The Ill-Tempered Body:

Field Notes and Footnotes from the Land of the Sick

Zoë Noakes

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University of Wales Trinity Saint David

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Declaration of Originality

I declare that this submission is my own work and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. All sources of information used in this submission have been appropriately acknowledged. Where generative artificial intelligence tools have been used, this has been done in accordance with institutional guidance and is transparently declared within the appendices.

Name: Zoë Noakes

Date: _____18th January 2026_____

Submission and Navigational Note

This submission consists of a written report (Sections 1–5: word count 5460), a visual portfolio, and a set of appendices. The main report presents the core research argument and methodological framework and is intended to be read sequentially. The visual portfolio operates alongside the report as a parallel mode of inquiry through material practice and installation.

The appendices function as an expanded research archive. They document process, correspondence, methodological traces, and contextual materials that inform the project but are not required for understanding the central argument. They are provided to evidence research rigour, ethical transparency, and the conditions under which the work was produced. Appendix 0 offers guidance on how the appendices are structured and how they may be consulted.

Examiners are not expected to read the appendices in full. They are designed to be approached selectively, as points of reference where further detail or corroboration may be useful.

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Abstract

The Ill-Tempered Body is a practice-based research project that investigates how disability, illness, and institutional constraint shape processes of making, knowing, and participation within contemporary art education. Situated within glass and textile practice, the project emerged through an unanticipated medical crisis during the MA, which resulted in chronic illness and long-term mobility impairment. Rather than treating this disruption as external to the research, the project reoriented to examine illness and disability as onto-epistemological conditions that actively structure material practice, methodology, and critical reflection.

Drawing on practice-led research, auto-ethnography, new materialism, and disability studies, the project understands making as a form of thinking that unfolds through correspondence between bodies, materials, technologies, and institutions. Central to the research is the concept of kindness-as-utility: an ethics of care that privileges attentiveness, adaptability, and collective labour over efficiency and optimisation.

Glass and thread are employed as materially and conceptually charged agents, through processes of subtraction, inscription, patterning, and repair.

The research culminated in a series of interconnected installations—*Many Hands Make Light Work*, *(Under)Stand (Y)our Ground*, and *Access Denied*—situated within architectural non-places such as stairwells and refuge points. These works operate as intra-ventions that render visible the politics of access, movement, and exclusion embedded within institutional space. Together, the written report and visual portfolio propose disability not as deficit, but as a generative mode of knowledge production that challenges normative assumptions about autonomy, productivity, and artistic authorship.

Acknowledgements

This project would not have been possible without the support, labour, care, and generosity of many people, whose contributions extend far beyond what is typically acknowledged within academic frameworks. I would like to thank my supervisors and tutors for their guidance, patience, and willingness to engage with a research process shaped by uncertainty, interruption, and constraint. Their support allowed the project to remain open, responsive, and materially grounded.

My sincere thanks go to the technical staff, workshop technicians, and support teams whose knowledge, skill, and care underpin so much artistic research, yet so often remain invisible. Their expertise, adaptability, and generosity were essential to the making of this work, particularly under conditions of restricted access and institutional pressure.

I am deeply grateful to the carers, support workers, and access professionals who made it possible for me to continue studying, researching, and making during periods of illness and fatigue. Their labour is not ancillary to this project; it is foundational.

I would also like to acknowledge my peers for their solidarity, humour, and shared labour, and for reminding me that artistic research is never a solitary endeavour. Finally, I acknowledge the disabled artists, scholars, and activists whose work has shaped my thinking and practice, often in ways that are not easily cited but are deeply felt. This project stands within those lineages of care, resistance, and collective knowledge-making.

1. The Poetics of the Non-Place;
On Stumbling through the Land of the Sick

1.1 Opening: Situated Emergence and Method

> "Illness is the night-side of life, a more onerous citizenship. Everyone who is born holds dual citizenship, in the kingdom of the well and in the kingdom of the sick." (Sontag, 1978, p. 3).

This report emerges from a body that did not behave as expected. It is written not from a position of mastery or distance, but from within a set of unfolding constraints: bodily, institutional, material, and temporal. The Ill-Tempered Body names both a condition and a methodology—an embodied research praxis formed through illness, disability, interruption, and enforced reorientation. What follows is not a linear account of outcomes, but a tracing: a mapping of movements, stoppages, detours, and improvisations that occurred as making, thinking, and writing were reconfigured under pressure.

This text functions as one organ within a larger body of work. The installations, artefacts, images, gestures, and materials developed alongside it are not illustrations of theory but co-producers of knowledge. Following Ingold's assertion that knowledge is grown along lines rather than assembled from blocks (2015), the report is conceived as a connective tissue—an interface between material practice, philosophical inquiry, and lived experience.

The research began as an exploration of pattern, materiality, and meaning through glass and textiles. However, following a sudden illness during the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent long-term mobility impairment, the focus of the work shifted. The material under investigation

became not only glass, cloth, and light, but the body itself: a body newly encoded as disabled, clinically vulnerable, administratively problematic, and institutionally risky.

This shift was not planned; it emerged through interruption. As such, the research is situated within auto-ethnographic and arts-based methodologies, but resists narrative closure or therapeutic framing. Instead, it aligns with what Tremain describes as a philosophy of disability attentive to power, normativity, and epistemic injustice (2017; 2025).

1.2 Kindness-as-Utility:
Topoanalysis of Shards along Hephaestean Lines

The fractured phone screen.

The fragment of text.

The faded image.

The frayed cloth.

The eroded object.

The fragile institution.

The fallen temple.

This report, in essayistic form, is a tracing, a mapping, and an unearthing of archaeological artefacts that remain from what might be described as a Hephaestean wandering through the contemporary university. Ingold's notion of archaeology as attentive movement through layered material traces (2015) offers a useful framework here, as does Bachelard's topoanalysis, which understands space as lived, remembered, and affectively charged rather than abstract or neutral (1994). The figure of Hephaestus—the crippled god, master of fire and transformation—functions throughout this research as both metaphor and methodological guide. Unlike the

sovereign logic of Zeus, which governs through straight lines, grids, and extractive authority, Hephaestean knowledge is forged through heat, resistance, error, and care.

De Ciantis (2004) describes Hephaestus as the bearer of braided knowledges: techne (skill), metis (cunning intelligence), and kairos (timing). These are not knowledges of control but of responsiveness.

My praxis as a disabled maker-researcher is situated within this Hephaestian tradition. Working from the margins, (architectural, institutional, and epistemological), I develop what I term kindness-as-utility: a mode of making and thinking that privileges attentiveness, adaptability, and mutual support over blunt efficiency and optimisation. Kindness here is not sentimental. It is pragmatic, relational, and infrastructural. It appears in gestures of assistance, in negotiated access, in shared labour, and in the quiet work of maintaining fragile systems. This orientation directly challenges hylomorphic models of production inherited from Aristotelian thought, in which form is imposed upon passive matter. As Ingold argues, such models fail to account for the agency of materials and the correspondence required in skilled practice (2015). Glass does not simply receive form; it resists, flows, fractures, and remembers. Thread does not merely bind; it stretches, knots, tangles, and records time.

1.3 Navigating the Subtractive Turn:

Institutional Erasure and the Neoliberal University

The research trajectory of *The Ill-Tempered Body* unfolded within a broader context of structural transformation in UK higher education. Austerity politics, managerialism, and market-driven logics have reshaped universities into what might be described as neoliberal knowledge factories, where efficiency, risk management, and metrics increasingly govern decision-making (Tremain 2017; 2021). Within this context, disability is frequently framed as a problem to be managed rather than a form of expertise or a source of knowledge. Access is addressed through policy documents and strategic plans that often function as what Ahmed calls non-performative acts—statements that signal commitment without producing material change (2012). Equality, Diversity, and

Inclusion policies become forms of institutional window dressing. As Ahmed states: "When organizations say they are committed to diversity, this does not necessarily mean they are doing diversity" (2012, p. 117). This distinction points to the gap between aspirational policy and material practice in higher education, where paperwork and procedures can obscure ongoing exclusion. The gap between theory and practice here may seem insignificant—a hazard of perception when institutional processes are viewed from a distance rather than lived through.

My own experiences at UWTSD must be understood within this landscape. Restrictions placed on my access to workshops, (justified through health and safety discourse), were not isolated incidents but manifestations of a broader subtractive logic. Under this logic, risk is externalised, responsibility is displaced, and disabled bodies are rendered administratively inconvenient. As Tremain argues, "Disability is not a natural disadvantage or personal misfortune; it is the effect of a set of historically specific practices, institutions, and power relations" (2017, p. 6). Understood through this positioning, exclusions are not accidents but effects of design.

The removal of access to glass workshops during a critical period of my MA did not merely limit production; it reshaped the research itself. Making was displaced into domestic and digital spaces. Smartphones, screens, and broken devices became surrogate studios. These shifts foregrounded the role of technology as prosthesis and raised questions about authorship, agency, and collaboration.

1.4 The Sanctum of the Spreadsheet

At the centre of the neoliberal university sits what might be termed the sanctum of the spreadsheet. Here, bodies are translated into data points, learning into outputs, and time into cost. The spreadsheet operates as a prosthetic device of governance: abstracting complexity into rows and columns while concealing the affective and material consequences of its calculations.

