

MAXIMILIAN CURTIS

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PROFILE

Hard of Hearing (HoH) gamer and researcher with a passion for how games foster community, connection, and belonging. Focused on making gaming more inclusive, designing and leading independent studies that uncover barriers for Deaf and HoH players and translate findings into practical, accessible solutions. Skilled in **mixed-methods research**, **co-design**, and **usability testing**, combining lived experience with academic rigour to advance inclusive game design. Currently completing a PhD in Computer Science at Cardiff University, understanding social and cooperative experiences in gaming for Deaf and HoH players.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Human Computer Interaction | Computer Science

Cardiff University

📅 Oct 2022 – Summer 2026

Deaf Play: A narrative thesis on the social play contexts of d/DHH players

Specialising in **Human Centred UX research**. Led mixed-methods studies exploring Deaf and Hard of Hearing player experiences in cooperative games, producing actionable design recommendations. Taught Bsc students on the 'Design thinking and prototyping' and 'Internet of Things Group Project' modules, teaching students about data collection and analysis methodologies. Demonstrating effective communication and mentoring.

B.Sc. Computer Science

Cardiff University University

📅 Sept 2019 – June 2022

Dissertation on: user experience in subtitling and automatic sign language translation systems.

- Developed a Python-based system for subtitle generation and translation into Sign-Supported English Grammar.
- Led UI and accessibility design for a cross-platform energy usage app; ensured screen-reader compatibility, colour-blind support, and large-text options; contributed to development in Flutter.
- Relevant modules: Human-Computer Interaction, Design Thinking & Prototyping for UX, Data Processing & Visualisation, Computational Mathematics, Multimedia, Python, Java.

INTERESTS

Passionate about gaming that fosters community and inclusivity, exploring how play can bring people together and create shared experiences. Engages in diverse crafts, including painting Warhammer models, 3D printing props and costumes, and other creative projects, developing innovative solutions, attention to detail, and the ability to turn imaginative ideas into tangible outcomes. Avid reader of science fiction, cultivating imaginative thinking, curiosity, and the ability to approach problems from multiple perspectives, skills that directly enhance research, player insight, and inclusive game design.

EXPERIENCE

- Engaged directly with Deaf communities and gaming activities to provide context and deeper understanding of player experiences.
- Developed prototype accessibility tools, including an automatic subtitle generator and a Sign-Supported English grammar translator.
- Produced reports for both academic and participant audiences; won multiple awards for clarity and accessibility of presentations.

PROJECTS/ PUBLICATIONS

Exploratory Study of Audio Accessibility

- Conducted large-scale surveys using Qualtrics and analysed data with R and Excel.

An observation of Deaf-to-Deaf communication in Co-Located Multiplayer Console games

- Delivered observational playtesting and co-design workshops with young people and Deaf players, identifying communication barriers and opportunities for more inclusive game mechanics.
- Organised and ran a community gaming event; responsible for study design, delivery, and analysis, collaborating with staff and participants.
- Collected and analysed qualitative data through interviews, structured questions, and think-aloud playtests, identifying patterns and recurring themes in player behaviour.

SKILLS

Mixed Methods Data Collection

Experiential Play-Testing

Video Game Accessibility/ WCAG

Python

Git

R

Qualtrics

Statistic Analysis