We present precise measurements of atomic distributions of low electron density contrast at a buried interface using soft x-ray resonant scattering. This approach allows one to construct chemically and spatially highly resolved atomic distribution profile up to several tens of nanometer in a non-destructive and quantitative manner. We demonstrate that the method is sensitive enough to resolve compositional differences of few atomic percent in nano-scaled layered structures of elements with poor electron density differences (0.05%). The present study near the edge of potential impurities in soft x-ray range for low-Z system will stimulate the activity in that field.

Thin films and multilayers (MLs), nano-structured in one dimension, have unique optical, structural, electronic and magnetic properties with a wide range of applications. Properties of these structures are strongly influenced by presence of small quantity of impurity, layer composition, interfacial microstructure and chemical nature. Low electron density contrast (EDC) structures are of enormous interest. For example, in Co/Cu magnetic MLs, presence of small magnetic impurity (e.g., Ni) concentrations in the nonmagnetic (Cu) layer brings drastic changes in magnetic coupling and magnetoresistance (ref. 4). Similarly, as the size of the semiconductor structure decreases, the dopant distribution—which plays a fundamental role in determining the layer composition—becomes narrower (~nm). Establishing a microscopic picture for fundamental understanding of this narrow low-atomic number (Z) doping layer requires spatial and chemical characteristics on the atomic scale.

Recently, growth of graphene on SiC and SiO$_2$ is of interest due to its unique physical and electronic properties and find potential applications. Because of its importance, numerous efforts have been invested to characterize low contrast underlying interface structure and chemical nature which strongly influences growth and properties using different techniques. Again, low EDC structures with low-Z/low-Z combinations and in particular Si/B$_4$C structure is of current interest due to potential application in emerging fields like astrophysics, low bandpass filter and electronic applications, where the properties of these structures are strongly affected by the interfacial microstructure and atomic distribution. However, accurate understanding of atomic distribution and microstructure remain uncertain due to low contrast problem (ref. 18). Progress in understanding and predicting the properties relies on quantitative information about the distribution of these parameters at the atomic scale. So, it is clear that chemically resolved small atomic concentration and their spatial distribution across nano-scaled buried interfaces of low EDC are interesting and important aspects, and those need to be investigated.

Despite important scientific interest, quantitative precise measurement of such informations at deeply embedded interfaces are very scarce owing to the fact that there are not many techniques available to measure such a small quantity of chemically resolved atomic composition profile and microstructure wherever layer thicknesses of the order of ~nm are involved. A combination of conventional hard x-ray reflectivity (XRR) and x-ray standing waves (XSW) analysis has been employed to quantify such a distribution with a precision of ~2 atomic percent (at.%) and depth resolution of ~0.1 nm generally from high contrast periodic ML. However, difficulty arises in XRR to probe microstructure when the EDC at an interface is low ($\Delta\rho/\rho \approx 5\%$), and to extract the layer composition. For example, in a Pt/C ML, even a 15% change in the electron density of the C-layers (say due to Pt diffusion into the C-layers) does not produce a significant change in XRR (ref. 20). So, combined XSW-XRR techniques are restricted in their success owing to lack of sensitivity in structures like: (i) For non-periodic structure and/or with low-Z materials where x-ray fluorescence signal is very weak. (ii) For low contrast interfaces because of contrast limit of XRR. Recently, a nice study has been done on mono-layers of graphene/SiC (0001) interface using XSW-excited photoelectron spectroscopy, however it is a surface sensitive (~1–10 nm) techn-
technique. Indeed, here we present using resonant soft x-ray reflectivity (R-SoXR), a method that can overcome previous limitations owing it’s excellent chemical sensitivity to low-Z materials, high contrast variation and high resolution. R-SoXR has been used for studying polymeric & organic materials, ionic liquid, electronic and structural analysis of hard matter and magnetization in magnetic structures. However, very little is known about it’s utility to precisely measure chemically and spatially resolved atomic distribution profile across low contrast and low-Z interface structure.