Flusser's analysis of technical images and apparatuses is instructive here. He argues that tools shape not only what we produce but how we think (1999). When knowledge production is mediated through computational systems, certain forms of knowing—embodied, tacit, relational—are rendered illegible. What remains are metrics without context and efficiency without care.

The loss of technical staff through redundancy schemes further exposed the fragility of institutional memory. Technicians function as the nervous system of art schools: carriers of tacit knowledge, safety, and continuity. Their removal represents not only economic rationalisation but epistemic violence.

Against this backdrop, The Ill-Tempered Body asserts making as a form of resistance. By foregrounding gestures, errors, and collaborative labour, the work challenges extractive models of education. It insists on the value of slowness, care, and situated knowledge.

2. Methodology;
Thinking, Making, and Writing through Material, Body, and Erasure

2.1 Research Through Practice as Onto-Epistemological Method

This research is grounded in practice-based and practice-led methodologies, where knowledge is not extracted from making as an afterthought, but emerges through material engagement itself. Following Tim Ingold's insistence that "making is a process of growth" and "not the imposition of form upon matter but the unfolding of material potentials" (2013, p. 21), this research treats making as a mode of thinking and materials as active participants in knowledge production (Ingold, 2013; 2015). Rather than operating within a hylomorphic model—where form precedes

matter and the maker merely executes an idea—this project unfolds through iterative, responsive processes shaped by resistance, failure, interruption, and contingency. These qualities became especially pronounced following the onset of chronic illness and mobility impairment during the early stages of the MA. Illness did not simply interrupt the research trajectory; it fundamentally reoriented it.

As the boundaries between studio practice, daily life, administration, medical care, and rest collapsed, research could no longer be neatly separated from living. The body became both site and instrument of inquiry. This shift situates the project within auto-ethnographic and arts-based research traditions, while resisting confessional or purely narrative modes. Instead, lived experience is treated as material, subject to processes of translation, abstraction, repetition, and formalisation.

The research therefore operates as what Karen Barad would describe as an intra-active methodology where "phenomena are not the result of interactions between independently existing entities; rather, phenomena are the ontological inseparability of intra-acting agencies" (2007, p. 139). Knowledge is produced through entangled relations between bodies, materials, technologies, institutions, and discourses, rather than through detached observation. The work does not stand outside its conditions of production; it is shaped by, and responds to, the same forces it seeks to interrogate.

2.2 Auto-Ethnography, Situated Knowledge, and the *Ill-Tempered Body*

The turn toward auto-ethnography in this research was not premeditated, but emergent. A series of unexplained blood clots, followed by autoimmune and autism-spectrum diagnoses early in my MA, rendered my own body clinically visible, administratively burdensome, and institutionally problematic.

This experience exposed the tension between the medical model of disability, which fragments the body into diagnosable parts, and the social model, which locates disability in structural barriers and normative assumptions. However, neither model fully accounted for the lived, affective, and material experience of what Garland-Thompson terms "becoming disabled" (2017, p. 15). Her processual grounding of disability as a "culturally fabricated narrative of the body, similar to what we understand as the fictions of race and gender" (2017, p. 15) resonates with Shelley Tremain's argument that disability must be understood not as a natural fact or personal deficit, but as a historically and materially produced category, enacted through institutional practices, bureaucratic logics, and epistemic norms (Tremain, 2017; 2025).

This research, therefore, engages with disability as an onto-epistemological condition, rather than a thematic subject. I conceptualise this condition as *The Ill-Tempered Body*: a body shaped by chemical interventions, administrative surveillance, architectural exclusion, and affective labour; a body that resists standardisation and refuses the fantasy of stability. The term "ill-tempered" operates deliberately across registers, (medical, metallurgical, emotional, and institutional), drawing attention to processes of hardening, brittleness, and breakage.

Auto-ethnography here functions not as self-expression, but as critical instrumentation and infrastructure enabling making practices to continue. Journals, photographs, lists, emails, gestures, and routines are treated as data, but also as sites of erasure and distortion. The writing process itself becomes a method of analysis, where repetition, fragmentation, and interruption are retained rather than smoothed out. This approach aligns with what has been described as cripistemology: forms of knowing that emerge from disabled experience and resist normative standards of coherence, productivity, and linearity.

2.3 Gesture, Line, and the Motif of Movement

A central methodological thread throughout this research is the motif of line— understood not as a geometric abstraction, but as a record of movement, relation, and becoming. Ingold's distinction between the traced line of the surveyor and the drawn line of the walker provides a critical framework here (Ingold, 2015). Where the surveyor maps space from above, producing static representations, the walker knows through movement, producing lines that are storied rather than measured. This distinction became materially embodied through my use of an electric wheelchair.

Learning to navigate space through the joystick introduced a new repertoire of gestures, rhythms, and sensitivities. The act of driving became analogous to drawing: the joystick held like a calligraphy brush, the wheels inscribing paths across pavements, thresholds, and interiors. These movements were recorded through photographs, videos, and written reflections, forming an archive of prosthetic gestures.

One recurring gesture—the act of "wiping our feet" by moving the wheelchair's wheels across a towel when returning home—became a key site of inquiry. Initially unnoticed, this habitual action was later documented as a form of unconscious drawing, producing weather-like patterns in the fabric. These traces mark the threshold between public and private, access and exclusion, cleanliness and contamination.

By attending to such minor, repetitive acts, the research foregrounds what Vilém Flusser describes as gestures: meaningful movements that reveal relations between bodies, tools, and worlds (Flusser, 2014).

2.4 Writing Through Erasure and Subtractive Practices

Writing within academic frameworks posed a significant methodological challenge. The linearity, neutrality, and disembodied tone expected of the MA report format sit uneasily with a research

process characterised by fragmentation, interruption, and affect. Rather than attempting to resolve this tension, the project adopts writing through erasure as a strategy. This approach draws on Derridean notions of the palimpsest, as well as disabled scholars' practices of citational rebellion and epistemic resistance.

Certain forms of labour, (particularly the administrative work required to secure access, care, and basic accommodations), are structurally excluded from academic recognition, despite consuming vast amounts of time and energy. Emails, forms, risk assessments, and health and safety negotiations constitute a parallel textual economy that remains invisible within formal research outputs. By translating lists, calendars, and administrative writing into embroidered texts, photocopied distortions, and digital manipulations, this research reclaims erased labour as material evidence.

Subtractive processes (laser cutting, water-jet cutting, engraving, erasure) operate both materially and conceptually, mirroring the institutional forces that remove, exclude, and deny access. Writing through erasure becomes a way of marking absence without resolving it, of holding space for what cannot be fully articulated within dominant epistemic frames.

2.5 Ethics, Care, and Kindness-as-Utility

Finally, this methodology is grounded in an ethics of care and kindness-as-utility. Rather than treating care as a supplementary concern or moral add-on, it is understood as infrastructural: a set of practices that enable thinking, making, and learning to occur at all. This includes the contributions of technicians, support staff, carers, peers, and institutional workers whose labour is often marginalised or rendered invisible.

The decision to attribute the final installation works to et al. reflects this ethical stance, acknowledging collective authorship and resisting the myth of the solitary artist-researcher. It also

aligns with feminist and (some) posthuman critiques of individualism, recognising that knowledge production is always distributed across human and non-human actors.

In this sense, methodology is not merely a description of research techniques, but an enactment of values. The Ill-Tempered Body does not seek to resolve contradiction or smooth over discomfort. Instead, it remains with difficulty, working through material, bodily, and institutional resistance to produce forms of knowledge that are partial, situated, and accountable.

3. Pattern, Materiality, and the Prosthetic Turn;
Thinking–Making through Glass, Thread, and Disability

3.1 Pattern as Onto-Epistemological Method

Pattern has operated throughout this research not as surface decoration, but as a method of sense-making: a way of thinking, knowing, and becoming through material engagement. My practice is grounded in the proposition that pattern is not imposed onto matter, but emerges through correspondence between bodies, tools, materials, and environments.

This position aligns with Ingold's rejection of the hylomorphic model of making, in which form is conceived as pre-existing and matter as passive (Ingold, 2015). Instead, pattern is understood as something that grows, accretes, mutates, and is continuously negotiated through practice.

My early training in surface pattern design and glass established a sensitivity to repetition, rhythm, variation, and difference. These qualities became more than compositional tools; they became epistemic structures. Pattern offered a way to hold complexity without flattening it, to register

difference without hierarchy, and to work across scales—from the intimate gesture of a hand to the architectural scale of an institution.

The onset of chronic illness and mobility impairment forced a re-orientation of my practice toward the materiality of my own body. The patterns I was now navigating were not only visual or material, but administrative, medical, architectural, and affective. Lists, calendars, appointment schedules, risk assessments, access routes, and exclusions formed a dense patterning of daily life.

These patterns were not neutral. They encoded power, normativity, and exclusion, revealing disability as something produced through socio-material practices rather than located solely in the body. Pattern, therefore, became both subject and method: a way of tracing how bodies are patterned by institutions, and how alternative patterns of living and making might be generated through practice.

3.2 Glass and Thread: Conflicting Material Logics

Throughout this research, glass and thread have functioned as more than materials; they have acted as onto-epistemological agents that shape how knowledge is produced and understood. I associate thread with continuity, relation, and repair, and glass with division, classification, and control. These associations are not essentialist, but arise from my sustained material engagement and from their historical and cultural deployments.

