In response to the comment of Madsen and Liu (2018), we explain why our quartz optically stimulated luminescence (OSL) ages showing the early MIS 3 lake highstand are robust. We also demonstrate that the difference in the age estimates between ours (Long et al., 2018) and other studies should be attributed to contrasting equivalent dose ($D_e$) values, rather than water contents (hence the dose rate) which was claimed by Madsen and Liu (2018).