Multilayered institutional thoughtlessness: A case study of the transition from being a deaf prison officer to being imprisoned[1]

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In recent years, understanding about the lives of imprisoned d/Deaf people in England and Wales has increased significantly,[2] with evidence showing that the pains of imprisonment can be intensified for this population.[3] However, to date, there is little known about what it is like to work in prison as a d/Deaf person. This article takes the form of a case study about an audiologically deaf person who was employed as a prison officer in England, presenting detailed findings about their experience of this role. While this alone would offer significant and previously unavailable insight, adding further depth to the findings is the fact this individual, known here as 'Ashley' then went onto be convicted and imprisoned. Their experience of both roles allowed for a rich discussion about their experience of transitioning from one to the other, the parallels between the two, and the impact of their former role (prison officer) on their latter position (imprisoned person). Perhaps most fundamentally of all, it was clear that for Ashley both experiences were shaped by being deaf, and that prison was "institutionally thoughtless" (p.350) regarding their deafness,[4] irrespective of their position within the prison.

Firstly, we provide some context about the broader study that Ashley was part of, including its research design. We then offer a brief outline of relevant literature, before moving on to present key findings from Ashley's interview, including their experience as a deaf prison officer, their experience as an imprisoned deaf person and the transition between the positions and their relative impacts. These findings will be situated within a broader discussion about the Prison Service's ability to meet the needs of a deaf person, regardless of their position.

The research

In this article, Ashley's experiences are presented as a form of case study. By case study, we mean the study of a single person or phenomenon.[5] In this instance, Ashley's experience represents what might be called an 'outlier' case,[6] that is a case that is interesting because it is unusual. While we are aware that the use of a single case means that findings are specific to this person's reality, the aim of this paper is not to provide a generalisable set of findings. Instead, it offers significant insight into a previously undiscussed phenomenon, and the paper gives sufficient space to present an in-depth account of this unusual experience. In doing so, we draw out its contribution to existing understandings both about deafness in prison, and about the transition from staff to imprisoned person. The findings presented cover a continuous seven-year period within the 2010s and 2020s.

These findings came from a larger British Academy project focused on the experiences of d/Deaf people after their release from prison. As part of the project,

1. Due to the sensitive nature of the data, it cannot be shared publicly. A metadata-only record has been created in Lancashire Online Research Data, and access is restricted.
2. The small 'd' here relates to the audiological condition, measured on a spectrum according to the quietest sound and types of sounds that an individual can hear, whereas the capital 'D' includes culturally and linguistically Deaf people, who value their Deafness and often communicate via British Sign Language (BSL) (Hearing Link. (2021). *Deafness & hearing loss facts.* https://www.hearinglink.org/your-hearing/about-hearing/facts-about-deafness-hearing-loss/). This article focuses on audiological deafness; however, d/D is used in instances where findings have been specified by authors to relate to Deaf people as well.
3. See, for example: Kelly, L. (2017). Suffering in silence: The unmet needs of d/Deaf prisoners. *Prison Service Journal, 234,* 3–15; McCulloch, D. (2012). *Not hearing us: An exploration of the experience of deaf prisoners in English and Welsh prisons.* Howard League for Penal Reform.
4. Crawley, E. (2005). Institutional thoughtlessness in prisons and its impacts on the day-to-day prison lives of elderly men. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice, 21*(4), 350–363.
5. Thomas, G., & Myers, K. (2015). *The Anatomy of the Case Study.* Sage.
6. See footnote 4: Thomas, G. & Myers, K. (2015).

semi-structured interviews were carried out with a sample of 18 participants, 12 being service providers and 6 being formerly imprisoned d/Deaf people. Ashley participated in this research in the context of talking about their imprisonment and their release from prison, as an audiologically deaf person who wears hearing aids in both ears. It only came to light during the interview that they had been a prison officer prior to being imprisoned. Ashley's interview took place on Microsoft Teams and was around 90 minutes long. It was recorded using the Teams recording tool, was transcribed as close to verbatim as possible, and analysed thematically. While much of the content of Ashley's interview correlated with themes from other interviews, having experience of both roles and transitioning between roles were unique within the sample.