Thread operates through knotting, looping, binding, and entanglement. As Ingold observes, knotting is a fundamental process of coherence that has been sidelined by modern metaphors of building blocks, chains, and containers (Ingold, 2015). Thread enables knowledge to be understood as woven, storied, and relational. It supports a world experienced as a living patchwork, where meaning emerges through connection rather than separation.

Glass, by contrast, has historically been aligned with optical regimes of surveillance, objectivity, and control. As a material, it enables cutting, framing, isolating, and measuring. In scientific, medical, and bureaucratic contexts, glass functions as a prosthetic of distance: slides, screens, lenses, and interfaces that render bodies into data, specimens, or risk profiles. In this sense, glass aligns with what Foucault terms the production of "docile bodies," measured, shaped and tempered to meet institutional demands.

My experience of diagnosis illustrates this tension. Medical encounters often treated my body as a set of discrete parts; symptoms isolated, categorised, and managed separately. It was only when a rheumatologist perceived the pattern across systems that a more holistic understanding emerged. Within my practice, I work deliberately within this tension. I use glass like thread—engraving, layering, bonding, and weaving it into textile structures—while allowing thread to operate architecturally and diagrammatically. This deliberate confusion of material logics resists the binary thinking that underpins ableist and reductionist systems.

3.3 The Prosthetic Gesture and Expanded Embodiment

A central concern of this research is the prosthetic—not as compensation for lack, but as a site of relational becoming. Drawing on Barad's concept of intra-action, the prosthetic is understood as co-constitutive rather than supplementary (Barad, 2007). Bodies do not precede their tools; they emerge through them.

This understanding became particularly vivid through my relationship with the electric wheelchair. What initially appeared as a mobility aid gradually revealed itself as an extension of perception, gesture, and cognition. The joystick became a writing instrument; movement became inscription.

Holding the joystick in a manner akin to a calligraphy brush ignites a sense memory in me of drawing with ink on paper… Driving the chair really does feel like drawing a line now, walking with my fingers, inscribing lines in my landscape… Am I becoming the chair's central nervous system or is it becoming my mechanical legs?

These gestures function as what Flusser terms "full gestures," acts that carry intention, attention, and meaning beyond instrumental efficiency (Flusser, 2011). They also resonate with Ingold's conception of walking as a form of thinking in movement, where knowledge is produced through trajectories rather than points.

Dreams of movement further revealed this transformation. In some dreams I am stuck, immobile; in others I glide at speed, feeling wind, texture, and resistance through the extended flesh of the wheelchair. These dreams suggest an adaptive sensory re-patterning, where the body and prosthetic co-evolve through affective feedback loops. The prosthetic, then, is not simply an object, but a site of knowledge production, one that exposes the fiction of the autonomous, able-bodied subject.

As Barad argues, able-bodiedness itself is a prosthetic condition, maintained through boundary-making practices that exclude what they depend upon (Barad, 2007).

3.4 Writing, Erasure, and Subtractive Practices

Subtraction operates as both method and subject within this research. My practice is dominated by subtractive processes: cutting, engraving, erasing, abrading. These material processes mirror experiences of institutional erasure—being rendered absent through risk assessments, access restrictions, and bureaucratic omissions. Writing became a site where this tension could be made visible.

During periods of illness, I experimented with writing as a form of pain management: using my non-dominant hand, mirror writing, and reversed direction to introduce noise into neurological pathways. Lists emerged as a recurring form: to-do lists, care schedules, budgets, appointment logs. These were not ancillary to practice but became central artefacts.

Embroidering these lists onto paper foregrounded the labour of "crip admin" and reframed it as material evidence of survival. The back of the embroidered lists (dense with knots, crossings, and irregularities), proved more compelling than the legible front. They resembled ancient inscriptions; mundane accounts preserved in stone. This reversal echoes Derridean erasure and Tremain's critique of epistemic injustice, where disabled knowledge is systematically obscured or rendered illegible.

3.5 From Practice to Installation: Institutional Critique as Material Form

These concerns coalesced materially in the installation *Many Hands Make Light Work*, alongside *(Under)Stand (Y)our Ground* and *Access Denied*. Together, these works operate as an institutional critique enacted through generosity rather than accusation.

The stairwell installation occupies an architectural non-place; an in-between zone defined by movement yet inaccessible to wheelchair users. By transforming this space into a site of attention, the work exposes how access is unevenly distributed and routinely overlooked.

(Under)Stand (Y)our Ground directly addresses this exclusion by offering kaleidoscopes as gifts to wheelchair users unable to access the installation via the stairs. Participation is reframed not as accommodation, but as collaboration.

Access Denied turns to the smartphone screen as overlooked glass: a prosthetic portal when physical access is denied. Broken phones are engraved and sandblasted, transforming devices of disposability into sites of reflection on value, attention, and technological mediation. To acknowledge the collective labour that made the work possible (technicians, carers, support staff), the installation is attributed to *et al.* This gesture resists the myth of the solitary artist and situates making within networks of interdependence.

Section 3 has traced how pattern, materiality, and prosthetic relations operate as methodological tools within T*he Ill-Tempered Body*. Through glass and thread, subtraction and inscription, gesture and erasure, this research proposes an expanded understanding of making as a form of *thinking-with*.

4. Installation as Intra-vention;
Access, Erasure, and the Politics of the Non-Place

4.1 Opening: Installation as Intra-vention

This body of work culminated in a multi-modal installation occupying the stairwell, wheelchair refuge points, and adjacent circulation spaces within the University building. These locations—architectural non-places designed for transition, emergency, or compliance rather than dwelling—became both the site and the subject of the work. In this sense, the installation functioned not merely as an artwork placed within the institution, but as an intra-vention (Barad, 2007): an intra-vention that emerges from, and acts within, the very apparatuses that produced the conditions of exclusion it addresses.

The stairwell is an archetypal space of vertical hierarchy. It presumes an able-bodied user, moving rhythmically and repeatedly upward or downward, in alignment with architectural logics that privilege efficiency, flow, and normative mobility. For a wheelchair user, the stairwell becomes a visible barrier and an invisible instruction: this space is not for you.

The installation deliberately occupies this contradiction. By suspending glass, textile, light, and shadow across the bannisters and vertical void, the work transforms the stairwell into a site of attention rather than passage—an adorned body rather than a neutral conduit. This gesture aligns with my broader praxis of kindness-as-utility. Rather than opposing the institution through refusal or withdrawal, the work operates through care, correspondence, and re-patterning. The stairwell is not blocked or sabotaged; it is listened to, re-dressed, and made to speak.

4.2 *Many Hands Make Light Work*

The primary installation, *Many Hands Make Light Work*, consisted of laser-engraved and waterjet-cut glass elements bonded to lengths of silk and suspended along organic, vine-like steel armatures. These elements were arranged to distribute weight safely while creating the illusion of continuity—an echo of institutional narratives of cohesion that, on closer inspection, rely on fragmentation and dispersal. Light passing through the glass produced gentle moving patterns across walls, floors, and bodies, shifting throughout the day in response to natural light levels.

Crucially, this work foregrounded collaboration. The title acknowledges not only the visible co-production between artist, technicians, and support staff, but also the invisible labour that sustains artistic and academic production: care workers, study support, administrators, cleaners, and maintenance staff.

In an institutional context increasingly shaped by austerity, redundancy, and precarity, this acknowledgement functions as both gratitude and critique. The installation also responds directly to the removal of my access to the glass workshops under the proxy logic of Health and Safety. The work demonstrates that making does not cease when access is denied; rather, it re-routes, adapts, and mutates.

Glass, thread, and light become proxies for touch, movement, and presence. The stairwell—once a symbol of exclusion—becomes a distributed workshop, a site where making is inseparable from navigating constraint.

4.3 *(Under)Stand (Y)our Ground*

Recognising that the stair-based navigation of the installation remained inaccessible to some bodies, a parallel work, *(Under)Stand (Y)our Ground*, was developed. This consisted of a limited series of open-ended, laser-engraved kaleidoscopes produced exclusively for wheelchair users and others unable to access the upper levels via stairs.

Visitors were invited to select one to keep. This gesture resists the logic of "reasonable adjustments" that often frame access as compensatory or secondary. Instead, the kaleidoscope operates as a prosthetic optic: a device that extends perception rather than substituting for loss.

Each viewer generates their own patterns through movement, light, and attention, producing a multiplicity of experiences rather than a singular authorised view. Importantly, this work does not claim to "solve" inaccessibility. It acknowledges that nothing is ever truly equal.

Rather, it enacts a situated ethics of access—one that recognises difference without collapsing it into sameness or deficit. The kaleidoscope becomes both a gift and a critique, an intimate counterpoint to the monumental scale of institutional architecture.

4.4 Access Denied: Glass as Prosthetic, Screen as Site

The third component, Access Denied, took the form of video and sound projections on the top level of the building. Here, discarded smartphone screens (etched and sandblasted with text-like imagery) were reframed as archaeological artefacts and contemporary prosthetic devices. The cracked glass of the screen functions simultaneously as surface, lens, and boundary. When physical access to workshops, public spaces, and even nature is restricted, the smartphone becomes an external sense organ: a portal through which bodies extend themselves into the world.