In this letter, precise quantitative measurements of both chemically selective atomic concentration and their spatial distributions along the microstructure of underlying Si/B₄C interfaces are presented. We observe that there is a chemical change in B₄C and we are in position to resolve differences of few at.% of compositional variation and their spatial distribution which ultimately enables for construction of highly chemically resolved interfacial map.

Results

Hard x-ray reflectivity. Thin film samples are fabricated with varying position of B₄C layer (30Å) in Si thin film of thickness 300 Å. B₄C is at top, middle and bottom of Si layer for sample 1 (S1), sample 2 (S2) and sample 3 (S3), respectively. In all samples, a W layer of thickness 10 Å is deposited just above the Si substrate to provide an optical contrast between substrate and the film. Prior to R-SoXR measurements, hard XRR measurements are done using Cu Kα source and data are plotted up to q₀ = 0.23 (figures 1(a) and (b)) to compare with q₀-range of R-SoXR measurements. Measured profiles of three samples with varying position of B₄C layer in Si clearly appear very similar (figure 1(a)). Inset of figure 1(a) shows also nearly identical electron density profiles (EDP) obtained from best-fit hard XRR measurements. The fitted profile matches well with the measured curve by considering Si and B₄C as a single layer having total thickness of 333 ± 1 Å; and mass density ~90 ± 2% of bulk value of Si with rms roughness ~8 ± 0.5, 7.5 ± 0.5 and 9 ± 0.5 Å; for samples S1, S2 and S3, respectively. W layer thickness is 10.5 ± 0.5 Å with mass density ~92 ± 2% of bulk value having rms roughness ~6 ± 0.5 Å for all samples. The rms roughness of the substrates is ~4.5 ± 0.5 Å. Thus, conventional XRR is not sensitive to Si/B₄C interface having low EDC, Δρ/ρ = 0.05%, and to compositional changes in the film, due to low contrast and lack of element-specificity.

Sensitivity of resonant reflectivity to low contrast interface. Sensitivity of resonant reflectivity to low contrast Si/B₄C interface is demonstrated by performing repeated measurements at a selected energy of 191.4 eV (B K-edge of B₄C) (figure 2(b)). Figure 2(a) illustrates schematic diagram of three deposited samples S1, S2 and S3 with different spatial positions of B₄C layer. To understand the observed scattered profiles for chemically selective atomic distribution analysis, the measured atomic scattering factor (ASF) of B, B₂C and B₂O₃ near boron K-edge are shown in figure 3. At this specified energy of 191.4 eV, ASF of B₂C has a strong variation (figure 3). The strong modulations in reflected spectra (figure 2(b)) is due to major reflection contribution from Si/B₄C interface apart from contributions from other interfaces. Thus the measured profiles of three samples are significantly different, as the spatial position of B₂C layer changes in Si film. The origin of the long period oscillations in the reflectivity curve for S2 is related to the strong optical contrast at Si/B₄C where B₂C is sandwich between two Si layers resulting smaller individual Si thickness. Two vertical dotted lines mark how the period of oscillations gets modulated as position of the B₂C layer varies in Si film. This provides an experimental evidence for sensitivity of R-SoXR to the spatial variation of a low contrast interface. The results demonstrated here with Δρ/ρ = 0.05% as an example, has two orders of magnitude better EDC sensitivity compared to conventional hard XRR.

Spectroscopic like information using resonant reflectivity. In ion beam sputter deposited B₄C films, there may be a partial decomposition of B₂C to elementary boron (B). The elementary B on the surface is likely to react with oxygen when it is exposed to ambient conditions. The question arises whether there is a chemical change in the B₂C layers, and if so, to quantify it and to determine the elemental distribution from the surface down to a depth of ~300 Å.

Figure 1 | (a) Overlap of measured hard XRR of three samples (S1, S2 and S3) upto q₀ = 0.23. (b) Measured along with fitted XRR profile (vertically shifted). Inset shows EDP obtained from best-fit hard XRR results.

