Author's response to reviews

Title: Effect on survey response rate of hand written versus printed signature on a covering letter: randomised controlled trial [ISRCTN67566265]

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Response to reviewers:

Reviewer 1: Phil Edwards

- The omitted study has been included and the incorrect trial data have been amended
- All minor changes have been made
- The suggested discretionary change has been made

Reviewer 2: Roger Harrison

- This experiment and the meta-analysis focussed specifically on the comparison of printed versus hand written signatures. As neither of the studies mentioned included this intervention, we have not included them in the meta-analysis. They will be included in the Cochrane review [reference 1 in the paper] when it is updated.
- All minor changes have been made with the following exceptions:
  1) The reviewer commented that the Edwards review had not shown a ‘modest’ effect, and that an odds ratio of 1.16 ‘is near enough no effect’. While 1.16 represents a small effect size, the odds ratio has a narrow confidence interval and does not cross one. Therefore this effect can be considered to be real and the wording has been left unchanged.
  2) The reviewer requested that the method for statistical analysis be reported. We believe that this has been done, and we were unclear as to the change the reviewer would like to see.