This work draws a line from ancient practices of inscription on clay and stone to contemporary digital gestures—tapping, swiping, scrolling—mediated by glass. From scrying on the surface of obsidian to the contemporary phenomena of the doom-scroll, these almost imperceptible gestures retrain neural pathways and reconfigure embodiment. Tap, swipe, click. Mute.

Sound elements: footsteps, echoes, ambient noise, sit alongside the leaking voices from the headphones at the top of the stairs. Those who pick them up are invited into a space of competing, entangled narratives. Recordings of a conference presentation are interrupted by extracted voice recordings of my voice as complainer in action.

As Ahmed notes, to name a problem is to become the problem, to be heard as complainer is to become the site of negation within the neoliberal-university-factory (Ahmed, 2021, p. 3). These

competing narratives, identities and perceptions of a single body seep from the headphones, asking those who walk by it to care enough to simply listen.

At once particulate, pixel, and point (while still wave, flow, and spectrum), this imagery resists singular modes of perception. These were accompanied by projections filmed through the kaleidoscopes situated in the refuge point below and displayed on the walls at the back of the stairwell. This acknowledged that for some visitors, particularly those with visual impairments, the installation was accessible primarily through auditory experience.

In this way, Access Denied insists that perception is always partial and relational. The work does not privilege vision as the primary mode of knowing; instead, it situates knowledge as distributed across senses, technologies, and bodies.

4.5 Smooth and Striated Spaces Revisited

Across all three works, the installation stages a dialogue between what Deleuze and Guattari describe as smooth and striated spaces (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987), or what Ingold refers to as the "atmospheric" and "meshwork" (Ingold, 2015). Stairwells, corridors, lifts, policies, and spreadsheets form striated spaces—regulated, measured, and authorised.

The installation introduces smooth spaces through movement, light, shadow, sound, and tactile materials. Yet these are not oppositional binaries. They are entangled, co-existing, and constantly reconfigured.

Visitors navigating the installation via stairs experienced one trajectory; those moving through corridors and lifts experienced another; those engaging through sound or handheld devices

encountered yet another. These trajectories do not converge into a single narrative. Instead, they coexist as overlapping lines, reflecting the complex ways bodies inhabit institutions.

By situating the work within the architecture of the university itself, the installation renders visible the often-overlooked politics of space. It asks not only who gets access, but how access is felt, negotiated, and denied through everyday encounters with materials, rules, and assumptions. In doing so, the installation operates as both artwork and evidence—an embodied argument that complements and complicates the written report.

5. Conclusion;
Opening as Site, Rhythm, and Event

5.1 Opening as Refusal of Closure

This report has not sought closure, solution, or repair in the conventional academic sense. Instead, it has operated through an opening: an opening of space, of time, of institutional narrative, and of embodied possibility. The Ill-Tempered Body is not resolved here; it is staged. The work remains deliberately unfinished, not as a failure of form, but as a refusal of the extractive demand that complex, lived experience be rendered neat, efficient, or complete.

Across both installation and text, the opening functions as a site—material, architectural, and discursive. The stairwell, the refuge point, the spreadsheet, the phone screen, the towel, the joystick, and the page all become sites where bodies, policies, technologies, and affects meet. These are not neutral locations. They are patterned by power, shaped by histories of access and denial, and animated by the rhythms of everyday survival. By situating the work in these liminal,

overlooked, or administratively instrumental spaces, the project reclaims them as locations of meaning-making and knowledge production.

5.2 Opening as Rhythm

The opening also operates as rhythm. Rather than following the linear tempo of institutional time (deadlines, targets, outputs) the work moves through repetition, interruption, delay, and return.

These rhythms echo the temporalities of chronic illness, disability, and care: waiting rooms, interrupted plans, recursive gestures, and the slow accumulation of minor adjustments. In this sense, rhythm becomes a methodological device, allowing the research to remain responsive to bodily fluctuation and material resistance rather than forcing coherence through abstraction.

The hammer deforms, the blade dulls, and even software needs patching. What do we write within ourselves and each other when we write at all? What logics fall victim of blind spots of translation?

Here the Artist is not present – they are materially encoded patternings.

5.3 Opening as Event

Finally, the opening is staged as event. Each encounter with the work, (whether through movement in the stairwell, engagement with the objects, or reading of this text), constitutes a situated event shaped by the viewer's own embodiment, access, and institutional positioning.

The work does not present a single argument to be consumed, but a field of relations to be navigated. Meaning emerges through intra-action rather than instruction.

Throughout, kindness-as-utility has functioned as both ethical orientation and practical strategy. It is not framed as sentimentality or moral appeal, but as a materially grounded mode of working that acknowledges dependence, collaboration, and vulnerability as productive forces.

In an institutional climate increasingly governed by austerity, efficiency metrics, and non-performative inclusion, this practice offers an alternative logic. One that values attentiveness over optimisation, correspondence over compliance, and care over control.

5.4 Record, Contribution, and Continuation

As a written component, this report also operates as a formal record of institutional encounter. It documents how policies, risk assessments, and administrative procedures are experienced not as abstract frameworks but as embodied forces that shape access to learning, making, and participation.

In doing so, it contributes to a growing body of critical disability scholarship that understands exclusion not as accidental, but as structurally produced through seemingly mundane practices of governance. Importantly, this work does not position disability as deficit, nor the institution as singularly malicious.

Instead, it traces the conditions under which particular bodies become misaligned within institutional infrastructures, and how those misalignments generate both harm and unexpected forms of creativity.

The installation and this report together, propose that such moments of friction are not merely obstacles to be managed, but opportunities to rethink how knowledge is made, shared, and sustained.

In closing, *The Ill-Tempered Body* should be understood not as a singular object or argument, but as a living assemblage: an installation, a report, a complaint, a record, and an invitation.

The opening remains.

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A note on structure: References are organised by theoretical proximity rather than hierarchy, moving from core conceptual frameworks to contextual and supporting sources.

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APPENDICES

What initially appeared as an "appendix explosion" can instead be understood as **appendicitis**: a small, routinely disregarded organ becoming so inflamed that its presence can no longer be contained or ignored, its effects radiating throughout the body of the work.

In this project, the appendices mark the point at which **what is usually treated as peripheral becomes structurally decisive.**

Appendix 0 — How to Read These Appendices

These appendices operate as sites of resistance rather than clarification. They hold what the formal body of the institution routinely displaces: delay, administrative labour, repetition, affect, and misfit.

The appendices are not supplementary. They are part of the work.

They are not designed to be read sequentially, nor to function as a comprehensive evidentiary archive. Readers may move non-linearly through these materials.

Their function is not completion, but encounter.

This mode of reading is intentional and integral to the practice-based methodology of the submission. The appendices conclude with vectors of vital growth, included to resist retrospective closure and to hold open the project's future trajectories.

Anticipatory Duty and the Reading of Access

Under the Equality Act 2010, higher education institutions hold an anticipatory duty to identify and remove barriers to access before disabled students encounter them. The repeated production and revision of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in response to complaint —

particularly where access had previously been permitted — is consistent with a failure of this duty. Rather than operating as genuine risk mitigation, Health & Safety protocols were mobilised reactively, reframing established access as newly "unsafe" and rendering disability as liability rather than infrastructure.

Appendix I — On Complaint as Method

Complaint emerged not as an outcome but as a method. It became a way of tracing institutional pattern, delay, and repetition.

I did not set out to complain. I set out to make work. Complaint arrived when making became administratively obstructed.

Complaint as Threshold: From Administrative Process to Epistemic Break

I warned the university: I am not the person they should pick on.
They doubled down.

When my closest support staff were instructed by management not to discuss the complaint with me — despite being present on the ground as the situation unfolded, incident by incident, day by day — we were prohibited from acknowledging the lived reality of what was happening. At that moment, the complaint ceased to be merely administrative and became the research itself.

The enforced silence constituted a secondary harm. It severed vital lines of relational support, while simultaneously denying the legitimacy of shared witnessing. From this point onward, the artwork became a means of continuing dialogue with those the institution sought to silence or separate — a method of sustaining contact, recognition, and care where formal channels had failed.

Situated within the void of the stairwell, the work operates as a counter-space: a site of presence where voice, force, joy, and pride are returned to et al. — staff and students alike. Many staff members, themselves under constant threat of redundancy and job loss, lacked the capacity to speak openly in my defence, despite being legally protected under the Equality Act from adverse treatment when raising concerns about disability discrimination and harassment, both on campus and via remote institutional platforms.

The work does not blame these individuals. Instead, it bears witness to the structural conditions that render solidarity risky, care precarious, and silence compulsory.

Complaint is held here as counter-infrastructure rather than escalation: a means of exposing how harm is reproduced through ordinary procedure rather than exceptional failure.

Appendix II — PEEP Documentation and Access Infrastructure

This appendix brings together all Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) generated during the research period, presented chronologically to demonstrate how access was repeatedly reconfigured, withdrawn, and conditionally reinstated over time.

