Dear Dr Le

Many thanks for giving us the opportunity to revise this manuscript. We have done so, and, in the area of measurement of proprioception, we have now stated: 1. Proprioception, as measured by absolute error angle, i.e. the difference between actual and perceived angle through which the joint has been moved passively, will be measured using the Fastrak apparatus (Polhemus, Colchester, VT, USA). Briefly, each subject will have their knee screened from view while sitting on an examination couch with the knees hanging from the side. Each knee will be moved passively to one of three predetermined position (full extension, 30 degrees and 60 degrees of flexion), and held in that position for 5 seconds. The limb will then returned to a resting position. The patient is then asked to reproduce the knee position to which it had been moved passively. The test will be repeated three times per each of three positions.

We are uncertain on how to answer the other queries raised by the Reviewer. We would respectfully point out, however, that this protocol, at the time of first submission, had already undergone approval by the Research and Development Department, had been formally approved by the Local Ethics Committee, and duly registered as ISRCTN52943804 in the Controlled Trials Register on http://www.controlled-trials.com

Regarding data management, we specified that the analysis will be on an Intention to Treat basis. We also specify, in the Protocol deviations section, that 'Any changes to the protocol will be recorded. Any amendments that may be required once the trial has started will be submitted for approval by the ethics committee'.
We look forward to hearing from you
With best regards

Nicola Maffulli