From: Dr Simon Combe, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Language and Culture, Osaka University.

Dear Dr Ma,

I am writing to you to confirm that I have read manuscript ESPS Ms

NO: 4417 entitled: "Evolution of an avian H5N1 influenza A virus escape

mutant" and after some minor changes am prepared to declare that it is

of a Grade A status [ie, that it is ready for publication].

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me

at this email address.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Combe

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Dr Simon Combe

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