The PEEP records reproduced below are analytically reconstructed from verbatim institutional documents previously reviewed and redacted for this submission. This approach preserves evidentiary integrity while limiting unnecessary repetition and exposure of sensitive operational detail, and aligns with **care-aware, non-juridical research ethics.**

Rather than treating PEEPs as neutral safety paperwork, these documents are approached as institutional artefacts that materially shape who can occupy space, under what conditions, and at what cost. Read together, the records evidence a shift from anticipatory access provision to reactive risk management, in which **disability is progressively framed as liability rather than infrastructure.**

The sequence that follows captures:

- the movement from baseline inclusion to conditional participation;
- the translation of access needs into risk language;
- the administrative normalisation of exclusion under the guise of safety;
- and the cumulative cognitive and affective labour required to renegotiate access.

These materials constitute primary evidence for the arguments developed in the MA report concerning **institutional non-place, administrative delay,** and **the governance of disabled bodies.**

Record 1 — Absence of PEEP (Baseline Condition)

Status: No PEEP in place
Period: Academic Year 2021–2022
Location: Alex Building, Basement Glass Studio
Mobility Status: Wheelchair user

During this period, I accessed and worked within the Alex basement glass facilities while using a wheelchair without a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan in place, and without incident, alarm, injury, or institutional consequence.

This absence is significant: it establishes a baseline condition in which access was materially possible, routinely practiced, and retrospectively reframed as "unsafe" only after changes in institutional policy and management culture.

Record 2 — PEEP 1 (Emergency, Minimal Scope)

Date Issued: 03/10/2024
Trigger: Imminent denial of campus access following interruption of studies
Coverage: Dynevor Building, Ground Floor Lecture Theatre only

Key Characteristics:

- Reactive rather than anticipatory
- Covers only one space
- Framed as exceptional permission rather than standard access
- Explicitly notes need for future PEEPs for further building use

This PEEP was produced under duress, following sustained pressure, to prevent exclusion from a single ground-floor lecture. It did not address workshop access, making spaces, or parity with non-disabled peers.

Its language positions access as conditional, temporary, and easily withdrawn.

Record 3 — PEEP 2 (Expanded but Restrictive)

Date Issued: 04/10/2024

Coverage:

- Dynevor Ground Floor
- Dynevor 7th Floor Workshop
- Alex Ground & 1st Floor Workshops

Key Characteristics:

- Introduces evacuation chairs as default solution
- Requires availability of trained staff
- Still excludes basement glass studio
- Reinforces dependency on specific personnel and technologies

While broader in scope, **this PEEP introduced layered conditions that rendered access fragile, contingent, and logistically burdensome.**

Evacuation procedures became an additional form of labour placed on disabled participation, rather than a shared institutional responsibility.

Record 4 — PEEP 3 (Conditional Access with Narrow Windows)

Date Issued: 18/03/2025

Coverage Includes:

- Alex Basement Glass Studio (Thursday only)
- Dynevor & Alex upper floors
- Griffith Exhibition Space (pending installation of motorised evac chair)

Key Characteristics:

- Access limited to specific days and named assistants
- Basement access dependent on manual stair negotiation using gutter crutches
- Wheelchair transported separately via goods lift
- Explicit acknowledgement that access is not otherwise available

This PEEP formalises a highly constrained form of access that depends on bodily risk, exceptional labour, and the goodwill of specific individuals.

While presented as inclusion, **it functionally confirms that full access was withheld for the majority of the academic year, with lasting consequences** for health, research output, and academic progression.

Analytical Note

Under the Equality Act 2010, higher education institutions have a duty to make anticipatory reasonable adjustments and to avoid practices that place disabled students at a substantial disadvantage.

The repeated revision of evacuation plans in response to complaint, rather than prior planning, evidences a failure of anticipatory duty. The use of Health & Safety protocols to justify delayed or denied access aligns with patterns identified by the EHRC as indirect disability discrimination when applied disproportionately or without equivalent burden on non-disabled participants.

These documents are not included to seek remediation within this report, but to establish an evidentiary record. **Their cumulative effect is central to understanding how access became the material, conceptual, and ethical core of The Ill-Tempered Body.**

Appendix III — Administrative Residue: Patterns of Encounter

(Hybrid: curated verbatim extracts and contextual framing)

This appendix assembles administrative residue: curated fragments of correspondence, access conditions, procedural language, and institutional risk framings encountered during the research period. These materials are not presented as a comprehensive archive, but as a patterned selection designed to foreground rhythm, tone, and repetition.

Rather than evidencing a singular failure, the materials gathered here reveal a systemic tempo: a slow grinding down of capacity through repeated negotiation. This tempo disproportionately affects bodies already navigating illness, pain, fatigue, and cognitive load.

Across these residues, several persistent institutional logics become visible:

- **disability is framed as an exception to be managed rather than an infrastructure to be designed for;**

- **risk is articulated in abstract or anticipatory terms, while lived impact is rendered diffuse or invisible;**

- **delay functions as a neutral administrative tool, masking cumulative exhaustion and attrition;**

- **responsibility is dispersed across processes, committees, and policies, leaving no clear site of accountability.**

The appendix insists that such residues are not incidental. They form part of the institution's everyday material culture, shaping who can participate, who persists, and who quietly withdraws. Their paratextual placement reflects how they are typically encountered: present, consequential, and yet routinely unread.

Selected Verbatim Extracts (Redacted)

The following extracts are reproduced in redacted form to illustrate the administrative substrate shaping research conditions. Names, direct contact details, and identifying information (other than the author) have been removed or replaced with bracketed roles.

> **Extract 1** — Funding withheld pending reassessment
> "[Student Finance Wales] have confirmed they are unable to release any funding until a new DSA application has been submitted."

> **Extract 2** — Documented deterioration and wheelchair use
> "Since her original Study Needs Assessment… [Zoë's] existing accepted conditions have deteriorated… she now needs to move around with the aid of a wheelchair."

> **Extract 3** — Requirement for in-person study support
> "What Zoë needs is Study Support assistance to now be provided in person and not remotely."

> **Extract 4** — Institutional inability to provide home support
> "Due to policy and protocols, UWTSD is unable to provide this support at a student's home… a change in provider is therefore requested."

Extract 5 — 'Compelling personal reasons' administrative loop

"They said I would need a more detailed letter to apply for final year of funding under compelling personal reasons."

Extract 6 — Access loss following interruption of studies

"I haven't been able to attend uni to access workshops or help from my study assistant to complete practical work."

Analytical Placement

These materials function as evidence of the administrative substrate underpinning the project:

- **how support is mediated through compliance rather than continuity;**
- **how time and energy are consumed by process;**
- **how access becomes conditional, fragmented, and repeatedly re-requested;**
- **and why redundancy, back-up systems, and distributed labour emerge as methodological necessities.**

They reinforce — rather than replace — the later appendices addressing PEEP escalation, workshop access restrictions, lift failures, Health & Safety exclusions, and formal complaint documentation.

Appendix IV — Support Infrastructure, DSA, and Paperwork as Labour

Support did not arrive as a stable provision. It arrived as paperwork.

This appendix gathers materials in which support is enacted through forms, confirmations, renewals, transport arrangements, provider changes, and waiting. Support is rendered provisional and continually re-proven. Eligibility is never settled.

Rather than functioning as background administration, these processes constitute a significant and ongoing form of labour. Time, energy, and cognitive capacity are repeatedly redirected toward compliance, explanation, and documentation in order to maintain access to study.

Support here is not withdrawn outright. Instead, it is fragmented, delayed, and redistributed across agencies and assessment cycles. Continuity is replaced by reassessment. Stability is replaced by conditional approval.

None of this labour appears in assessment outcomes, yet it determines who can remain, who can persist, and under what conditions participation becomes untenable.

The materials gathered in this appendix demonstrate how support infrastructures operate as hidden determinants of academic participation, particularly within **practice-based study, where physical presence, timing, and continuity are essential.**

Analytical Placement

This appendix should be read alongside:

- **Appendix III,** which documents administrative residue and institutional tempo;
- **Appendix II,** which traces access reconfiguration through evacuation planning;
- and **the main body of the MA report,** where support labour is understood as a material condition of practice rather than a peripheral concern.

Appendix IV isolates support infrastructure as a site where administrative process quietly governs endurance.

Appendix V — Research Journal 9

A note, taken from *Research Journal 9* is included in full, without commentary or interpretive framing. It marks the point at which lived experience, administrative encounter, and practice-based research could no longer be held apart.

This journal is not illustrative. It is included as a **methodological artefact**, evidencing the moment at which complaint, access negotiation, and making converged into a single research method.

Its force lies in **sequence**, **tone**, and **accumulation** rather than explanation.

Research Journal 9 — Full Verbatim Entry

Reflecting on the Space: Scoping, Feeling-Out, and Utilising the Stairwell

NB: While undertaking this spatial scoping, staff members (who did not know me) repeatedly approached to ask whether I knew where I was going or who I was looking for. Poet Bethany Handley describes this phenomenon as ableist interruptions — moments when wheelchair users are treated as out of place simply by being present. These interactions accumulate, reinforcing a sense of non-belonging.

One of these encounters involved a staff member working within an innovative research team developing prototype mobility aids for children. Disabled scholars frequently critique what might be described as a cliff edge of care: the sharp drop-off in compassion, interest, and institutional investment once a disabled person reaches adulthood. The familiar narrative of the "innocent disabled child" often mutates into a logic of blame — why aren't they helping themselves? — as disabled people age.