Figure 2 | (a) Schematic diagram of three fabricated samples with varying spatial positions of B₄C layer. (b) Measured R-SoXR profiles at a selected energy of 191.4 eV (B K-edge of B₂C).
To obtain spectroscopic like information of whether chemical changes exist in the B₄C layer or not, R-SoXR measurements are performed at selected energies near the respective absorption edge of boron and it’s all the possible compounds. Figure 4(a) demonstrates experimental evidence of the presence of chemical changes in sample S1. The measurements are performed at B K-edge of both elementary B (~189.5 eV) and B₂O₃ (~194.1 eV). Near B edge, three energies of 188, 189 and 189.8 are chosen. At these energies the ASF undergoes strong variation for boron but not for B₂O₃ (figure 3). If the film contains elementary B within penetration depth of x-ray (for e.g., at 189.8 eV, penetration depth in B is ~500 Å), it will produce a strong modulation in reflected spectra as incident energy is varied in these range. However, the measured reflected spectra are clearly appear very similar near B K-edge of elementary B (figure 4(a)). This observation corroborates no elementary B is present in sample S1. The upper limit of elementary boron in sample S1 is ~3% consistent with the measurement. Similarly, to confirm the presence of B₂O₃ in sample S1, R-SoXR measurements are performed at three selected energies of 193.7, 194 and 194.3 eV across the strong B K-absorption edge of B₂O₃. At these energies the ASF of B₂O₃ undergoes strong variation but elementary boron exhibits nearly a flat optical response (figure 3). The scattering strength of B₂O₃, $(f_{NR,B2O3} + f_{R,B2O3}(E))^2 + \left(f_{R,B2O3}(E)\right)^2$, at energies 193.7, 194 and 194.3 eV are ~1400, 2940 and 2079, respectively which are more than three orders of magnitude higher than that of away from absorption edge (for e.g., 0.4 at 185 eV). Thus, near the edge, B₂O₃ provides enhanced and tunable scattering. In figure 4(a), near B K-edge of B₂O₃, as the energy changes from 193.7 to 194.3 eV, the measured R-SoXR curves undergo strong variation with significant change in the amplitude as well as shape of the oscillations. This corroborates presence of B₂O₃ in sample S1. These experimental results provide evidence of the chemical changes in B₄C layer which may be due to decomposition of some of B₄C during deposition. In sample S1, all the decomposed B atoms in the top B₄C layer are fully oxidized.

**Chemically selective quantitative atomic profile.** To quantify atomic percent of B₂O₃ and it’s spatial distribution in B₄C layer of sample S1, R-SoXR measured data along with fitted profiles with different models are shown in figure 4(b). The measured data are fitted by slicing B₄C layer with different thicknesses and atomic compositions to account spatial variation of at. % of B₂O₃ within B₄C layer. However, the best-fit data matches well with the experimental data with uniform distribution model. The layer thickness and roughness obtained by simultaneous fitting measured data at different selected energies near B K-edge of B₂O₃ are kept constant. The optimized value for thickness (roughness) of Si and B₄C layers are 302 Å (9 Å) and 31 Å (8 Å), respectively. Figure 4(b) shows the variation of fitted profiles with the measured R-SoXR curve (at energy 194 eV) when the content of at. % of B₂O₃ in B₄C layer is varied. As at. % of B₂O₃ is varied from 0 to 40%, the reflected profile undergoes strong modulation producing changes in both the amplitude and shape of the oscillations envelope. Here, it is mentioned that while structural parameters are linked to the periods of the oscillations in the reflected profile, parameters of the atomic composition of the resonating atom/compound are closely related to the amplitudes and shape of the oscillations envelope. Even by mixing 5% of B₂O₃, brings significant change in optical properties of the B₄C layer (e.g., $\delta$ changes from $-4.53 \times 10^{-4}$ to $-8.33 \times 10^{-4}$ and $\beta$ changes from $2.62 \times 10^{-4}$ to $3.41 \times 10^{-4}$) at 194 eV, which brings significant changes in reflected spectra. The scattering contrast at interface, $(\Delta \delta)^2 + (\Delta \beta)^2$, which is proportional to scattering intensity undergoes significant and tunable enhancement. In figure 4 (b), the fitted profile with 20 at. % of B₂O₃ in top B₄C layer is well matches the measured curve. The sharp and strong resonance effect provides more accuracy. The result clearly reveals resonant reflectivity is a highly sensitive technique to quantify atomic composition within a few at. % of precision.

