



### **Who are you, where are you based and what do you do?**

I'm Rowan Williamson and I work at University of the Arts. We are a large Arts institution spread out across London. We have six Libraries, based at the London College of Communication (LCC), London College of Fashion (LCF), Central Saint Martins (CSM), Chelsea College of Arts, Camberwell College of Arts, and Wimbledon College of Arts.

My job is Associate Director of Library Services and Support. I oversee the libraries and Learning Zones in each of our colleges. My role is partnered with the Associate Director of Content and Discovery, which is held by Chris Foreman, so I am focused on the management of the library services in the colleges, including the spaces, IT, and staff support. I also lead on customer services and academic liaison offer which is situated in my teams.

### **What do you most enjoy about your job?**

I love the variety of people I get to work with. I am always learning a new aspect of university business as I am able to collaborate with colleagues in other departments, and represent Library Services in our wider community. There is also such a huge amount going on at all levels in our own service. I am constantly amazed by the innovation and commitment that our staff demonstrate in their work, delivering services, supporting students and academics, and developing their own professional skills. It's exciting and it's a real privilege to be part of that. I benefit from their insight and learning all the time.

### **What motivates you in your work?**

Rather simplistically, I want everyone to be happy, so for me, a big part of my motivation is from trying to contribute to improving student experience or staff satisfaction, whether its services, relationships or morale. I want things to work, so problem-solving and looking for new ways of working are key, and seeing colleagues achieve their goals and students benefitting from what libraries can offer is a real thrill for me.

### **How has/can the M25 Consortium support you in your career?**

I have really benefitted from the contacts and networking. I have met new people, shared and requested information to inform my decision-making in roles and kept in touch with colleagues I have previously worked with in M25 institutions. A lot of this is through the cpd25 programme which I have found is an amazing resource that delivers very relevant and valuable opportunities across a wide range of staff development.

### **What would it surprise people to know about you?**

That after a stint doing work experience in a library I actually swore never to become a librarian, but as I left school I was challenged by a teacher who told me I should aim higher than just being a librarian. I could not for the life of me think why being a librarian was considered so lowly, and being stubborn I wanted immediately to change this perception and prove that it was as high a calling as any! Hence my passion for all things library-related began.

### **Complete the sentence:**

If I wasn't working in a library, I would be... working as a children's storyteller or maybe in a Citizens advice bureau somewhere because... Either way, I would be doing something that opens up people's imaginations and empowers them to process information, access it and use it to improve their lives.

*Rowan Williamson, UAL, April 2021*