Welcome to *Diffusion* Volume 3, issue 1, the first issue of the journal to be co-edited with a UCLan student – Ryan Owen Gibson. Ryan, a postgraduate in Literature, was appointed as Student Editor in February this year, to encourage further student participation in the production of the journal and to forge greater links with the student community. His role and the initiatives he has implemented are explained in the ‘Message from the Student Editor’.

*Diffusion* 3:1 brings together seven pieces of outstanding work produced by undergraduates at the University of Central Lancashire. Three of these contributions are strong research articles from Physiotherapy students in the School of Public Health and Clinical Sciences, articles by Deborah Ruscillo, Donna Tootell and Leon Mabire, which address the importance of exercise in the very young and the over 65s, and the role of the physiotherapist in promoting better health and well-being in the elderly. In each an evaluation of published literature leads to recommendations to improve existing practices and, in the case of the Ruscillo and Tootell pieces, exercise programmes are provided in the Appendices. These articles demonstrate the excellent level of research now being carried out by undergraduates in physiotherapy, both in the second and third years of study. Together they provide exemplars for other students in the school to emulate.

This issue also includes another fine example of undergraduate research from the Lancashire Law School. Justine Mitchell’s article on UK Parliamentary supremacy and the European Union, was produced in only her first year as an undergraduate at UCLan. It analyses some complex legal issues and selected case histories surrounding the question of sovereign power and the topical and controversial subject of the UK’s membership of the European Union. This is followed by an article which is also concerned with law, but from a social perspective. Ashton Bamfield, a final year student in Criminology and Criminal Justice, analyses some key feminist critiques pertaining to
law and rape cases, drawing attention to the problems and residual inequalities which victims of rape still encounter.

But the first two pieces in Volume 3 offer a slightly different take on research activity at undergraduate level. The first, Victoria Todd’s ‘Eternal Flame’, is a short story written for children and produced on a Creative Writing module. Victoria’s entirely creative input highlights a crucial aspect of research: that reviewing the literature base for a particular subject and evaluating existing theories are the precursors to creative thinking which produces new ideas and pushes out the boundaries of knowledge. Research is the path to that creativity, a way which leads to new developments and different solutions. In creative subjects, such as music, the visual arts and creative writing, the fruit of prior learning and research stands alone, but it is, nonetheless, evidence in itself of the means to that end. The Diffusion Editorial Team hope that future issues of the journal will include more contributions from the creative sector.

The second of these new interventions for Diffusion is at the cutting edge of research. The contribution on ‘Henry “Box” Brown’ by Shukar Bibi and Rebecca Foss is a poster, the result of a final year ‘Student Live’ research project in American Studies to explore the ex-slave Abolitionists who came to Britain from America in the 1840s and 1850s. The poster, accompanied by a short account of its genesis, provides new evidence about the black slave, Henry Brown, who escaped from America in 1950. This research project demonstrates that you do not need to be a postgraduate to produce a valuable contribution to knowledge in your specialist field, undergraduates are also capable of ground-breaking research, for the ‘Henry “Box” Brown’ Poster, includes previously undiscovered information which updates the published authority on this subject.

Whether researching the ways in which we can live healthier lives or reviewing the legal powers which control us, questioning the social frameworks which are so easily taken as ‘natural’, unearthing past lives to better understand our racial heritage or providing new sources of creativity which both entertain and enrich human life and understanding, the contributors to this issue of the journal have all made their mark on the University’s
record of research and they set a fine example to other students who I hope will benefit from reading *Diffusion* 3:1.

Finally, I wish to express my thanks to: the Student Editor, the members of the Editorial Team, the Readers and the Authors themselves for their valuable time and their hard work in bringing this issue to publication.