Ethical clearance for the project was awarded by the University of Central Lancashire in 2022, and all relevant ethical guidelines were adhered to throughout. To minimise the risk of participants being identified, we provided pseudonyms for each participant and removed other obvious identifiable characteristics. However, when we initially discussed this paper, we were mindful that its sole focus on Ashley might make them more identifiable. Accordingly, we contacted Ashley, clearly stating the intended focus of the paper, and the potential issue of them becoming identifiable. Ashley replied, stating:

> "I'm happy to be left relatively unidentified, although it doesn't really matter if someone works out it was me! My experience as an officer probably affected my follow up experience as a prisoner, as I had insider knowledge, which a new inmate would not normally have."

Ashley read through a draft of the article, was given an opportunity to suggest changes and went onto confirm that they were "100% happy with what you have written". Despite their support of the article, we remained mindful that d/Deaf people can experience sharpened stigma following release from prison.[7] Thus, we took steps to maximise their anonymity in case they wish for greater anonymity in the future.

Existing literature

There is no information available about how many deaf staff members there are across His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). However, through contact with HMPPS about these issues, we are aware that there are individuals currently working in the organisation who are audiologically deaf.[8]

Despite this, there is no academic literature available about this group. This contrasts with literature about the lives of imprisoned deaf people, which is limited but growing. Existing literature shows that this population experience greater pain and suffering within prison compared to imprisoned hearing people,[9] and that HMPPS is not meeting their needs or the conditions of relevant equality law.[10]

However, to date, there is little known about what it is like to work in prison as a d/Deaf person.

The prison environment and regime are oriented around sound and sound-based communication.[11,12] Therefore, to engage meaningfully deaf individuals need access to an array of sound converting resources and adjustments, and to staff who have awareness of their needs and inclination/capacity to support them. However, in reality, such adaptations in prisons are at best inconsistent and at worst non-existent, with reasons for this including a lack of awareness, motivation or resources on the part of individual officers or the service more generally.[13] Existing evidence shows that the Prison Service is "institutionally thoughtless" (p.350) in relation the needs of imprisoned deaf people,[14,15] something which is important to this article. Institutional thoughtlessness refers to the ways that prisons are inadvertently (rather

7. Kelly-Corless, L., & McCulloch, D. (2024). *Deaf after prison: Guidance for practitioners in supporting Deaf people post-release.* University of Central Lancashire and The Open University.
8. As well as audiologically deaf staff members, there are also culturally and linguistically Deaf staff members.
9. Zidenberg, A. M. (2021). Avoiding the deaf penalty: A review of the experiences of d/Deaf individuals in the criminal justice system. *Disability & Society, 38*(5), 824–864.
10. For detailed insight into the lives of d/Deaf people in prisons in England and Wales, see: Kelly, L. (2017). Suffering in silence: The unmet needs of d/Deaf prisoners. *Prison Service Journal, 234,* 3–15.
11. Herrity, K. (2024). *Sound, Order and Survival in Prison: The Rhythms and Routines of HMP Midtown.* Bristol University Press.
12. See footnote 9: Kelly, L. (2017).
13. Kelly, L. M. (2018). Sounding out d/Deafness: The Experiences of d/Deaf Prisoners. *Journal of Criminal Psychology, 8*(1), 20–32.
14. See footnote 3: Crawley, E. (2005).
15. Kelly-Corless, L., & McCarthy, H. (2024). Moving Beyond the Impasse: Importation, Deprivation, and Difference in Prisons. *The Prison Journal, 105*(1), 62-83.

than intentionally) ignorant of the needs of those who differ from the 'expected' imprisoned population of young able-bodied, hearing, English speaking, males.[16]

Prison was initially designed for this 'expected' group, and policy, culture and practice tend to be framed around them. Consequently, 'different' populations can experience additional layers of pain as an outcome of their deviation from the 'norm'.[17] However, this individual suffering is often of little consequence to the prison, where in some instances, making changes to meet different needs can be seen as a burden or as preferential treatment.[18] In the context of deafness, this means that individuals tend to become isolated from prison life and to be confused about rules, procedures and formal/informal expectations.[19] While prison experiences often vary significantly based on the type of prison that someone is confined within, the fact that their deafness is a characteristic that differs so significantly from what is expected in prison means that "isolation from the regime that becomes the defining experiential feature, rather than the regime itself" (p.76).[20] Later we consider how these experiences compare with those of Ashley, drawing out similarities and differences, and exploring whether their former position as prison officer impacted their transition to imprisoned person.