The effective EDP (bottom panel of figure 5) is obtained from the best-fit R-SoXR curve (top panel of figure 5) at three different selected energies. The EDP undergoes gradual variation at the
interfaces and is sensitive to Si/B4C interface. The EDP profiles clearly show that the position of B4C layer is at top of Si in sample S1. The EDP of B4C layer containing B2O3 undergoes significant change as the energy is tuned near B K-edge of B2O3. A schematic diagram representing model of vertical atomic composition distribution in different layers obtained from best-fit R-SoXR results is shown in right hand side of figure 5. The best-fit results of sample S1 are: thickness (roughness) of W, Si and B4C layers as 10.5 ± 0.5 Å (6 ± 0.5 Å), 302 ± 1 Å (9 ± 0.5 Å) and 31 ± 0.5 Å (8 ± 0.5 Å), respectively. The best-fit results also reveal that the top B4C layer is composed of ~80 ± 3% of B4C and ~20 ± 3% of B2O3.

Similar to quantitative determination of atomic profile along with microstructure for sample S1, those of samples S2 and S3 have been also determined. The procedure for data analysis for samples S2 and S3 is similar to that of S1. In order to find spectroscopic like information of whether B2O3 is present in the samples S2 and S3 or not, R-SoXR measurements are performed across the very strong and sharp B K-absorption edge of B2O3 (figure 6). However, the measured R-SoXR profiles are nearly identical in nature at three selected energies of 193.7, 194 and 194.3 eV for both S2 and S3. R-SoXR measured data are consistent with repeating the measurements three times. This confirms B2O3 is not present in samples S2 and S3. The upper limit of B2O3 in sample S2 and S3 is ~3% consistent with measurement.

In conclusion, we precisely measured chemically and spatially resolved atomic distribution profile with high resolution along with microstructure of the low contrast buried interfaces critical for nano-scaled layered structure devices. In prospective, methodology introduced here can be readily generalized to other complex multi-component interfaces. Structures up to several tens of nanometer thickness relevant to many scientific and technological problems can be studied. Such quantitative precise measurements help to understand properties of layered structures associated with chemically resolved interface map.
Figure 7 | Measured R-SoXR curves along with best-fit profiles of Sample S2 at selected energies near B K-edge of elementary B.

Methods

All the thin film samples are fabricated using ion beam sputtering system with base pressure of \( \sim 2 \times 10^{-9} \) mbar. R-SoXR measurements are carried out in the s-polarized geometry using reflectometry beamline on Indus-1 synchrotron \(^{39}\). R-SoXR data are fitted using Parratt formalism \(^{40}\). R-SoXR data analysis requires a precise value of \( S^2 \) at selected energies near B K-edge of elementary B.

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M.N. took part in conceiving the idea and performed experiments; M.N., G.S.L. and P.C.P. discussed the results; M.N. wrote the manuscript; All authors reviewed the manuscript.

Additional information
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Corrigendum: Determining Chemically and Spatially Resolved Atomic Profile of Low Contrast Interface Structure with High Resolution

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It was brought to the authors’ attention that the original paper contains the following errors. (i) We reported a 0.05% electron density contrast between silicon and boron carbide. There was a calculation error in computing this number and the correct contrast is 0.5%. This is one order of magnitude lower than what can be studied using hard x-ray reflectivity. Therefore, with this revised electron density contrast value, the proposed methodology is still valid. (ii) Numerical errors were made during the conversion of the measured angular reflectivity to qz (4π sinθ/λ). To revalidate the proposed methodology, we have performed fresh measurements on similar new samples. The fresh soft x-ray resonant reflectivity measurements were done using the Optics Beamline at the BESSY storage ring which has a better energy resolution (E/ΔE ≅ 670), smaller vertical angular divergence (0.5 mrad), larger photon flux (~1.4 × 10^10) and accessible q-space compared to the measurements reported in the original paper using the Indus -1 reflectivity beamline. The results are presented below and the methodology and the conclusion reported in the original paper still stand.

