It is a great pleasure to present the First Edition of the Independent Student Journal. Founded by a small group of university students in 2017, the ISJ is an exciting and innovative publication which endeavours to encapsulate the cherished ideals of free-thinking, and independent thought produced by both undergraduate and postgraduate students from across the international community. This peer-reviewed publication aims to promote the neutral exchange of original research, ideas, and student authorship from a variety of academic disciplines; often exploring topical and contentious themes.

Opening this edition is the first of five sections which begins with an exploration of contemporary legal decisions and issues arising from global and domestic developments. Articles in the Law section present purposeful investigations concerning the various threats and violations to international peace and security, as witnessed by the global community in recent times. In continuation of the global issues theme, the International Relations section is dominated by philosophical and conceptual discussions concerning twenty-first century soft power projection, prospects for international peace, and cyber security lessons pertaining to modern technological practices. The third section, Economics, focuses on macroeconomic developments within Indonesia and addresses economic growth concerns arising from Brexit. Pleasingly, microeconomic challenges are discussed, notably through a unique article exploring the intersection between law, economic policy, and paten regulation. In demonstrating the multidisciplinary philosophy of this Journal, the Medicine section presents a broad array of articles exploring issues from clinical cultures to technological innovations, and even evolving medical practices designed to improve the general health and well-being of patients. Closing the First Edition, the Psychology section presents research concerning causes of happiness, differences in leadership personality traits, and language acquisition skills. Hopefully readers will enjoy the diversity of research areas, alongside the thought-provoking content contained within each and every article.

This inaugural edition would not have been possible without the support and guidance of numerous individuals and institutions; most notably that of the late Mr. Dinesh C. Rajp to whom this edition is dedicated. Whilst independent in nature, this Journal shares the philosophy of the University of Buckingham; Britain’s leading free-thinking university. It is only appropriate to acknowledge the meaningful impact the University of Buckingham has exerted upon this Journal. Likewise, the invaluable and indefatigable efforts of Christopher Woodhead from the University of Buckingham Press must be recognised as being essential in bringing this idea to print. This sentiment of gratitude is additionally conveyed to all members of the Editorial Board for their valuable editing and curation of twenty-one unique articles.

This Journal is especially grateful to all who contributed content and to all who invested in this unusual publication.

Preparations for the Second Edition, due in July 2019, are already underway. The new Editor-In-Chief, Joshua Cullen, would like to invite university students from across the globe to consider submitting articles via the Journal website for consideration. Further information about the Second Edition and the Journal can be found online at http://ubplj.org/index.php/isj.

Finally, I am grateful to all readers of this Journal for showing a genuine interest in student research and authorship.