When conducting the literature search, we were able to locate relevant academic sources focusing on reasons why prison staff may engage in corrupt behaviour that could lead to arrest,[21] and multiple news articles highlighting cases where an officer was arrested and imprisoned.[22] However, we could not find any research studies about the imprisonment of former prison officers, instead drawing on literature about the roles, experiences of and interactions between prison officers and imprisoned people more generally. The role of power is a key theme within this body of work, with discussion around the power disparity that exists between prison officers and imprisoned people being a well-trodden path for prison scholars.[23] Imprisoned people are deprived of autonomy by very nature of their role,[24] with their everyday lives in prison being dictated (in many ways) by prison staff, who hold a degree of institutional power, as an outcome of their position. While staff members do have more institutional power than imprisoned people because of their role within the prison, recent research has highlighted nuances in relation to this. For example, Harrison, Mason, Nichols and Smith (2024) have shown that staff too can feel deprived of autonomy at work and feel powerless to make meaningful decisions.[25] This case study contributes to existing understanding here by exploring whether this relative position of power made it easier for Ashley to secure the required adjustments during their time as a staff member, and whether this prior experience impacted their experience as a prisoner, a position of relative powerlessness.

Findings

Being a deaf prison officer

Ashley discussed their experience as a prison officer at length in the interview. They felt that there was a lack of deaf awareness on the part of other staff and the Prison Service more generally, highlighting their own experience of staff training:

> "When I did my prison officer training, it was never touched upon. We were given a little bit of training as to how to deal with people that maybe have physical disabilities. How to ensure that steps are put into place to for them to be able to live, you know, as normally with access to all the facilities as anyone else. There's pretty good training on understanding a bit about different mental health issues, but none whatsoever about people with hearing problems. It's it just seems a shame. It's a silent problem, you know?"

Ashley alluded repeatedly to the fact that any adjustments for their deafness came about through their own persistence in response to a place of work that was institutionally thoughtless as to their needs:

16. See footnote 3: Crawley, E. (2005).
17. Abbott L., Scott T., & Thomas, H. (2024). Institutional thoughtlessness and the incarcerated pregnancy. *Criminology & Criminal Justice, 0*(0), 1–19.
18. Kelly-Corless, L. (2022). No longer free to be Deaf: Cultural, medical and social understandings of d/Deafness in prison. *Disability & Society, 39*(6), 1–22.
19. See footnote 9: Kelly, L. (2017).
20. See footnote 14: Kelly-Corless, L., & McCarthy, H. (2024).
21. Frow-Hones, B. (2024). *Prison Staff Wrongdoing: An Exploratory Study [*Doctoral Dissertation]. University of Cardiff.
22. For example: BBC News. (2025, May 13). *Prison officer jailed over affair with inmate.* https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c4grz022lvyo
23. See, for example: Crewe, B. (2009). *The Prisoner Society: Power, Adaptation and Social Life in an English Prison.* Oxford University Press.
24. Sykes, G. M. (1958). *The Society of Captives: A study of a maximum security prison.* Princeton University Press.
25. Harrison, K., Mason, R., Nichols, H., & Smith, L. (2024). *Work, Culture, and Wellbeing Among Prison Governors in England and Wales.* Palgrave Macmillan.

"In the very first instance, when my hearing aids were changed to be the digital version and with the ability to be Bluetooth, security at the jail were unsure as to whether or not they were going to allow me to wear them in for my job. I… kept pushing it back at them. I just basically gave a flat refusal to remove them at any point and said, you know, if you, if you're telling me I can't come in to work with my hearing aids in, then I will simply go off sick until you resolve this. So, through my sort of tenacity, I suppose, stubbornness, I kind of made the system work with me and but it's kind of because there's no system in place. It's just piecemeal. It's made up as they go along just to resolve that one issue in front of them. I was the problem, so they dealt with me. There was never any mention of making sure policies were better written, better understood, more available, nothing"

There's pretty good training on understanding a bit about different mental health issues, but none whatsoever about people with hearing problems.

