustments (Department for Work and Pensions, 2024). In addition, UK evidence on autistic adults indicates that adjustments are often perceived as necessary but are inconsistently received (Davies et al., 2022). Therefore, process-control selection needs to include detailed information about tasks, accessible assessment instructions, structured interviews and opportunities to demonstrate pattern recognition, monitoring and fault-finding through job-relevant exercises.

In Britain, process control commonly intersects with safety-critical industries, including energy, chemical processing, utilities, and advanced manufacturing. This creates training design challenges that are particularly important because operator competence is linked to safe monitoring, effective emergency response, and structured decision-making. Recent studies using simulator evidence show that operator training simulators can support prompt and accurate responses to chemical accidents (Lee & Ma, 2023), while process-simulator evidence shows the value of tailored learning design, explanatory models, and gamified practice for developing process knowledge (Caño de Las Heras et al., 2021). For neurodivergent trainees, the British training question is therefore not whether standards should be lowered but how equivalent competence can be demonstrated through accessible instruction, repeated practice, clear interfaces, and debriefing.

3. Selection Procedures

Table 1. General selection procedures may involve stages, as follows

Selection stage
1. Determine when to commence a recruitment programme
2. Assess the requirements, e.g., the number of trainees to be recruited and attributes to be sought
3. Design the selection process (select test methods, etc.)
4. Advertise for applicants
5. Screen the application process
6. Support applicants to decide whether they really want the job they are being offered
7. Carry out the testing of selection procedures
8. Carry out interviews
9. Selectors make a decision on whom they would like to train
10. Applicants are vetted, and references and health checks are required
11. The selection process is followed up and validated

Clearly, stages 3 and 7 are crucial, as selection hinges on an adequate assessment of cognitive skills and on whether those skills are transferable across tasks. Different process control tasks have distinct characteristics. If individuals differ, this may enable trainers to match task requirements to the psychological characteristics needed to carry out complex tasks. The costs of training in process control can be high. However, these costs can be minimised by recruiting individuals who fit the role for which they have applied or by reducing training times and failure rates. It is necessary to consider individual differences, including neurodivergence. In this case, it is apparent that insufficient information is available on the selection of process control trainees.

4. Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity describes the natural differences in how people think, learn, and process information. The autism spectrum includes conditions that affect language, communication, and social interaction. It encompasses Asperger's syndrome, often associated with individuals described as high functioning. Teaching students/trainees the purpose of language and how to use it correctly is one way to meet their needs. For example, emphasising skills such as conversation, active listening, and turn-taking is important. Conversely, specific learning disabilities (SpLD) refer to difficulties a student may have in certain areas.

These disabilities include dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Dyslexia affects reading, writing, and spelling, and trainees may experience challenges with working memory and phonological processing. Dysgraphia also impacts handwriting, which may not meet standards for punctuation, legibility, or writing speed. Dyscalculia is a cognitive difficulty that hampers understanding of numerical concepts but can be supported through visual and auditory teaching strategies. Another well-known learning difficulty is ADHD, characterised by forgetfulness, impulsivity, inattention, hyperactivity, and organisational challenges.

It is crucial for trainers to recognise that conditions like ADHD can coexist with dyslexia. Essentially, trainees may encounter anxiety and memory issues when learning and completing tasks. Anxiety can be an expected outcome for trainees who face workplace challenges. The emotional impact of challenges that induce anxiety in

Simon, Tara, and Hamza may affect their problem-solving outcomes. Memory issues also affect trainees who are neurodiverse, as do cognitive styles, age, gender and personality.

The National Autistic Society (NAS, 2026) discussed how organisations recognise and create inclusive environments, as this influences recruitment, retention, staff wellbeing, communication and organisational culture. However, the society notes that awareness is not forthcoming.

Within the British context, neurodiversity should also be understood as a training-design variable. ACAS (2025) emphasises that neuroinclusive practice depends on manager training, policy clarity and everyday work design rather than informal goodwill alone. The CIPD (2024) similarly links neuroinclusion to fairness, wellbeing and organisational outcomes. These points are relevant to process-control training because neurodivergent trainees may need adjustments to the sequence, timing, sensory load and communication mode of training while still meeting the same safety-critical competence expectations.

