Author’s response to reviews

Title: A specific gene expression signature for visceral organ metastasis in breast cancer

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Title: A specific gene expression signature for visceral organ metastasis in breast cancer

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Point by point reply to issues raised by editor:

Comment 1: We note that currently there is substantial overlap with your published thesis:


While we understand that this is work that you have previously published, and some of the same ideas are contained in these publications, please be aware that we cannot condone the use of text from previously published work. Please rephrase your manuscript as much as possible to reduce overlap, and ensure that your thesis has been cited.

Answer:

In consultation with Ms Catherine Rice, Ph. D (see e-mail contact dated 13 March 2019), we have included a statement indicating that this work was already submitted (first submission date April 2018) and was under review/revision process by BMC Cancer, at the time point of
publication of my thesis (18 January 2019). This statement can be seen in line 343 (“This work … process”) in disclaimer section, additionally the reference list is updated with addition of this reference (reference#4, thesis entitled “Genomic characteristics of metastatic breast cancer”).

Comment 2: Abstract

In order to be in line with journal requirements, please include the following headings within your abstract: Background, Methods, Results, Conclusion.

Answer:

We have included the suggested headings.

Comment 3: Headings

Please amend the following headings in your manuscript, as indicated:

- “Materials and Methods”: please change this to “Methods”

Answer:

We have made the change.

Comment 4: Conclusions section

Please add a “Conclusions” section after the “Discussion” section. This should state clearly the main conclusions of the research article and give a clear explanation of their importance and relevance.

Answer:

We have added a “Conclusions” section.

Comment 5: Availability of Data and Materials

Please remove the sentence "The authors accept to deposit the data in a publicly available server, in case of acceptance of this manuscript for publication." As including your raw data in the additional files of this manuscript is sufficient.
Answer:
We have removed this sentence.

Comment 6: Funding
In the Funding section, please also describe the role of the funding body in the design of the study and collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and in writing the manuscript.
Answer:
We have added the necessary information

Comment 7: Conflict of Interest
Please remove the 'conflict of interest' section from your Declarations, leaving only the 'Competing Interests' Section.
Answer:
We have removed the “conflict of interest” section.

Comment 8: Remove figure legends
Please remove the figure legends present within the figure files. Figure files should contain only the image, as well as any associated keys/annotations.
Answer:
We have made the changes.

Comment 9: Remove unneeded files
Please remove the cover letter and response to the reviewers comments file from the file inventory as they are no longer needed at this stage of the editorial process.
Answer:
We have made the necessary changes.
Comment 10: Clean manuscript

Please upload your manuscript as a single, final, clean version that does not contain any tracked changes, comments, highlights, strikethroughs or text in different colours. All relevant tables/figures/additional files should also be clean versions. Figures (and additional files) should remain uploaded as separate files.

Answer:

We submit a clean version of our manuscript.

Point by point reply to issues raised by reviewer 1:

Comment (Reviewer 1): I understand the argumentation of the authors and can follow them. The only minor revision I finally would suggest is a description of the experiences the authors made with their signature in the meantime (I think they have it now for more than a year and what is the value of a molecular classifier not used by the authors?) or a short statement in the discussion why they have not yet used it for themselves.

Answer:

We understand this comment. We believe that we have addressed this issue with our statement in the conclusions section, lines 308-310 “Further validation…. metastatic behaviour”.