



# Sarah Porter

Audiologist

## Can you give us a brief outline of your work history?

I have been working within the SHSCT Audiology Department for almost four years. The initial three years were spent training as a Band 4 Associate Audiologist, and this past year, I have been working as a Band 5 Audiologist based in Craigavon Area Hospital.

## What made you decide this career path?

I love working with people and have always wanted a job within a healthcare setting. I also learned sign language while I was at university, and ever since, I've had an interest in working with people who have a hearing impairment. So, audiology seemed like the perfect choice for me.

## How did you train for this role/educational route?

I completed a three-year distance learning BSc Audiology with Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. After completing the initial two years (FdSc Hearing Aid Audiology), I could register as a qualified Hearing Aid Dispenser/Associate Audiologist, and the final year of training converted this into a BSc Audiology, enabling me to register as a qualified Audiologist. While completing the training, I worked full-time as an Associate Audiologist within the SHSCT (who sponsored the qualification). This is where I received the majority of my practical training. Distance learning with the university included online and in-campus lectures, practical workshops, and exams.

## What qualities are required for your job – personal and professional?

This role involves working closely with service users and their families, so it is important to be empathetic, patient, and have good communication skills. It's also important to be organised, work within a team, and have good problem-solving skills.

## What does a typical day involve?

The great thing about audiology is that every day is different! My role involves the diagnosis and management of hearing loss. This includes conducting hearing assessments, creating, and implementing individual management plans for each patient, fitting and maintaining hearing aids, creating ear impressions, and working alongside Ear Nose & Throat (ENT) clinics. Working as a Band 5 Audiologist means I predominantly work with adults of varying ages; however, I regularly assist senior audiologists with paediatrics clinics too.

## What do you like best about your job?

I love getting to work with a variety of people! Each day, I work with people of all ages from lots of different backgrounds. Getting to see the difference using something as simple as a hearing aid can make in their lives is very rewarding.

## What advice would you give anyone thinking of doing your job?

Go for it! It is a career that has a great combination of technical and personal skills, with a wide range of specialities to choose from.