The following case studies are used to discuss factors associated with ADHD, dyslexia and autism that may be beneficial or challenging for trainees. These case studies can help trainees understand the practical implications and benefits of accommodating different learning and communication styles, as well as their impact on the workplace. To illustrate neurodiversity, the following case studies are proposed. Such cases could be implemented in the workplace to help trainees gather confidence in work practices. However, these are not well-documented in the literature.

5. Case Studies

Case 1: Simon (autism)

Simon is 24, has autism, and started working as a trainee process control operator. He finished school and university with strong results in computer science. However, during his studies, he struggled with social anxiety but participated in a skills programme that helped him to live independently and develop social and work skills. Despite this, he had difficulty with executive functioning and became frustrated when others held different opinions. Nevertheless, after a six-month internship, he was employed as a trainee process control operator. This case suggests that support targeted to individual needs at key points in the workplace can result in successful outcomes.

Case 2: Hamza (ADHD)

Hamza has ADHD and faces challenges in paying attention to detail, which affects how quickly he completes tasks. His executive functioning is impaired, often due to burnout, which leads to difficulty meeting deadlines. As a result, he struggles with time management and prioritisation. Nevertheless, he is creative but works best with flexible hours and projects divided into sections. Memory aids are useful for his working practice. A strength of Hamza is his non-judgmental communication style, which enables him to work well with colleagues. However, spotting errors during work and staying focused while following instructions can be difficult for him. He may try to steer sessions away from appropriate support content and into areas of conversation that make others uncomfortable. This suggests that emotional regulation may also need support.

Case 3: Tara (dyslexia)

Tara has dyslexia and is a systems engineer with a degree in fault-tolerant control systems. She has worked in areas such as control rooms and condition monitoring, and she feels comfortable in meetings and workshops led by others. She prefers to read documents that use clear language and terminology. She prefers quiet areas with limited distractions. However, she finds complex, multi-step processes challenging, as well as poorly structured documents and the quick interpretation of numbers.

She tends to forget names, documents, or projects she has worked on, as well as what she said or did. She also struggles in open-plan offices, where noise and distractions can be overwhelming. Nevertheless, she enjoys solving problems, and her ability to capture core principles visually can support workplace problem-solving despite slower movement toward solutions.

Analysing these case studies reveals types of diversity among the neurodivergent individuals. These include social and cognitive differences, as well as other individual differences. However, the literature lacks longitudinal evidence to determine the long-term effects of these differences on neurodivergent people who work in the process control industry.

6. Issues With Memory

Researchers emphasised the significance of operator characteristics and training methods that influence performance. In other words, a trainee operator's ability to complete tasks is greatly affected by the types of process

control systems, the requirements for fault-finding, and the design of training interventions (Burkolter et al., 2010). Analysing individual differences can help clarify how variables interact to support trainees in performing process control tasks (Sauce & Matzel, 2013). This is necessary because case studies show issues with executive functioning, such as organisation, time management, and task prioritisation, which can interfere with trainees' ability to process and retain inherently complex information. Klostermann et al. (2022) argued that skill retention, temporal transfer, and adaptive transfer can be explored using simulated process-control tasks. The researchers found that skill retention resulted from a combination of training types, personal factors (cognitive ability, experience, and motivation), and task complexity.

When changes were made to the simulation dynamics, trainees' completion rates increased. That is, trainees' experience with tasks supported the development of temporal and adaptive transfer skills. This contrasted with procedural training, which involved learning written instructions and rules, and with cross-training (learning from team members who knew the requirements for completing tasks). In addition, memory recall and cognitive ability influenced skill retention but did not necessarily lead to positive transfer to novel tasks. This has implications for training neurodiverse trainees such as Simon, Tara, and Hamza, given the memory challenges described in the case studies, which affect knowledge acquisition and retention. Nevertheless, it is also relevant to consider the environment in which trainees find themselves and how individual differences impact training and learning.