Hard x-ray reflectivity. Thin film samples are fabricated with varying position of B4C layer (40 Å) in Si thin film of thickness 300 Å. The samples are fabricated using electron beam evaporation. Elementary boron is incorporated into B4C layer by co-deposition. B4C is at top, middle and bottom of Si layer for sample 1 (S1), sample 2 (S2) and sample 3 (S3), respectively. In all samples, a W layer of thickness 10 Å is deposited just above the Si substrate to provide an optical contrast between substrate and the film. Prior to R-SoXR measurements, hard XRR measurements are done using Cu Kα source. Hard XRR profile of all three samples are measured and fitted up to qz = 0.42 Å⁻¹ (theta = 3 degree). However, hard XRR profile are plotted up to qz = 0.22 Å⁻¹ (theta = 1.545 degree) [Figure 1(a,b)]. Measured profiles of three samples with varying position of B4C layer in Si clearly appear very similar [Figure 1(a)]. Inset of Figure 1(a) shows nearly identical electron density profiles (EDP) obtained from best-fit results of XRR of S1, S2 and S3 [Figure 1(b)]. The fitted profile matches the measured curve by considering Si and B4C as a single layer. The total thickness of (Si + B4C) is 350 ± 1, 352 ± 1 and 353 ± 1 Å; and mass density is about 95 ± 2% of bulk value of Si with rms roughness = 7.5 ± 0.5, 6.5 ± 0.5 and 7 ± 0.5 Å; for samples S1, S2 and S3, respectively. W layer thickness is ~10 Å having rms roughness = 3.5 ± 0.5, 4 ± 0.5 and 4.5 ± 0.5 Å; for samples S1, S2 and S3, respectively. The rms roughness of the substrates is 4.5 ± 0.5 Å. A silicon oxide layer of thickness ~15.5 Å is considered above the silicon substrate. Thus, conventional XRR is not sensitive to Si/B4C interface having low electron density contrast (EDC), Δρ/ρ = 0.5%, and to compositional variation in the film, due to low contrast and lack of element-specificity.

Sensitivity of resonant reflectivity to low contrast interface. Sensitivity of resonant reflectivity to low contrast Si/B4C interface is demonstrated by performing measurements at a selected energy of 191.4 eV (B K-edge of B4C) [Figure 2(b)]. Soft x-ray reflectivity measurements are carried out in the s-polarization geometry using the Optics Beamline at the BESSY-II storage ring. The measurements were done with a better energy resolution, photon flux, accessible q-space and lower angular divergence than the measurements presented in the original paper. For the soft x-ray measurements, the data are collected up to theta = 89.2 degree. The reflectometer used was specially designed for measurements in near-normal incidence geometry. A GaAsP-photodiode
of 4 × 4 mm² acceptance area, surrounded by a support of 2 mm diameter at a distance of 310 mm from the sample was used. The minimum angle to normal is thus \( \tan(4/310) = 0.74° \), corresponding to 89.26° grazing angle. Figure 2(a) illustrates schematic of three deposited samples S1, S2 and S3 with different spatial positions of B₄C layer. To understand the observed scattered profiles for chemically selective atomic distribution analysis, the measured atomic scattering factor (ASF) of B, B₄C and B₂O₃ near boron K-edge are shown in Figure 3. At this specified energy of 191.4 eV, ASF of B₄C has a strong variation [Figure 3]. The strong modulations in reflected spectra [Figure 2(b)] is due to major reflection contribution from Si/B₄C interface apart from contributions from
other interfaces. Due to the contribution of the reflection from the Si/B₄C interface, the three different layer structures of three samples (S1, S2 and S3) exhibit significantly different measured profiles with a strong modulation, as the spatial position of B₄C layer changes in Si film. Two vertical dotted lines mark how the period of oscillations gets modulated as position of the B₄C layer varies in Si film. This provides an experimental evidence for sensitivity of resonant soft x-ray reflectivity (R-SoXR) to the spatial variation of a low contrast interface. The results demonstrated here with ($\Delta \rho/\rho = 0.5\%$) as an example, has one order of magnitude better EDC sensitivity compared to conventional hard XRR.

