

## Reviewer's report

**Title:** Insights into age- and sickle-cell-disease- interaction using principal components analysis

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 14 August 2006

**Reviewer:** Lize van der Merwe

### Reviewer's report:

#### General

I have two serious concerns about the statistical methods used in the paper. I would like the authors to respond to them to my satisfaction before I will regard the statistical component as acceptable for publication.

Firstly, why did they derive the principal components for the hemoglobin AA subjects only instead of for the whole sample?

Secondly, why did they categorise the ages into age groups instead of treating age as a numerical confounder? It would give them much more power.

-----  
Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

-----  
Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

-----  
Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)