Current workplace-adjustment studies support this logic. For instance, Petty et al. (2023) define reasonable adjustments as changes that improve autistic employees' well-being and work output without disadvantaging employees or the organisation. Weber et al. (2024) likewise indicate that physical workplace adjustments, particularly those addressing sound, light and environmental control, can be relevant to occupational longevity, performance and health, although stronger evidence is still needed. In operator training, this implies that memory aids, interface simplification, predictable scenario sequencing, low-distraction learning spaces, and documented debriefs should be evaluated as competence supports rather than as peripheral welfare measures.

7. Correlates With Neurodiversity

Apart from neurodiverse conditions, trainees may also have other individual differences that can affect learning. Some of these have not yet received substantial research attention but are nevertheless important to discuss in the learning process for process control tasks. Strategies are proposed that trainees could use to overcome challenges associated with some types of individual differences, as the literature is sparse for others.

Table 2. A Comparison of Socio-Cultural Factors

Case Study 1 - Autism	Case Study 2 - ADHD	Case Study 3 - Dyslexia
Research has shown that many autistic people experience a range of psychosocial challenges, including poorer mental health (Lai, 2023), difficulties with social participation (Chan et al., 2020), and a higher likelihood of victimisation (Gibbs et al., 2021; Griffiths et al., 2019) compared with non-autistic people. While masking is an attempt to hide autistic traits to appear neurotypical (Miller et al., 2021), camouflaging refers to blending into social surroundings, which can produce stressful outcomes (Hull et al., 2017). This occurs when people with autism consciously or unconsciously change autistic characteristics to fit into non-autistic social environments (Cage & Troxell-Whitman, 2019; Hull et al., 2017). These strategies include hiding or masking autistic characteristics, imitating non-autistic social interaction styles, and trying to assimilate with others (Hull, 2019). However,	Interaction and collaboration should be acknowledged when training neurodiverse learners such as Simon, Tara and Hamza in group and team-based work. Trainees might find it challenging to interpret unspoken social cues, understand highly abstract language, and manage fast-paced verbal exchanges in the workplace. Ruse and Rhodes (2026) introduce a cultural eco-social niche theory of adult ADHD. That is, symptoms appear within cultural and social contexts and not just from neurobiological differences. Through in-	Dyslexia is a lifelong condition, and workplace anxiety and stress can extend beyond reading and writing challenges. Holmes et al. (2026) discussed the experiences of dyslexic adults, using semi-structured interviews with eleven participants and reflexive thematic analysis. The findings emphasise the psychological and social impacts of dyslexia, including stigma, shame and reduced self-confidence. The authors argue that these contribute to fewer educational and consequently career opportunities. Of interest, participants reported that compensatory supports, individualised accommodations and assistive technologies were required, as these enabled them

Chapman et al. (2022) and Mantzalas et al. (2022) discussed that masking can affect the well-being of individuals in terms of experiences of anxiety, depression, and subsequent burnout. Nevertheless, Bradley et al. (2021) argue that camouflaging is beneficial for autistic individuals. Zhuang et al. (2025) reviewed prior research and noted that camouflaging is largely motivated by psychological and social factors. The researchers found that previous studies had examined only a few psychosocial factors related to camouflaging, so they investigated further. They explored individual psychological factors (such as fear of being negatively judged, self-esteem and autistic identity) and broader social and cultural factors (such as perceived stigma, negative life events, cultural emphasis on conformity and desire to fit in or stand out). The sample was relatively large, consisting of 225 autistic adults aged 18–77 years, recruited online. Their findings showed that sociocultural factors were associated with camouflaging, and fear of negative judgment from others appeared as a strong predictor of camouflaging. Interestingly, those who experienced more negative life events were more likely to engage in camouflaging. This may be because, in social situations, individuals find support and comfort. It is now clear from research that more understanding and acceptance is required, cross-culturally, of autistic individuals. Greater understanding and acceptance are therefore required, although age-related applications to process-control training require further investigation.	depth interviews with seven Australian women diagnosed with adult ADHD, complemented by photo-voice methodology, the study found that ADHD symptoms fluctuated across different social interactions. The study found that participants actively construct and inhabit cultural ecosocial niches where their traits achieve a functional fit with their social and cultural environment. These niches ranged from adopting the macro-cultural framework of 'neurodiversity' to build affirming identities and communities, to finding micro-social occupational niches in fast-paced roles where their cognitive style became an advantage. Each niche was sustained by a reinforcing feedback loop, where the environment (such as a supportive social group or a demanding job) reinforced the very traits and beliefs that initially attracted them to that niche. These findings illuminate the complex ways socio-cultural settings can both constrain and empower, while highlighting implications for how we conceptualise and address adult ADHD in an era of increasing diagnosis.	to navigate societal narratives, for example through literature. These allowed participants to reconsider negative self-perceptions and develop more positive identities. The authors concluded that access to resources was frequently hindered by financial costs, lack of institutional support, and broader systemic barriers. Effective interventions involve challenging stigma, reshaping educational practices, and addressing structural barriers that disable dyslexic individuals. For Tara (Case Study 3), such support may benefit her training and learning.