**Spectroscopic information using resonant reflectivity.** To determine the spectroscopic information using R-SoXR, elementary boron is introduced in B₄C layer by co-deposition using electron beam evaporation method. R-SoXR measurements are performed at selected energies near the respective absorption edges of boron and the compounds of boron. Figure 4(a) demonstrates experimental evidence of the presence of chemical changes in sample S1. The measurements are performed at B K-edge of both elementary B (~189.5 eV) and B₂O₃ (~194.1 eV). Near B K-edge of B₂O₃, four energies of 193.7, 194, 194.3 and 194.6 eV are chosen across the edge. At these energies the ASF undergoes strong variation for B₂O₃ but elementary boron exhibits nearly a flat optical response [Figure 3]. If the film contains B₂O₃ within penetration depth of x-ray, it will produce a strong modulation in reflected spectra as incident energy is varied in these ranges. The measured reflection spectra clearly appear very similar near B K-edge of B₂O₃ [Figure 4(a)]. This observation corroborates that no B₂O₃ is present in sample S1. Similarly, to confirm the presence of B in sample S1, R-SoXR measurements are performed across the B K-absorption edge of B at selected energies of 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190.7 and 191.4 eV [Figure 4(a)]. At these energies the ASF undergoes strong variation for boron but not for B₂O₃ [Figure 3]. Near the edge, B provides enhanced and tunable scattering. B₄C also exhibits variation of ASF with energy towards higher side with respect to elementary B. However, the magnitude of variation of ASF is more in B than B₄C due to stronger resonance enhancement of elementary B than in B₄C. The observed changes in the reflected profile at the selected energies across the B K-edge of elementary boron can be due to contribution of both kinds of atoms. At the lower energy side, the variation in the measured profiles is dominated by the contribution of elementary boron. The contribution of B₄C starts at higher energy along with elementary boron. This corroborates the presence of B in sample S1. In the original paper, the elementary boron was not detected in S1, as elementary boron is fully oxidized when...
exposed to ambient condition. Whereas in the fresh sample S1 (in corrigendum), the elementary boron in the top B₄C layer is not oxidized because of a contaminated carbon layer at the top. This contaminated carbon layer most likely prevents elementary boron in the top B₄C layer to be oxidized in fresh sample S1.

Chemically selective quantitative atomic profile. To quantify the atomic percentage of B and the spatial distribution in B₄C layer of sample S1, R-SoXR measured data along with fitted profiles with different models are shown in Figure 4(b). The measured data are fitted by slicing B₄C layer with different thicknesses and atomic compositions to account for a spatial variation of at. % of B within B₄C layer. However, the best-fit data matches well with the experimental data with uniform distribution model. The layer thickness and roughness obtained by simultaneous fitting measured data at different selected energies near B K-edge of B are kept constant. The optimized value for thickness (roughness) of Si and B₄C layers are 294 Å (5 Å) and 42 Å (13 Å), respectively. An intermixing layer at the Si/B₄C interface is considered with thickness 11.5 Å and roughness 7.5 Å. A carbon contaminated layer with thickness 11.5 Å and roughness 6.5 Å is also considered at the top of B₄C layer. Figure 4(b) shows the variation of fitted profiles with the measured R-SoXR curve (at energy 190.7 eV) when the content of atomic % of B in B₄C layer is varied. As B is varied from 0 to 40%, the reflected profile undergoes strong modulation producing changes in both the amplitude and shape of the oscillations envelope. Here, it is mentioned that while structural parameters are linked to the periods of the oscillations in the reflected profile, parameters of the atomic composition of the resonating atom/compound are closely related to the amplitudes and shape of the oscillations envelope. Resonant x-ray reflectivity has excellent chemical sensitivity to the resonating atom along with their spatial distribution. This high sensitivity determines the chemically and spatially resolved atomic profile within the nanometer range with a very tiny volume of contributing material. The significant change in reflectivity profile at around q = 0.05 Å⁻¹ by varying percent of elementary B in Figure 4(b) could be due to type of layer structure chosen in the thin film for the case study, the optical properties of the resonating atom and change in