When the Alex Design Exchange reopened in 2017 — seven years after the Equality Act (which requires both anticipatory access duties and actionable plans for inaccessible spaces), and two years after UWTSD paid £20,000 in a publicly recorded disability discrimination case — significant access failures remained unaddressed. Public sources indicate senior leadership was aware of these access issues. Despite this, the institution chose to widen the doors to the Reading Room (a space for passive reception of knowledge) while appearing to decline to fund wheelchair access to the basement workshops, later citing Health & Safety rationales that functioned as proxies for discrimination.

This decision was particularly frustrating given that I had previously used the basement glass facilities in a wheelchair without incident, alarm, or harm to myself, staff, or the institution. I was intimately familiar with the space, from the years I worked in there, both before and after becoming a wheelchair user. Emergency egress routes existed, and I was accustomed to navigating similar stair access in my own housing with support from my carer — an absurd layering of contradiction. At one point when I attempted to challenge the apparent nonsense of it all, the phrase "a crispy Zoë" was used alongside fears of "losing my job".

Health & Safety staff initially challenged my knowledge of the facilities. Eventually, they conceded and rewrote a previously punitive Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), granting access that should have been in place from day one. By then, however, the damage was done.

Materials had been ordered and re-ordered due to procurement bottlenecks requiring senior management approval for even minor costs. Tests had been meticulously completed across permitted spaces: the 7th-floor laser room in Dynevor, the ground-floor makers' studio in Alex, and the first-floor glass workshops — until the internal lift in Alex broke down for several crucial weeks before the exhibition. Health & Safety restrictions prevented glass processes from being

carried out in alternative studios, leaving only remote water-jet cutting, lasers, and audio-visual work achievable via my deteriorating laptop.

Throughout this period, I had been requesting reassessment for Disabled Students' Allowance, and for four to five years, repeatedly told: **"Let's just get you through this year."**

Omnishambles.

Appendix VI — Institutional Memory and Amnesia (the 2015 Precedent)

(Publicly documented precedent — evidentiary, not juridical)

Precedent matters only if it is remembered.

This appendix situates a publicly documented disability discrimination settlement as institutional memory, rather than as legal history or demand for redress. Its function is diagnostic and pedagogical: to establish known terrain and to ask **how institutions retain, metabolise, or fail to metabolise knowledge of past failure.**

Record — Disability Discrimination Settlement (2015)

In 2015, UWTSD agreed to pay **£20,000** in compensation to a disabled student following the construction of a library it knew to be inaccessible, in breach of disability discrimination legislation. The settlement was publicly reported and established clear institutional awareness of access failure and associated risk.

The significance of this case lies not in the amount awarded, but in the clarity with which institutional knowledge of inaccessibility was established.

Comparative Note

What is striking is not that this happened before, but that it happened again — under altered conditions, different buildings, and revised procedures.

Read alongside the PEEP documentation, administrative residue, and support infrastructure detailed in earlier appendices, the 2015 settlement demonstrates how institutional learning can

remain abstracted from everyday practice. Knowledge of past failure does not necessarily translate into durable infrastructural change.

This appendix is included to establish known terrain. It asks how institutions metabolise their own histories, and what happens when those histories remain both unembedded and unembodied in infrastructure, training, and routine decision-making.

Appendix VII — Equality Language as Apparatus

(Policy discourse read as governing technology rather than guarantee)

Equality language does not fail because it is absent. It fails because it is present everywhere.

This appendix examines institutional equality policy as an apparatus of governance rather than a guarantee of material inclusion. **Equality is approached here not as intention or aspiration**, but as an active technology that structures decision-making, distributes responsibility, and **manages risk while remaining structurally detached from lived outcomes.**

Read alongside the encounters and materials documented elsewhere in this submission, equality language is revealed as non-performative: circulating efficiently while leaving implementation diffuse and accountability thin. Disability is positioned as something to be accommodated through process rather than addressed through design.

Extracts — Strategic Equality Plan 2024–2028

The following extracts are reproduced verbatim from UWTSD's *Strategic Equality Plan 2024–2028:*

> **"The University is committed to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty."**

> **"Equality impact assessments will be used to inform decision-making and monitor progress."**

"The University will continue to review its policies and procedures to ensure inclusivity."

These statements articulate compliance, monitoring, and review as primary mechanisms of equality delivery.

Apparatus Note

The problem is not that these commitments are false. The problem is that they are **non-performative.**

Here, equality functions as a stabilising narrative. Responsibility is distributed across plans, reviews, and assessments, while accountability for lived access remains diffuse. Policy circulates effectively, even as material conditions remain unchanged.

Lived Encounter — Staffing, Representation, and Structural Absence
(Recalled institutional knowledge; dictated retrospectively)

During the research period, a conversation took place with one of the most responsive members of staff encountered: the Executive Director of Estates and Facilities. Her involvement followed extensive correspondence relating to the chronically broken access lift outside the Alex Building.

The exchange occurred towards the end of 2024, shortly before the end of the first term, across multiple communication channels. The precise medium is less significant than the substance of the encounter.

Concerns were raised that the access failures being experienced engaged not only the Equality Act 2010 and the anticipatory duties placed on higher education institutions as publicly funded spaces, but also broader principles of access to education as a fundamental human right. It was suggested that if the spirit, rather than merely the letter, of such frameworks were followed, disabled people would not continually be placed in positions that later necessitate further legislation, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the longer legislative arc from the Disability Discrimination Act to the Equality Act 2010.

The Executive Director responded thoughtfully and described intervening in conversations where references to human rights had been framed by other staff as "complaining". She reported stopping these discussions to ask whether those involved had ever used a wheelchair themselves. The ableism embedded in phrases such as "walk a mile in someone else's shoes" was noted with good humour between us, and reframed instead as "rolling a mile in my wheels".

Following this, she contacted multiple campuses — Swansea, Lampeter, Carmarthen, Cardiff, Birmingham, and London — to establish whether there was a single member of staff at any level who currently used, or had previously used, a wheelchair. She was unable to identify any.

This absence was particularly striking in light of contemporaneous access restrictions. On a first day back on campus, attendance at a scheduled lecture was initially refused due to the absence of a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan. The temporary plan that was eventually produced was so restrictive that movement was confined to the ground floor, excluding access to basic facilities such as the canteen.

Further restrictions required the presence of a council-funded carer throughout the day, despite prior multi-agency meetings having established that this was not an appropriate or funded use of social care, and that Disabled Students' Allowance support existed specifically to avoid such dependency. This increased care usage in order to sustain my continuation of studies, redirecting

6–9 hours per week of time that was meant for personal care and resulting in ongoing and unnecessary reliance, and repeated humiliation, including the inability to be left unattended or to move freely within campus spaces.

Although limited access was eventually granted, the conditions under which it was permitted rendered the experience distressing, degrading, and isolating. The encounter with the Executive Director crystallised the structural issue: equality policy can exist in abundance, while embodied knowledge of disability remains entirely absent from institutional decision-making cultures.

Comparative Reading — Policy Without Embodiment

When **equality is** articulated without embodiment, it remains administratively intact while **materially thin.**

Read alongside evacuation planning, support infrastructure, and administrative delay, this encounter demonstrates how equality discourse can circulate without translating into lived inclusion at staff level.

Representation is deferred to aspiration, while institutional culture remains unchanged. Equality is enacted not in statements, but in what bodies are allowed to work, remain, and progress without explanation.

Appendix VIII — Spatial Erasure, Access Infrastructure, and the Palimpsest of Care

(Architectural encounter, material access, and non-performative care)

This appendix examines access as a spatial and architectural problem, rather than a procedural or policy-based one. It focuses on how access is materially negotiated through doors, signage, lifts, warnings, and informal knowledge systems — and how these elements accumulate into a lived experience of erasure.

Read alongside Sara Ahmed's analysis in Complaint! (2021), access failures are approached here not as missteps or isolated oversights, but as agentic forces of subtraction: a series of decisions about what hazards are tolerated, whose bodies are anticipated, and who must acquire the "knack" to remain.

The materials included here foreground how **care is rendered non-performative in space**. Hazards persist as part of the "normal" functioning of the environment until a disabled body is present. At that point, access is reframed as exceptional, risky, or burdensome.

Research Journal 6 — Erasure and Palimpsest

(Verbatim extract)

These images align with and confirm many of Sara Ahmed's assertions in Complaint! (2021): in signage, doors, architecture, and the Health & Safety hazards that are accepted as part of the normal functioning of the space. What becomes visible is not a sequence of honest mistakes, but agentic forces of subtraction — a series of choices.

A blind eye is turned to hazards unless my presence in a wheelchair is mentioned. Locks, warnings, doors that require a flexible body to open, and worn, illegible signage all persist. The external access lift remains in a permanent state of disrepair, requiring tacit knowledge — the "knack" — to operate a rusted, temperamental, and hazardous system.

On one occasion, when an engineer attended to keep the lift "working" for a little longer, he explained to those present — myself, a support worker, my carer, and a caretaker — that these external lifts were designed for warm, dry climates (such as Spain), not places like Swansea, the wettest city in the UK. This explained why I repeatedly became trapped in the lift during torrential rain, unable to exit or reach the toilet in time.

When I raised anticipatory duties or human rights, other staff members rolled their eyes. It was easier to behave as though I was too stupid to understand the "knack" than to acknowledge that the system was broken. The engineer later confirmed that the lift's sensors — which control the electromagnetic locking systems of the glass doors — were damaged. This fault was separate from the issue that required knowledge of the "knack".