It is evident that Simon, Hamza and Tara require social considerations in their workplaces, as they are neurodivergent. As with individuals with ADHD, process control trainees' cultural differences need to be considered in relation to their performance and learning outcomes. As with investigations into cultural influences, little attention has been paid to the role of cognitive styles in the workplace and how they interact with the learning processes of neurodivergent individuals in environments that some may find socially challenging.

7.1 Cognitive Styles

Cognitive styles are considered relevant to solving process control problems. Rasheed-Karim's (2016) research highlighted the relevance of cognitive styles in the acquisition of process control skills. Reflective and impulsive styles influence decision-making, with reflective styles helping learners be more careful and ensuring positive outcomes in task completion. However, these styles may be influenced by other cognitive styles, such as field

dependence and field independence, suggesting significant interactions between reflectivity and field dependence. This requires research with process-operator applicants, as field-dependent applicants often prefer working in groups, whereas field-independent applicants tend to be self-reliant and analytical. Only by investigating the role of cognitive styles can intervention strategies be developed for modelling workshops (Recker et al., 2014). It follows that individual differences in how novices, such as process control trainees, use information when learning could be established (Le Cunff, 2025).

This is important because designing training scenarios has implications that may also depend on trainees' cognitive styles. Individuals with ADHD and Autism exhibit styles that are beneficial across different settings. Wilson (2024), for example, explained that individuals with ADHD have strengths in divergent thinking, which are especially useful when original ideas are needed and when innovation and out-of-the-box thinking are required. Additionally, autistic individuals may exhibit strengths in pattern recognition and attention to detail, which are necessary in data analysis, quality control, and scientific research. However, the workplace may be challenging for those with ADHD when they must adapt to new information and changes in a task. They may also struggle to inhibit impulsive reactions and to maintain attention on tasks they may not have a deep interest in. This is compounded by social challenges, where understanding other people's perspectives is difficult and inhibiting impulsive behaviours is not apparent to them or to others they work with.

Cognitive styles can influence a wide range of behaviours and understanding how this occurs among neurodiverse process control trainees can help develop support strategies for a range of individuals. This is evident in the neurodiverse condition of dyslexia. Cognitive styles can affect adults with dyslexia by influencing their ability to process language and other information. For example, cognitive styles such as verbalisers and imagers may influence how individuals with dyslexia approach learning tasks. Verbalisers generally have proficient reading ability (Smith-Spark et al., 2019). There is a case to consider for trainees whose first language is not English.

Developing an academic register and getting to grips with terminology are important. Therefore, the question arises: how should such trainees with individual differences be trained? Digital support may assist where appropriate. Learners with dyslexia are likely to struggle to retain information, such as new vocabulary; consequently, what they have read may not be easily recalled due to weaker working memory. This also affects how instructions are followed and how much information is retained when listening to texts. That is, learners with dyslexia tend to assimilate information more slowly because it takes them longer to make sense of what they hear or read. When they respond, they may find it challenging to identify rules and forms of language use and, therefore, to understand spoken information and texts. This affects how sentence structures are created (Jarman, 2025). In terms of phonological processing, using the sounds of language (phonemes) to process spoken and written language is challenging. That is, dyslexic learners may struggle to distinguish sounds, and consequently, reading is slower and less precise.

