Author's response to reviews

Title: Relations of low contrast visual acuity, quality of life and multiple sclerosis functional composite: a cross-sectional analysis

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

Thank you very much for the valuable comments by the reviewers and the opportunity to revise our manuscript accordingly. Please find enclosed a point-by-point answer to the reviewers’ comments and our revised manuscript entitled

“Relations of low contrast visual acuity, quality of life and multiple sclerosis functional composite: a cross-sectional analysis”

Reviewer #1
We thank the reviewer for carefully revising our manuscript. This reviewer made no specific comments.

Reviewer #2
We thank the reviewer for this important comment. We completely agree that in patients without a history of optic neuritis it is hardly possible to differentiate between a primary neurodegenerative process in the retina and axonal degeneration secondary to subclinical inflammation in the optic nerve. Hence, already in the original version of the manuscript we carefully phrased this interpretation as “support of a hypothesis”. In fact, by hypothesising that SLCLA reflects “diffuse neurodegenerative processes in the retina” we did not mean to imply a primary neurodegenerative process but rather diffuse retinal neurodegeneration which could either be due to primary degeneration, secondary to subclinical inflammation, or both. We clarified this in the revised manuscript:
“[…] our data showing a significant association between SLCLA and retinal axonal integrity independent of a previous ON support the hypothesis that SLCLA reflects diffuse neurodegenerative processes in the retina, which could either be due to primary degeneration, secondary to subclinical inflammation, or both.”

Reviewer #3
Thank you very much for reviewing the manuscript from a statistical point of view. We are happy that you consider both statistical approach and interpretation of data as appropriate.

I hope that you will find our manuscript now suitable for publication in *BMC Neurology*.

Yours sincerely

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