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**Figure 4.** (a) Measured R-SoXR profiles of sample S1 at selected energies near B K-edge of both B and B₂O₃. (b) Measured R-SoXR profile of S1 at a selected energy of 190.7 eV (near B edge) along with fitted profiles with varying atomic percentage of B in the B₄C layer.
optical contrast by varying with atomic percent of B. The changes in the values of atomic scattering factor/optical constant (δ and β) by incorporation of different percent of B in B4C layer are as follows: At 190.7 eV, the values of δ and β of B4C layer with 0%, 10%, 15%, 20%, 25% and 40% of B are as follows: −3.17 × 10⁻³ and 2.29 × 10⁻³, −4.72 × 10⁻³ and 4.09 × 10⁻³, −5.49 × 10⁻³ and 4.99 × 10⁻³, −6.27 × 10⁻³ and 5.89 × 10⁻³, −7.04 × 10⁻³ and 6.78 × 10⁻³, and −9.36 × 10⁻³ and 9.48 × 10⁻³, respectively. Even by mixing 5% of B, brings significant changes in the optical properties of the B4C layer, which brings significant changes in the reflected spectra as well. The scattering contrast at interface, (∆δ)² + (∆β)², which is proportional to scattering intensity undergoes significant and tunable enhancement. In Figure 4(b), the fitted profile with 20 atomic % of B in the B4C layer matches the measured curve well. The result clearly reveals resonant reflectivity is a highly sensitive technique to quantify atomic composition within a few atomic % of the precision.

The effective EDP [bottom panel of Figure 5] is obtained from the best-fit R-SoXR curve [top panel of Figure 5] at three different selected energies. The EDP undergoes gradual variation at the interfaces and is sensitive to the Si/B4C interface. The EDP profiles clearly show that the position of B4C layer is at top of Si in sample S1. The EDP of B4C layer containing B undergoes significant changes as the energy is tuned near the B K-edge of boron due to the contribution of both types of B atoms (i.e. elementary B and B in B4C) at these energies. A schematic model of the vertical atomic composition distribution in different layers obtained from best-fit R-SoXR results is shown in the right hand side of Figure 5. The best-fit results of sample S1 are: average thickness (roughness) of W, Si, interlayer (mixed layer) (B4C-on-Si), B4C and the top contaminated carbon layers as 8 ± 1 Å (3.5 ± 0.5 Å), 294 ± 1 Å (5 ± 0.5 Å), 11.5 ± 1 Å (7.5 ± 0.5 Å), 42 ± 1 Å (13 ± 0.5 Å) and 11.5 ± 1 Å (6.5 ± 0.5 Å), respectively. The best-fit results also reveal that the B4C layer is composed of 80 ± 3% of B4C and 20 ± 3% of B. The interlayer (mixed layer) is composed of 80% of Si and 20% of (80% B4C + 20% B).