Understanding orthography is essential for learning a new language, as it refers to the rules governing how language is written. When orthography is less clear to learners, teaching morphology is necessary (Hurry et al., 2005), and Duff and Lester (2008) suggested that instruction should encompass vocabulary and strategies for achieving language mastery. This is because, according to Mortimore et al. (2012), students and others susceptible to dyslexia are likely to face challenges with the complexity of English orthography. Furthermore, learners will benefit from grasping the phonology of an additional language. According to Sadeghi and Everatt (2015), reading a second language requires processing words in terms of their phonology, and Ziegler and Goswami (2005) identified that phonological processing requires skill with orthographic units such as syllables and morphemes (the smallest units of meaning). Therefore, there are associations between letters and sounds. To conclude, understanding orthography is necessary for listening, learning languages, and writing. Orthography is used in the teaching and learning of languages. Therefore, trainers will appreciate its impact on learners who may be at risk of developing dyslexia.

A major challenge in assessment is the lack of procedures, tools, and trained assessors capable of evaluating diverse language contexts and understanding their impact on second-language learning. As a result, psychologists (assessors) may misdiagnose or overlook signs of dyslexia in multilingual students. According to Berryman and Wearmouth (2009), assessments and interventions should consider cultural differences in the backgrounds of the individuals being assessed. Therefore, assessments should adopt a perspective that incorporates the culture being assessed. According to Peer and Reed (2000), assessment procedures may fail to identify dyslexia among multilingual students, and this may be due to several factors that hinder progress.

One possible solution is culture-fair assessment, as recommended by the British Psychological Society (BPS, 1999). Cline (1998) argued that analysing test performance across culturally and linguistically diverse groups can

help identify linguistic items that may cause cross-cultural misunderstandings. Furthermore, the BPS emphasised that recognising phonological difficulties during assessment should be a priority, as this is essential for language instruction. Everatt et al. (2002) suggested that assessing phonological skills can distinguish individuals with dyslexia from those learning an additional language.

Assessment, therefore, should consider factors arising from a wide range of causes of reading problems, such as dyslexia, within the learning environment (Dal, 2008). That is, assessments need to take into account alternative causes of reading problems that affect language learning (Cline, 1998).

8. Neurodiversity - Age, Gender, and Personality

8.1 Ageism

Promoting effective selection procedures for neurodiverse individuals is vital for creating inclusive workplaces where process control trainees thrive. Such practices recognise diverse social and cultural differences, for example, in communication styles and cognitive strengths. Of course, other individual differences are also discussed, such as how age, personality, and gender impact trainees' neurodiversity. These are discussed as follows:

Symptoms of autism do not worsen with age, but the type of support system influences how autism is experienced in adulthood. Therefore, this should be considered when training operators, as some may see improvements, such as in social skills, while others may face increased life stressors that lead to anxiety or depression outside their work environment. In contrast, it is often essential to differentiate between ADHD symptoms and age-related cognitive decline. ADHD can increase susceptibility to sensory overload and affect information processing, which may hinder the development of compensatory strategies. If depression ensues, motivation to use learned social skills is reduced, and anxiety can exacerbate symptoms of autism (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, NICE, 2026). With dyslexia, ageing amplifies cognitive changes, such as slower processing speed and reduced working memory, which can lead to slower reading and greater mental fatigue when performing literacy-based tasks. Adults may also experience difficulties with word retrieval, organisation and time management. Nevertheless, adults with dyslexia can thrive professionally, especially when they focus on their strengths and use compensatory strategies effectively (Dyslexia in Adults, 2026).