They followed this up by saying:

"The radio system they used was an in-ear system, so I used to take one of my hearing aids out and have my radio in one ear. And there was no help given to me to ensure that my safety as an officer was the same as someone else's, let alone then any of the inmates. But I did know that if you start saying words like disability discrimination and you say it loud enough, people will then just panic and tend to just go 'oh, whatever you need', so I was confident enough that if it came to it, I could push through… You know when you push it, then you'll get that teeny result, but there's no bigger picture and there no planning. You would have thought when dealing with me that the jail would have thought maybe we should just write this down, so we know in the future. But yeah, there is too much effort involved."

These findings show a difference between Ashley's experience as a staff member, and those of imprisoned deaf people in existing literature, in that although the institution was not set up to meet Ashley's needs, their position meant that they were able to successfully argue for some support in a way that an imprisoned person usually cannot. Although these issues were resolved in Ashley's case, these quotes expose institutional rigidity and an unwillingness to make changes to the service at an institutional level to meet deaf people's needs in prisons, suggesting institutional thoughtlessness in relation to deaf staff members as well.[26]

Becoming imprisoned and navigating the transition

Ashley reflected significantly on how their experience changed once they were convicted, and thus transitioned from being a staff member to an imprisoned person. On this, they said:

"I think the one time that it becomes really prisoner specific is that in jail you have no control over changing that situation yourself. So, you have to rely on staff who are prepared to help… to look things up, to see if there's any more support. You are punished in jail for being different in any way, whatever it is that you've got that's different if it involves any deviation from standard, then your kind of punished for it because it's an effort"

Clearly then, a key difference for Ashley was the 'deprivation of autonomy' that they felt whilst imprisoned.[27] While this is a fundamental pain of imprisonment, this quote shows that this deprivation is felt in different ways when somebody does not fit what is 'expected' in prison and has to rely on staff members for changes to be made, something which maps onto findings from Kelly-Corless and McCarthy (2024) and Abbott, Scott and Thomas (2024).[28,29] They detailed many of the same experiences reported in other literature by imprisoned deaf people. For example, they discussed the importance of the role of sound in prisons,[30] and the problems this caused:

26. See also, Wilson, M., Johnston, H., & Walker, L. (2020). 'It was like an animal in pain': Institutional thoughtlessness and experiences of bereavement in prison. *Criminology & Criminal Justice, 22*(1), 150-170.
27. See footnote 23: Sykes, G. M. (1958).
28. See footnote 14: Kelly-Corless, L. & McCarthy, H. (2024).
29. See footnote 16: Abbott, L., Scott, T., & Thomas, H. (2024).
30. See footnote 10: Herrity, K. (2024).

> "They used to use tannoy system to call prisoners to the office. When I was first put in a room where the tannoy was poor anyway. The other[s]… couldn't hear it either, and so I went to the office and said please be aware that if you need to speak to me at any point the tannoy is not going to work. Someone will have to come and get me, and it was written down somewhere and then ignored. Promptly ignored"

While this quote again emphasises the lack of will to support those who are different, Ashley said that their previous experience as a staff member helped them to navigate this, thus lessening the extent of the issues they faced once imprisoned. They discussed at length their experience of entering prison, where they had their hearing aids taken from them and placed into prison storage, leading to a period without access to them. Below they discuss how they sought to navigate this, using their 'insider knowledge' (as a former prison officer) to do so:[31]

> "I was aware that there are obviously certain rights for those with disabilities having worked the other side of the door with the keys instead. So, I said to them, well, first of all, you haven't written me a personal evacuation plan, which you're legally obliged to do... When I was about to have my door locked after being counted that evening, I said to the officer I need … the form for a disciplinary and a disability discrimination report form thing… and he said, 'Why? What have we done?', and I said, 'You're not giving me my hearing aid batteries'. In the end I essentially did a deal with the officer. I said, 'You give me the form and I will give it back to you unwritten when you hand me the hearing aid batteries, if you don't get them to me before I go to bed tonight, I will be submitting the form'... Eventually he went off and got them from my property and handed them over, to which I handed him back an unwritten form. But I had to remind them, I said, 'Are you comfortable that you will be sending me to bed tonight knowing that I won't hear any fire alarms or whatever? Go on and if you're comfortable with that then that's absolutely fine, but let's just make sure that's recorded'. So, in the end, they made it happen, but it became a source of constant and anxiety for me really because if my hearing aid batteries were to run out in the morning, I wouldn't be able to get replacements for them until the evening. But for those who had no previous experience of a prison, it would have been incredibly scary to be told you can't have your hearing aids and not know that actually they're able to say yes, I can…. I'm sure it's even worse for those that need to communicate in sign language"

Even with this insider knowledge, Ashley reported feeling that trying to get any changes made that they were legally entitled to, was a "constant battle", where their needs were consistently disregarded. This is a clear example of institutional thoughtlessness, where their needs are not necessarily intentionally ignored, but instead, are not taken seriously.