Similar to quantitative determination of the atomic profile along with microstructure for sample S1, those of samples S2 and S3 have been also determined. The procedure for data analysis for samples S2 and S3 is similar to that of S1. In order to find spectroscopic information of whether B2O3 is present in the samples S2 and S3 or not, R-SoXR measurements are performed across the very strong and sharp B K-absorption edge of B2O3 [Figure 6]. However, the measured R-SoXR profiles are nearly identical in nature at four selected energies of 193.7, 194, 194.3 and 194.6 eV for both S2 and S3. This confirms that B2O3 is not present in samples S2 and S3. The presence of elementary boron in sample S2 is confirmed using the procedure followed for sample S1 (discussed earlier) by performing R-SoXR measurements across the B K-edge of elementary boron at the selected energies of 185, 186, 187, 188, 190.7 and 191.4 eV. To quantify the atomic % of B and the spatial distribution in B4C layer of sample S2, R-SoXR measured data along with best-fit profiles at three selected energies of 188, 190.7 and 191.4 eV are shown in Figure 7. The best-fit results of sample S2 are: average thickness (roughness) of W, Si, interlayer layer I (B4C-on-Si), B4C, interlayer II (Si-on-B4C) and Si layers as 8 ± 1 Å (4 ± 0.5 Å), 138 ± 1 Å (8.5 ± 0.5 Å), 13 ± 1 Å (4 ± 0.5 Å), 41 ± 1 Å (6.5 ± 0.5 Å), 13 ± 1 Å (5.5 ± 0.5 Å) and 148 ± 1 Å (7 ± 0.5 Å), respectively. The best-fit results also reveal that the B4C layer is composed of 80 ± 3% of B4C and 20 ± 3% of B. The interlayer (mixed layer) is composed of 80% of Si and 20% of (80% B4C + 20% B).
Similarly for sample S3, the best-fit results of R-SoXR measurements near the B K-edge of elementary B are obtained as: average thickness (roughness) of W, B₄C, interlayer (Si-on-B₄C) and Si layers as 8 ± 1 Å (5 ± 0.5 Å), 41 ± 1 Å (5.5 ± 0.5 Å), 12 ± 1 Å (6 ± 0.5 Å) and 301 ± 1 Å (7.5 ± 0.5 Å), respectively. The best-fit results also reveal that the B₄C layer is composed of 80 ± 3% of B₄C and 20 ± 3% of B. The interlayer (mixed layer) is composed of 80% of Si and 20% of (80% B₄C + 20% B).

**Energy resolution of the measurements.** The energy resolution ($E/\Delta E$) for the energy scan to determine ($I'_0 + I'$) and $I''$ values is about 1000 at 200 eV. The energy resolution available for the angular scan, in the original paper is about 250 at 190 eV and in the corrigendum is ~670 at 190 eV with spectral impurity ~0.1%. In
the original paper, due to intensity reasons the energy resolution used for the angular scan was poorer than for the energy scan. This may lead to some uncertainty for the determination of the composition. In the original paper, to better understand the changes in reflectivity profile in the vicinity of the B K-edge of B₂O₃ (Figure 4(a) in the original paper) although the energy resolution was not optimum, we compare the changes in the value of \((f_0 + f')\) and \(f''\) in energy interval of 0.3 eV at selected energies, below the edge (away from the edge) and near the edge. For example, as per the energy scan, below the edge, \((f_0 + f')\) and \(f''\) of B₂O₃ are \(-1.71\) and \(0.488\) at 188.5 eV, and \(-1.74\) and \(0.476\) at 188.8 eV, respectively. Below the edge, the change in \((f_0 + f')\) and \(f''\) in energy interval of 0.3 eV is small. However, near the edge, \((f_0 + f')\) and \(f''\) of B₂O₃ are \(-30.46\) and \(13.89\) at 193.7 eV, \(-16.3\) and \(49.25\) at 194 eV, and \(-17.3\) and \(39.78\) at 194.3 eV, respectively. Taking into account the broadening of the resonance for the angular scan in the original paper, near the edge, \((f_0 + f')\) and \(f''\) of B₂O₃ are \(-27.77\) and 17.53 at 193.7 eV, \(-15.93\) and \(40.44\) at 194 eV, and \(-18.25\) and 38.91 at 194.3 eV, respectively. Near the edge, the change in \((f_0 + f')\) and \(f''\) in energy interval of 0.3 eV is significant. The variation of the atomic scattering factor of B₂O₃ near the B₂O₃ edge provides changes in the reflectivity profile as observed in the original paper.

A. Sokolov and F. Schäfers have been added to the author list because they contributed to the experiments reported in this Corrigendum. This has now been corrected in the HTML versions of the Article. The Author Contributions section in the HTML version now reads:

M.N. took part in conceiving the idea and performed experiments in the original paper; M.N., G.S.L. and P.C.P. discussed the results; M.N. wrote the manuscript; All authors reviewed the manuscript; In the corrigendum, A. S. And F. S. played a key role in the soft x-ray measurements and optimization of the beamlines for these measurements; All authors discussed the results in preparing the scientific contents of the manuscript; M.N. wrote the manuscript; All authors reviewed the manuscript.

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Erratum: Determining Chemically and Spatially Resolved Atomic Profile of Low Contrast Interface Structure with High Resolution

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