8.2 Gender

According to the National Institute on Neurological Disorders and Stroke (2026), dyslexia is more common among males than females. Research suggests that hormonal differences between males and females contribute to this pattern. Other factors, such as societal characteristics, also pose challenges for individuals. Females tend to seek support more often, whereas males, by comparison, tend to face significant challenges in their academic and professional settings. In comparison, men are more often diagnosed with ADHD, and the diagnosis is commonly associated with the hyperactive-impulsive dimension. Men, therefore, are likely to display fluctuating emotions and enjoy engaging in risky behaviours that subside with ageing. In contrast, females with ADHD can experience symptoms of lack of attention or focus. Both men and women may experience lower self-esteem and a stronger sense of hopelessness. In comparison with males who are dyslexic and/or have ADHD, autistic males may find interpreting social cues more challenging than females, and so they will struggle with making eye contact and maintaining meaningful conversations with others. This may be because they prefer to engage in routine activities and develop their interests. Like females, males with autism learn to veil their differences. Such masking is more apparent among women in social settings. Therefore, women tend to be skilled at social behaviours, mimicking, for example, others' gestures to form a picture that they can adapt to social situations.

8.3 Personality

The relationship between personality factors and neurodiversity recognises that human brains vary and that traits associated with, for example, autism and ADHD are part of this variation. Personality assessments can show greater variation in traits than among neurotypical individuals. This may reflect negative biases in the instruments used to select employees. This is because neurodivergent individuals tend to score higher on traits such as Neuroticism and Openness, and lower on Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness, compared with neurotypical individuals.

9. Strategies for Learning and Task Completion

It is believed that trainees experiencing anxiety might not fully understand the training material (Cai et al., 2024). Simon, Tara, and Hamza face stressful circumstances, such as a sudden change in schedule. This may be anxiety-provoking. That is, anxiety could arise from personal characteristics or the situations trainees face (Amiri & Ghonsooly, 2015). Therefore, it is essential to distinguish between these factors and assess their influence on trainees' completion rates and performance in the process control industry. Most importantly, trainees need to feel

they are in environments where they are psychologically safe, have the necessary support, skills, and resources to complete tasks, and recognise their own abilities and resources. Naturally, trainees should be inherently motivated to complete tasks. However, anxiety can impair cognitive functioning (Eysenck & Calvo 1992), which may affect motivation to engage in complex reasoning and problem-solving, as well as the ability to maintain focus. This may be acute as trainees encounter challenges in the work environment, such as loud, repetitive noise. Accessing memories and forming new ones may also be compromised.

Training choices depend on trainees' cognition, experience and company policies, and the following strategies may support neurodiverse learners in process-control contexts. A multisensory approach is expected to scaffold trainees' learning. When learners encounter new concepts and attempt to make connections among them, they may employ multiple methods to understand the information. This is because they possess multiple learning styles of equal strength. Those who prefer visual learning to verbal, auditory, or kinesthetic approaches will benefit from visual learning. Trainers can use a variety of strategies, such as flashcards, story videos, and real objects, in the classroom. Music and rhythm may be utilised to practice pronunciation. Audio recordings, pictures, and mind maps can be combined with written text to support learning new information.

These approaches should be formalised into a neuro-inclusion training framework by the British training organisations and employers. These involve an assessment of sensory load, working memory demands, communication channels, scenario pacing and feedback timing before participants enter high-fidelity simulation. There should also be a confidential adjustment route so that trainees can request adjustments without needing to disclose more medical details than is necessary for the training purpose. This plan supports the recent UK guidance, which treats neuro-inclusion as a systems issue involving managers, trainers and organisational policy instead of a matter for the individual trainee alone (ACAS, 2025; CIPD, 2024).

9.1 Phonological Skills Development

Phonological skills may develop when support involves strengthening the connections between sounds and spellings. Trainers may select a confident pair to read some words and phrases aloud. The trainer will check their pronunciation, make corrections, and then ask the class to repeat what the confident pair said. Learners are provided with a printed copy of the follow-up questions for reading aloud, facilitated by the trainer.

For example: How many signals are there?

Can you think of another similar signal?

How many shifts in transmission are there in the signal?