Trying to get any changes made that they were legally entitled to, was a "constant battle"

Ashley discussed being particularly vulnerable as an imprisoned former prison officer. Their vulnerability was exacerbated further by not having access to necessary equipment (such as hearing aid batteries):

> "In jail you feel vulnerable enough, and I mean for myself, slightly different going in as an ex-prison officer, I was already in a vulnerable situation and to feel that at times you're not gonna be as aware of what's going on around you because you're not being helped to keep the equipment that you've been provided"

During their interview Ashley also discussed their experience of leaving prison, stating, "I didn't really expect any support in the move to being released, and so therefore I wasn't surprised that that I got none". This indicates that their former (prison officer) position exposed them to the failings of HMPPS in supporting imprisoned people, thus tempering any expectations they had for their time as an imprisoned person. They also suggested that any positive change or support that did exist usually came about because of individual staff

30. See footnote 10: Herrity, K. (2024).
31. Jones, R. S. (1995). Uncovering the Hidden Social World: Insider Research in Prison. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice, 11*(2), 106-118.

members going above and beyond the norm, rather than any broader institutional support:

> "I saw no evidence of anything progressive happening, and also that depends on the characters in a jail… If you happen to have a custodial manager who is keen to get his or her staff well trained and well versed in all the different aspects of life that they might come across and then maybe they would arrange every now and again a sort of training session, and you might be lucky at some point."

Multi-layered institutional thoughtlessness

Ashley's unusual position as someone with experience of being a prison officer, an imprisoned person and a deaf person, meant that they were able to reflect about their institutional experience in a multi-layered way:

> "The whole system is not well adapted. So whatever angle you're looking at, whether you're a visitor and a prisoner, a prison officer, someone being released or then someone on probation, it just doesn't get any easier"

"It's not so much that it's because you're the prisoner as just because you're bloody needy."

While it was clear that during their time as an imprisoned person, they were subject to an array of extra difficulties because of their status, they were resolute in the perception that there is little space for any sort of difference in prison (such as deafness), stating, "I did get the impression that it's not so much that it's because you're the prisoner as just because you're bloody needy. You know 'Oh, that one again!', so it's more that than the sort of anti-prisoner thing". Adding further weight to this is the fact that Ashley had a family member was also deaf, who required adjustments to be made during visitations times:

> "I also highlighted that my family member was visiting and who has hearing aids and that they would require some support, and again that was missed off. I got my family member to actually write a formal complaint for them as the visitor because I said, 'If you wanna mess me around, that's fine, but don't be disrespectful to my family member's requirements'... So, it shows that it wasn't about me being a prisoner in that situation. It was that that request would have taken a little bit of individual dealing with and therefore was just ignored"

This suggests therefore that the Prison Service is institutionally thoughtless to the rights and needs of deaf visitors too. This is further evidence of the ways in which the Prison Service fails to adapt to meet the needs of people who are 'different' from the 'expected' person within the prison, regardless of their relationship with the prison.

Although there are some similarities between the experience of being a prison officer and being imprisoned, there are also some differences. For example, as both a prison officer and imprisoned person, Ashley challenged the prison's lack of adaptation for their needs. However, the exact way of challenging the prison differed as a prison officer (through threat of sick leave) compared to being an imprisoned person (threat of complaint about the prison). Yet, both experiences highlight that in relation to deaf people, there can be piecemeal change, but that there is often a lack of wider institutional strategy or planning. Ashley summarised this well, saying that "It is just an area that's very lacking and is dealt with on a 'when it crops up, we'll deal with it' kind of thing."

In these ways, institutional thoughtlessness exists at multiple levels, affecting prison officers and imprisoned people (as well as visitors to prisons).

