Welcome to the third issue of *Diffusion*, in which we continue to publish outstanding research produced by undergraduate students at the University of Central Lancashire.

In this issue we have selected articles written by students, in their second and third years of study, from three different Schools: two in Literature from the School of Journalism, Media and Communication; two from the School of Psychology; and two from Public Health & Clinical Sciences. Additionally, we have included a brief report from a third-year, Literature undergraduate and member of the *Diffusion* Editorial Team on his experience of conference presentation, an activity that has become an integral part of research at post-graduate level, and it is encouraging to see this now filtering through to undergraduate studies.

In preparing this issue I wish to express my thanks to the academic staff (the First Readers), who submitted these articles for consideration in the first place and who have helped the respective students in the process of revision and minor correction. Additionally, I am also grateful to a small number of students who have now become involved in the selection process as Second Readers. The critical reading skills required to carry out this task are a crucial factor in the business of research and the opportunity to practice and develop these skills is therefore highly beneficial to those students who volunteered in this capacity.

Indeed, as the contributors to this issue are now aware, the work that goes into preparing a piece of research for either presentation or publication continues long after the initial paper or research project has been completed.

In a recent edition of *The Guardian*, the novelist Jenny Diski, writing about her experience as guest-editor of a magazine described by its student editors as ‘the premiere literary anthology of student writing’, expressed her disappointment in work that is offered for publication in what appears to be a draft version and provided a description of the process of revision and correction necessary when writing for publication, which I fully endorse:
For me writing is the editing … Draft, redraft, let the thing sit, and then consider it again, read closely, carefully, cut away everything that you haven’t properly thought through. (The Guardian ‘Review’, Saturday 20.06.09, ‘Author, Author’, 15)

Readers may think that I agree with this because I am an editor myself, but this is sound advice not just for writers, but for all those engaged in research, particularly when the stage is reached when that research has to be conveyed to others. I am, furthermore, delighted to point out that all the contributors to this issue have worked hard revising their articles for publication, and this not only concerns clarity of expression. For some the process involved making drastic cuts, for others structural and presentation changes were needed, if only to conform to the Diffusion ‘house style’, and for one contributor it also meant seeking permission to use material in copyright.

These are, of course, valuable lessons to be learnt and as we continue to broaden the various ways in which research-informed teaching is carried out at the University of Central Lancashire, I am very pleased that Diffusion has also extended its scope in this respect and I hope that future issues will go a step further to include book and article reviews, since reviewing is another significant aspect of the research process.

As you will see, the Abstracts and Contents now identify the School / Subject area for each article, so that readers may go straight to the field (or fields) of study which most interest them. However, the beauty of the multi-disciplinary journal is that readers may also reach beyond their specialist fields and read what other students have written from different disciplines outside their own. One of the criteria for inclusion in Diffusion is that articles should be accessible to the general reader; the report on conference presentation is certainly accessible to undergraduates in all subject areas and may encourage some to likewise take the plunge. But I also hope that science students will enjoy reading about criticism of Tolkien, and that students in the humanities will find research into the use of cannabis, constructing facial images for criminal evidence and the difficulties experienced by autistic children or people with Parkinson’s disease equally interesting. Most of all, the producers of this journal trust that the work published in Diffusion will inspire undergraduate students in all subjects to learn from and find inspiration in the examples presented here.