Signals in process control enable data transmission and ensure that control systems can respond to changes in the process industry. Operators choose signal types based on process requirements, such as environmental conditions. Analogue signals represent values for temperature, pressure, and flow level. In comparison, digital signals represent ON/OFF values, such as switches and alarms. These signals ensure that industrial processes run safely and efficiently.

Applying Jarman's (2025) research to the process control industry, the trainer elicits answers from the trainees and encourages learners to use the sounds, words, and phrases. In this situation, dyslexic and EAL learners may work together. The trainer aims to enhance trainees' communication skills by encouraging collaboration, which can also boost everyone's self-esteem and confidence in recognising signal failures.

9.2 Working Memory Support

Support for working memory can take many forms. The trainee can practise active listening skills by summarising and repeating back what the trainer said or taught. In this way, the trainer can monitor trainees' ability to recall items they have heard. Another strategy is to break tasks into smaller steps so that each can be remembered more easily. Trainees would be encouraged to develop their vocabulary by exploring fewer words in greater depth from a variety of perspectives.

Trainees can develop memory skills for topics by using visual aids such as graphic organisers and forming concept maps, which help students to define new vocabulary (Heimlich & Pittleman, 1986).

9.3 Metacognition

Over time, metacognition enables trainees to correct their errors (Schneider, 2008). To help trainees recognise their metacognition, a trainer could ask questions such as, 'Is this something you have done before? What are the essential points about the task?' Additionally, trainers could model their thinking and then scaffold trainees' responses, prompting them to reflect on their thinking.

9.4 Environmental Adjustments

Adjustments will make learners feel valued (Bell & Tudhope, 2016). Trainers will aim to get to know trainees individually and encourage students to work in different groups with peer assessment. Trainers should also offer trainees the option to choose how they engage with tasks.

9.5 Motivational Strategies

This will be achieved by trainers providing praise for effort to build trainees' confidence and by asking trainees to share their histories and cultures (Jarman, 2025). Trainers could provide extra time for trainees to process information and encourage peer support.

10. Actionable Insights for Trainees Using Case Studies

By giving names to the case studies, the learning experience is humanised, and trainees can identify potential challenges. Trainees will receive an outline of where individuals might struggle, and trainers might highlight strategies and accommodations to support them. This approach fosters empathy for neurodiverse learners and encourages trainees to think critically about how they can adapt processes to be more inclusive and supportive. Trainers would encourage open discussions for each case study, and trainees would be encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas on potential issues and learning strategies. These case studies would reflect different cultures and backgrounds and include role-playing, feedback loops, and practical takeaways that trainees could use to develop their learning skills. In this context, tailored training for those with ADHD would use clear, easy-to-understand strategies and routines. Structured routines with clear instructions could enable individuals with ADHD to leverage their creativity and problem-solving skills. Visual aids will help trainees with autism engage with learning materials and deepen their understanding. On the other hand, assistive technologies and alternative writing formats can help individuals with dyslexia manage challenging tasks.

More effective training would encourage open discussions of case studies on operator training scenarios. Trainees will share their thoughts and ideas on solutions and strategies. Microlearning meets trainees' needs and supports on-the-job training that develops their skills. This process should be motivating. Simulated training procedures test the use of different strategies in a controlled setting. Trainees will practise and immediately observe the outcomes of their strategies. To achieve this, scenarios are designed to reflect real task situations in process control operator training. With case studies of autism, ADHD and dyslexia embedded in simulated trainees within microenvironments, trainees can be provided with an understanding of neurodiversity. Detailed case studies of profiles are developed, including workplace scenarios, strengths, and potential challenges. Trainers may focus on specific scenarios, highlighting the strengths and challenges of each. In this way, trainees will explore strategies for support. Additionally, role-playing exercises would reflect problem-solving in real-life scenarios, enabling trainees to practise the strategies they have learned and understand how these strategies shape solution development. At the end of each session, trainers will summarise key points and steps that trainees can apply in their roles.