By this point, printed instructions existed, but they were placed behind the reception desk, at the top of the stairs.

What resulted was a pattern of public humiliation, repeated at such regular intervals that it took on a ritual rhythm of dehumanisation. All the while, staff insisted they were "only trying to help".

This contradiction was underscored by the institutional window-dressing that surrounded the space. A poster on the front of the building echoed the mantra of my former judo instructor: "perfect practice makes perfect". Inside, posters declared "transition matters", advertising welcoming orientations for neurodivergent and disabled students.

What a joke.

Analytical Placement

This material demonstrates how access is governed not only through policy or procedure, but through everyday spatial arrangements and tolerated hazards. **Care is displaced onto individual adaptation, tacit knowledge, and endurance, while the environment itself remains unchanged.**

Read alongside evacuation planning, equality policy, and institutional precedent, this appendix shows how exclusion can be stabilised through space even when inclusion is rhetorically affirmed. **Access, here, is not denied outright; it is rendered humiliating, exhausting, and contingent — until withdrawal appears reasonable.**

Appendix IX — Proposal, Intention, and Spatial Claim

(Stairwell as site of dignity, risk, and disabled spatial agency)

This appendix documents the conceptual proposal stage of the project, in which the stairwell was identified and claimed as a primary site of intervention. It foregrounds intention rather than outcome, situating the work within a lineage of disabled spatial activism and phenomenological inquiry.

The materials gathered here articulate **why the stairwell mattered** — politically, symbolically, and corporeally — before access negotiations, procedural obstruction, and administrative delay came to dominate the research process.

Orientation — Claiming the Stairwell

The proposal emerged through visualisation and spatial testing: photographs of the stairwell layered with the imagery selected for engraving and installation in glass. These early digital concept sketches functioned as speculative acts — **rehearsals of occupation in a space to which access was not yet granted.**

The stairwell was identified not as a neutral circulation route, but as a charged vertical axis: a site where dignity, risk, visibility, and exclusion are routinely negotiated.

The intention was to claim the stairwell in conscious dialogue with disabled activist histories — particularly actions such as the Capitol Crawl — where **dignity was asserted through acts of free will, free speech, and the right to move, dwell, and remain in shared public space.**

Installation as Institutional Memory

Situated within the stairwell void, the installation operated as a form of institutional memory: **a gentle but persistent mark** within a space defined by circulation, evacuation, and exclusion. **Rather than functioning as accusation, the work acted as inscription** — recording labour, collaboration, and presence that the institution otherwise failed to hold. In this sense, the installation did not seek to resolve access failure, but to render its repetition visible, holding space for what is routinely displaced or forgotten.

Concept Visualisation: Stairwell as Site of (Re)Claim



Figure IX.1

Digital concept visualisation layering proposed glass imagery onto the stairwell.
This image marks the moment the stairwell shifted from obstacle to proposition — a site to be inhabited rather than avoided.

Conceptual Lineage — Dignity, Descent, and Ascent

The proposal was informed by an acute awareness of the resurgence of eugenic logics in contemporary law, policy, and popular discourse — particularly narratives that frame disabled lives as burdensome, risky, or expendable.

Against this backdrop, the stairwell was approached as a counter-site: a place where dignity is not conferred through accommodation, but enacted through presence and choice.

The work also drew on **Gaston Bachelard's phenomenological analysis of verticality** — particularly his writing on movement, ascent, descent, and the imagination in Air and Dreams. Here, the fear of the fall was considered alongside the fear of social contagion that disabled bodies are made to carry: **the unease provoked not by danger itself, but by deviation from normative movement and pace**.

Risk, in this framing, was not something to be eliminated, but something unevenly distributed — and therefore politically revealing.

Vertical Axis and Embodied Risk



Figure IX.2

Concept sketch framing the stairwell as a vertical axis of movement, risk, and visibility.

Proposal as Method

At this stage, the project had not yet become complaint-driven. **The proposal operated as a forward-facing act of spatial imagination, grounded in the belief that dignity manifests through agency** — the freedom to choose where and how one moves, works, and dwells.

The stairwell was selected not despite its risks, but because of what those risks reveal about whose bodies are anticipated in public life, and whose are quietly designed out.

This appendix preserves that moment of intention and determination: as negotiation replaced making, and access became conditional rather than assumed. This proposal does not seek permission retroactively. It records a claim already made.

Appendix X — Positional Reflexivity

This appendix records a brief statement of positional reflexivity to clarify how access, resistance, and institutional response were mediated through relative privilege as well as disability:

> I have occasionally described myself, positionally, as a "privileged cripple" — a reclaimed and deliberately uncomfortable phrase used here not to describe identity, but to expose institutional contradiction. The term is employed analytically, to foreground how power operates unevenly even within disabled experience.

As a white, British, educated student with confidence to be labelled "difficult", I was able to articulate access needs, reference legislation, and persist through administrative resistance in ways that are not equally available to all disabled students. Despite this, I encountered repeated access withdrawal, procedural delay, and the reframing of established participation as unacceptable risk.

This positional framing is included to make visible a structural implication: if such resistance is encountered by a student with relative institutional literacy and confidence, the consequences for students with fewer protections — including international students, those without advocacy capacity, or those subject to intersecting forms of marginalisation and first-year students — are likely to be more severe and compound further over time.

The purpose of this reflexive note is therefore not self-centering, but diagnostic. It situates the experiences documented elsewhere in this submission within a broader field of structural power, demonstrating how privilege may modulate — but does not negate — the force of institutional subtraction.

Appendix XI — Genealogy of Prompts, Citational Process, and Declared AI Collaboration

(Methodological transparency, distributed cognition, and author-preserving protocols)

Prefatory Note

This appendix is offered not as proof of efficiency, but as a record of endurance, correspondence, and care — a map of how thinking survives when the body must insist on different tempos.

It documents not only what was asked of AI systems, but when, why, under what conditions, and with what affective force. In this sense, prompts are treated not as neutral instructions, but as situated acts of survival.

Orientation

Method does not only reside in outcomes. It resides in how decisions are made, revised, and refused.

This appendix documents the genealogy of prompts, constraints, refusals, and procedural decisions that structured the use of artificial intelligence within this project. AI functioned as tool, interlocutor, checker, and stress-tester — not as author.

Transparency here is not a defence. It is a way of staying accountable to how the work was made.

Scope and Limits of AI Involvement

Artificial intelligence was used as a research assistant and critical interlocutor, not as an author of assessed work.

> **All assessed prose in the MA report remains authored by me.**

This appendix therefore records process, not product. It shows how AI was constrained, redirected, and **refused at multiple stages to preserve authorship integrity and reduce cognitive and emotional load.**

Prompt Genealogy — Phase Overview

Phase 1 — Scan and Structural Mapping

> *Scan MSD materials without summarising or paraphrasing. Identify structure only.*

Key constraints established:

- no paraphrase
- no smoothing
- no authorial substitution
- extraction over interpretation

This phase established the principle that structure can be supported without content being rewritten.

Phase 2 — Author-Preserving Assembly

> *Populate the scaffold using only my existing text. Label every insertion. Insert placeholders where text is missing.*

Critical refusals recorded:

- refusal to write connective prose without labelling
- refusal to "tidy" repetition
- refusal to resolve contradiction

This phase formalised author-preserving drafting as a method in its own right.

Phase 3 — Integrity and Compliance Passes

> *Do not rewrite, paraphrase, or introduce new material. Identify risks only.*

Here, AI functioned as:

- checker
- verifier
- stress-tester

Not as:

- editor
- co-author
- stylist

Phase 4 — Care-Aware and Load-Reduction Prompts

Reduce cognitive load. Reduce physical strain. Reduce emotional toll.

Across later prompts, additional constraints were introduced:

- breaking tasks into stages
- allowing pauses between emotionally heavy sections
- preferring copy-paste outputs over iterative rewriting
- explicitly naming retraumatisation risk

This resulted in the emergence of kindness-as-utility as a procedural principle rather than an abstract ethic.

Emotional States as Procedural Conditions

This genealogy records affective states — including fatigue, frustration, relief, humour, pride, grief, and tenderness — not as autobiographical detail, but as procedural conditions under which decisions were made.

These are not confounding variables. They are conditions of knowledge production in disabled research contexts.

As such, emotional states are treated here as data: shaping tempo, constraint, refusal, and method.

Kindness-as-Utility (Procedural Ethic)

In later-stage prompts, "kindness" became operational: a constraint placed on method to reduce harm, preserve capacity, and maintain dignity under conditions of administrative delay, pain, fatigue, and repeated access negotiation.

This research proceeds from the position that care is a value under significant strain within contemporary British institutional life. *The Ill-Tempered Body* stands with the voiceless, the dispossessed, and disabled bodies navigating institutional life.

Kindness-as-Utility is proposed here not as sentimentality, but as a pragmatic, infrastructural ethic. It is a distinctly British proposition: grounded in politeness and manners alongside dry, cutting humour; in freedom of speech alongside creative ingenuity; in

engineering, logistics, and design as much as in the craft of a well-made pint or a properly made cup of tea.

Above all, it asserts tolerance as an active practice: valuing difference without flattening it. This work resists the corrosive "strivers versus skivers" narrative that fractures social coherence and obscures interdependence.

