



Contribution ID: 78

Type: **Talk (17 + 3 min)**

Influence of polarisation analysis on buffer subtraction

Monday 20 March 2023 12:10 (20 minutes)

Protein dynamics play a vital role in biology. Quasi elastic neutron scattering is an ideal method to access these dynamics. Normally data analysis is performed based on the assumption that the scattering spectrum is incoherent. In order to observe the full range of protein dynamics it is necessary to perform the experiments in solution. This solution is usually a fully deuterated buffer, while the protein remains protonated. It is generally assumed that while the buffer leads to a coherent contribution, this can be taken into account during data analysis by subtracting the buffer contribution from the sample spectrum. Up until recently there was no way to experimentally verify this assumption. Polarised QENS experiments on LET allow for the coherent and incoherent contributions to be separated. By comparing the results from the polarised QENS experiment and the standard analysis method from unpolarised QENS it was possible to experimentally check this assumption. The results and the implications for data treatment in the future will be discussed.

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Session Classification: Proteins & Peptides seen by Neutrons