Types of feedback and support can help trainees apply new knowledge or insights. Feedback support will enable trainees to improve their skills. This could be developed through interactive discussions around case studies. Trainees will share their thoughts and ideas on potential strategies for addressing the problem. These feedback loops or peer feedback will enable neurodiverse trainees to deepen their understanding and generate actionable insights. Feedback support is therefore crucial for reinforcing learning and encouraging trainees' improvement, as they share their insights and provide constructive feedback to one another, thereby fostering a collaborative learning environment. Other strategies include providing regular check-ins where trainees can discuss their experiences, challenges, and successes in implementing neurodiversity-friendly practices.

Other strategies could include administering anonymous surveys to gather feedback on the training process and identify areas for improvement or further exploration. This could be coupled with pairing trainees with mentors experienced in providing guidance, support, and advice to neurodiverse individuals. Trainers could then encourage trainees to develop personal action plans outlining how they intend to implement what they have learned and review these plans in follow-ups. Such action plans would translate learning into practice, help trainees set clear, achievable goals, and outline steps for implementing new strategies effectively.

When implementing an action plan, a trainer could begin with a specific goal to support neurodiverse individuals, informed by insights from training. The trainer will identify the steps required to achieve this goal, including any resources or support needed. A timeline will be set by the trainer, and the trainee's progress will be monitored. Trainees will be encouraged to reflect on their practice by recording their experiences, challenges, and adjustments.

The trainer will review this and update the action plan regularly to ensure it aligns with ongoing understanding and workplace needs. Such action plans can therefore be integrated into training sessions.

11. Future Research Needs

The process control industry's selection procedures need to account for the fact that not all applicants for 'operator' roles are neurotypical, and that adjustments to selection, training, and monitoring of learning outcomes are necessary. Recruiters may need awareness training to understand neuro-inclusive environments and relevant training requirements.

This may mean providing learning experiences for individuals with, for example, different learning styles, using case studies that show how neurodiverse individuals may thrive or, in some cases, do not. Trainees will develop ways that lead to successful outcomes. This paper outlines some strategies trainers could use. It is envisaged that these will be the initial steps toward creating a supportive and collaborative learning environment that encourages trainees to explore and apply what they have learned. All trainers will need to analyse their scenario designs in terms of the age, gender, and personalities of neurodivergent employees. This requires new research.

Future research in the UK should focus on sector-specific evidence from the energy, chemicals, utilities, and manufacturing industries. Evidence is needed on whether neuroinclusive simulator design improves retention, adaptive transfer, fault-detection accuracy, and psychological safety among neurodivergent and neurotypical trainees. The research should also examine disclosure, access to adjustments, and progression, as the British evidence base shows that employment participation and workplace openness remain constrained for autistic adults (Department for Work and Pensions, 2024; Davies et al., 2022).

The review highlights developments in practice and policy within the process control industry. However, more diverse workplaces are still needed in process-control industries. Senior leaders will organise their working environments to embed neuro-inclusion, including through the development of relevant policies. This will include ensuring that neurodivergent trainees feel psychologically safe and able to discuss their current workplace needs. For example, employee-led discussion groups enable trainees to share their experiences, offer support, and suggest resources that may meet their needs. This may mean tailoring the learning approach and environment to trainees. This will include accommodating their sensory preferences, providing hands-on experience solving process control problems, and supporting their executive functioning, for example, by using virtual training procedures. Fundamentally, recruitment procedures will be tailored for neurodiverse individuals.

Furthermore, Bruyère and Colella (2022) identified simulations as a means to improve process control efficiency, but older operators who leave cannot be replaced, and skills are lost to new trainees due to a lack of one-on-one coaching and ineffective books that teach concepts. Nevertheless, the authors recognise that interactive simulation-based training is relevant to improving retention, and that simulation platforms produce superior performance across multiple domains. More recently, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) have been integrated into process control systems. This enables learning to be reinforced, which neurodiverse trainees can make use of.

Trainers will be aware that trainees' personal identities can affect their experiences in the process control industry on a daily basis. It is therefore essential to monitor and evaluate the progress of neurodivergent employees and to provide guidance on specialist career pathways. Furthermore, ACAS For Everyone Independent Research (2025) reports that job design should be based on individual needs. This includes regularly reducing multitasking, which will enable trainees to work with their strengths.

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