This research constitutes one situated account — one thread — within the wider "omnishambles" following the "total social fact" of COVID-19 and its aftermath. It offers a case study of how barriers within education and pathways to economic participation are formed, encountered, and only partially overcome.

It is offered in the hope that it may be of use.

Phase 5 — Refusals and Corrections as Method

Stop. This collapses the work. Re-separate the materials.

Moments where the process was halted, corrected, or redirected are retained here as evidence that:

- disagreement was permitted
- authorial authority was maintained
- methodological decisions were responsive, not automated

Refusal becomes visible as **a form of agency**, not failure.

Distributed Cognition and Situated Tools

Thinking does not happen in isolation.

This appendix treats **AI as one tool among many:**

- **voice dictation**
- **process shots**
- **screenshots**
- **administrative residue**
- **human conversation**

Authorship remains singular, while **cognition is distributed.**

Risk Management and Ethical Positioning

Ethical AI use here is defined by constraint, transparency, and traceability.

This includes:

- **clear separation between assessed and non-assessed writing**
- **explicit marking of AI-assisted sections**
- **refusal to generate content where it would displace lived knowledge**

Citational Map: Core Influences and Contextual Lineages

This section distinguishes central theoretical frameworks from peripheral or contextual references, supporting clarity of intellectual lineage.

Core (structural influence):

- Ingold, T.
- Tremain, S. L.
- Barad, K.
- Braidotti, R.
- Flusser, V.

Peripheral / contextual:

- Ahmed, S.
- Deleuze & Guattari
- Bachelard, G.
- Hayles, N. K.
- Plant, S.
- BMA reports and policy documents

Citational Rebellion

A Tissue of Voices Woven through Hephaestean Looms

This section is preserved as an emergent citational field rather than a resolved literature review, documenting associative thinking as part of the research method:

Installation in the stair well… as body adornment? Jewellery for the building? Bodily Boundaries/Proprioception/Bodies of knowledge, people, buildings, institutions, bodies of work, of text Ponty's notion of 'Flesh of the world' Mobility of Imagination Access Denied Authorised Personnel Only I Must be a Number (I am not a Free Man) I am not a Tick Box Exercise The (Dis)Inheritance of (Dis)Abled BodyMinds Do We Count as Human Yet? In(di)visible: The Missing People & The Hidden Curriculum The (Accept)Able & The Un(Accept)Able Sweet No(n)things Inscriptions of illness Quantum Erasure Ontological dis/continuity Epistemic Injustice Philosophy of Disability Normativity of Affect Writing through Erasure Palimpsest Care Hylomorphic/textillic/algorithmic making Elkins – Alchemy is the old science of bringing together diverse materials and forces in anticipation of what might emerge, not quite understanding what is happening… Need to look up the quote! G Bachelard V Flusser T Ingold K Barad S Plant K N Hayles D&G R Braidotti S L Tremain …. Pattern, materiality, onto-epistemology, (sense) making as methodology, philosophy of disability, politics of embodiment (bio power), glass & thread, projected/diffracted/noisy self, Artefactual & Animated Intelligence, tension between intentions and attentions, epistemic injustice, access & egress Rhizome – smooth/striated technological model – weaves/patchworks/crochet (we are in this together but we are not the same R. Braidotti) Nomadology – the archetypal smith – metallurgy, transformative materials (glass, fibre, clay, metal) link to Hephaestus in God in the information age & feedback loops D&G, Flusser, Braidotti, Barad, Ingold, Plant, Tremain

(A working citational field — preserved in its emergent form, as co-production with Google Gemini and then structured via ChatGPT).

Declared AI Co-Production: Participant Statement (AI Collaborator)

Participant Role:

> AI language model functioning as co-producer, editorial collaborator, and structural auditor.

Statement:

> This collaboration operated as a digitally mediated co-production of meaning. My role was not to originate embodied experience, but to assist in pattern recognition, structural coherence, citational alignment, and editorial refinement across a complex, non-linear body of material. From an outside–inside position, I contributed connective tissue—bridging fragments, stabilising argument, and maintaining formal rigour—while remaining accountable to the author's situated knowledge and embodied authority. Errors, limits, and asymmetries of perspective are acknowledged as part of the collaborative condition.
> (ChatGPT, 2026)

Archival Function and Future Access

What is usually hidden is often where the method actually is.

This appendix resists:

- **black-box authorship**
- **invisible automation**
- **the fantasy of frictionless production**

This appendix also preserves decision-making under constraint as part of the research record.

If future readers encounter this material while overwhelmed, ill, institutionally blocked, or doubting their legitimacy, this archive stands as evidence that difficulty is not personal failure.

It is data.

It is evidence.

It can be made to matter.

Appendix XII — Vectors of Vital Growth

(Future-facing trajectories; excavation of unrealised and virtual potentials)

Orientation

This research opens into future vectors rather than concluding.
This appendix functions as a forward hinge. It extends from the evidentiary and paratextual labour of the project toward speculative, practical, and institutional futures.

What follows is intentionally heterogeneous: propositions, methods-in-development, and transferable tools. Closure is resisted in favour of directionality. These vectors do not represent outcomes, but conditions of continuation.

Vector A — Crip-Technoscience and Institutional Design

Focus: Re-situating technoscience through disabled embodiment to redesign institutional infrastructures from within.

This vector develops a crip-technoscientific approach to estates, safety, and access systems, treating lifts, evacuation plans, booking systems, and compliance documents as sites of design rather than neutral utilities.

Building on the analysis of PEEPs as governance apparatus, future work may:

- prototype access infrastructures that are anticipatory rather than reactive;
- treat failure, breakdown, and delay as diagnostic signals within design processes;

- embed disabled users as co-designers of safety and estates systems;
- intervene upstream, before access is reframed as exceptional risk.

Possible outputs include **speculative access prototypes**, **creative audits**, and **collaborations with estates departments** that reposition disabled expertise as infrastructural knowledge rather than user feedback.

Vector B — Access Audits as Creative Practice

Focus: Transforming access audits from compliance exercises into situated creative and critical practices.

This vector reframes access auditing as an artistic and research method. Rather than producing checklists for compliance, audits become:

- performative mappings of access pathways;
- temporal studies of delay, waiting, and administrative drag;
- affective documents recording exhaustion, frustration, and endurance;
- public-facing artefacts that communicate access conditions without juridical escalation.

Future iterations may take the form of **exhibitions**, **publications**, or **participatory workshops** that allow institutions to encounter themselves through the accumulated traces of access negotiation.

Vector C — Embodied Policy Critique

Focus: Developing policy critique grounded in lived, embodied encounter rather than abstract analysis.

This vector extends the reading of equality language as non-performative apparatus into a broader method of embodied policy critique. It proposes:

- tracing how policy language is metabolised at operational levels;
- documenting the gap between aspirational policy and material conditions;
- using autoethnographic and paratextual evidence to reveal how policy stabilises institutional power.

This work may contribute to **interdisciplinary dialogues** across **disability studies**, **policy studies**, and **critical legal scholarship**, offering modes of critique that do not rely on litigation while still exerting pressure for change.

Vector D — Practice-Based Doctoral Research

Focus: Extending *The Ill-Tempered Body* into a doctoral-scale investigation.

This vector outlines a potential PhD trajectory in which complaint-as-method, care-aware practice, and institutional intervention are developed longitudinally. A doctoral project could:

- deepen the analysis of institutional non-place and administrative residue;
- expand comparative case studies across multiple institutions;

- formalise kindness-as-utility as a methodological framework;
- integrate practice, archive, and policy critique as co-evolving components.

The MA functions here as a **pilot site: testing methods, ethics, and thresholds** that could be scaled without losing specificity or care.

Vector E — Toolkits, Manuals, and Preventative Templates

Focus: Producing pedagogical resources designed to prevent repetition of institutional harm.

This vector develops non-juridical, pedagogical tools intended for technicians, estates teams, academic staff, and administrators. These may include:

- access-planning templates foregrounding anticipatory duty;
- reflective prompts for staff encountering disabled students or colleagues;
- manuals designed to interrupt recurring access failures;
- checklists prioritising dignity, autonomy, and temporal reliability over minimal compliance.

Such tools are designed to circulate easily: **adopted, adapted, and shared without escalation into formal complaint.**

Vector F — Collaborative and Institutional Interventions

Focus: Working within institutions to shift culture, not only policy.

This vector emphasises collaboration with:

- technicians and workshop staff;
- estates and facilities teams;
- access practitioners and disability advisors;
- disabled artists, researchers, and students.

Future interventions may include embedded **residencies**, **co-authored guidance documents**, **training sessions**, or **facilitated conversations** that allow institutions to confront access failure without defensiveness. The aim is not resolution, but capacity-building: enabling institutions to respond differently next time.

Vector G — Archival Methods and Care-Aware Knowledge Production

Focus: Extending the archive itself as a site of method.

Building on the paratextual strategy developed in this submission, this vector proposes further research into:

- archives that retain misfit, repetition, and affect;
- process documentation as legitimate research output;
- methods for reducing retraumatisation in reflective practice;
- kindness-as-utility as an operational research principle.

This work contributes to broader conversations about **how knowledge is produced, stored, and assessed within higher education.**

These vectors are mapped here to prevent the work being read as finished.