Discussion and conclusion

Ashley's case study offers numerous significant insights in relation to transitions in prisons. Firstly, in relation to 'difference' and transitions, Ashley's account highlights the ways in which 'difference' is disempowering within prisons, regardless of status. Their account as a former prison officer, former imprisoned person, and as someone who had a deaf visitor highlights that institutional thoughtlessness persists regardless of the position held within the prison. Thus, the effect of 'difference' cuts across the experience of transition from prison officer to imprisoned person.

Secondly and relatedly, Ashley's account offers new developments in understanding about power and transitions within the prison environment. Even as a prison officer, a position of relative power within a

prison, their power to challenge the prison was very limited, because of the power that prisons hold over those who occupy them, regardless of their role. This corroborates other studies which have demonstrated that staff commonly feel a lack of control over their lives in prison, despite the perceived power associated with their role.[32] However, although they had limited power as a prison officer, they had to rapidly adjust to having much less power as an imprisoned person as part of their transition.

Thirdly, Ashley's account highlights the ways in which they managed their transition from prison officer to imprisoned person. Significantly, it highlights the ways in which their experience of being a prison officer made a difference in their management of this transition. For example, Ashley's account shows that managing as a deaf imprisoned person was made less difficult by knowing their rights and the recourse for complaints (which they knew because of their experience as a prison officer.) Furthermore, in both positions Ashley used ultimatums of different sorts to 'push' for the adaptations that they needed, in line with the power they had available to them within each role. As a prison officer, this was the threat of going on sick leave if their workplace was unable to adapt to meet their needs, whilst as an imprisoned person, it was the threat of a complaint being made about the prison. In this sense, their prison officer experiences gave them 'insider' knowledge that most imprisoned people (as 'outsiders' to the workings of the prison) might not have. Thus, prior experience of prison as a prison officer shaped Ashley's transition to becoming an imprisoned person, and to some extent mitigated the disempowerment they experienced when they became imprisoned.

In relation to transitions, Ashley's experience highlights the ways in which difference, power, and understanding 'the system' all matter in understanding their transition between prison officer and imprisoned person. Furthermore, Ashley's case study reveals new insights about the ways in which 'difference' (in this context, deafness) is experienced within prisons as both a prison officer and imprisoned person, and the ways in which the transition from prison officer to imprisoned person is experienced as a deaf person. While it is unsurprising that many of Ashley's experiences as an imprisoned person align with findings from existing literature,[33] it is somewhat surprising that their experience of being a prison officer also showed such a degree of institutional thoughtlessness. Like other literature, this suggests that when someone deviates so significantly from what is expected in prison, their experience can become defined by this difference.[34]

Most fundamentally, Ashley's account clearly demonstrated that the Prison Service was not meeting their needs as a deaf person, irrespective of their position within the system (and to some degree, outside of the system, in the case of prison visitors). In this way, prisons are places of multilayered institutional thoughtlessness, with it affecting prison officers, imprisoned people and prison visitors. To address this, we recommend that HMPPS begins to make system-level changes to encourage the Prison Service to become more institutionally thoughtful. These include the creation of service level guidance for how to support a deaf person who comes into contact with the service; the roll out of national d/Deaf awareness training which is incorpoated into wider diversity training; and more effective and consistent recording of d/Deafness across the prison estate (both in relation to staff members and imprisoned people).[35] These steps will not solve all of the issues faced by deaf people within prisons and would only offer a relatively basic improvement in the experiences of this population. However, in our view, they are some of the most realistic and achievable steps currently.

This article provides significant new findings, about (i) the experiences of prison officers who become prisoners; (ii) the experiences of prison staff who are deaf; and (iii) the experience of transitioning between these roles as a deaf person. In each case, we believe this to be the first research publication in the UK to consider these issues. Whilst this case study presents innovative and new findings in relation to these issues, further research could provide deeper insights. Research which explores the experiences of deaf people working in prisons, as well as research about the experiences of prison officers who become prisoners, would have the potential to offer significant new developments in relation to knowledge about prisons and people within them.

32. See footnote 24: Harrison, K., Mason, R., Nichols, H., & Smith, L. (2024).
33. See footnote 8: Zidenberg, A. (2021).
34. See footnote 14: Kelly-Corless, L., & McCarthy, H. (2024).
35. d/Deafness is referred to in relation to recording mechanisms and training here, as being aware of the differences in the needs and behaviours of people at different points across the spectrum of d/Deafness is fundamental to the provision of appropriate support.