

SASC statement on the DTVP-A:2, Developmental Test of Visual Perception–Adolescent and Adult: Second Edition. September 2023

The DTVP3 [Developmental Test of Visual Perception, Third Edition (DTVP-3)] was added to (and DTVP2 removed from) the Pre-16 list in July 2022. Under the 2-year rule (post publication of a new edition) assessors should no longer be using DTVP2.

DTVP-A:2 was added to both lists in July 2022. This is not the DTVP2. Please see the DTVP-A:2 guidance on the SASC website. www.sasc.org.uk

Until recently, the DTVP-A:2 [Developmental Test of Visual Perception–Adolescent and Adult: Second Edition] has been little-used by specialist assessors in the UK. If assessors did use this test, it was most likely to have been because they wished to explore visual-motor perceptual and coordination issues or as a possible alternative to the Beery-Buktenica VMI.

The DTVP-A:2 itself claims to measure **visual perception**, i.e., what is involved in interpreting and organising the physical elements of a stimulus rather than the sensory or symbolic aspects. Perceptual tasks are thought to be potentially influenced by cognitive and language-related factors, even though the task may not involve a verbal response. The VME (visual motor efficiency) index is based on 2 tests which have little or no similarity to SDMT. The SASC guidance explores what particular information the DTVP-A:2 might contribute to an assessment as well as listing various factors that might impact upon performance.

Processing speed, whether verbal, visual, auditory, perceptual, information (etc) is a complex construct, often reliant on other skills or cognitive abilities. Reynolds calls the Visual-Motor Efficiency Index (VME) ‘a test of **simple** processing speed/perceptual speed.’ Therefore, the pertinent question for assessors using the DTVP-A:2 instead of the SDMT (a coding task) is, if this is a simple processing speed task, what makes it simple as opposed to more complex? How could it be compared to coding tests such as the SDMT? For example, while the Visual-Motor speed test in the DTVP-A:2 involves completing empty boxes with simple shapes, coding tests rely on the retention of multiple matching pairs, so involving **working memory** and **attention skills** as well as fine motor and sequencing skills.

The second important question is: How could the DTVP-A:2 test relate to the identification of a Specific Learning Difficulty? It is worth noting that in the original standardisation of the test, a small sample of individuals with learning disabilities (US terminology) were included in the normative sample but their mean performance on the test lay within the average range.

Our current advice is that if the DTVP-A:2 test is used, reporting it will depend on the **purpose of administering this test**. If chosen specifically to investigate visual perceptual and motor coordination difficulties it would be best described in the section covering additional diagnostic evidence.

If chosen to ***supplement information from other tests of processing speed***, it can be reported in the section on processing speed. However, assessors should be aware that the DTVP-A:2 test is not, in itself, a direct substitute for the SDMT. Assessors should be careful to describe what components of processing speed it does and does not capture and to administer other tests alongside it that capture additional processing skills.

Certain sub-tests were dropped from the original battery in the newer DTVP3. SASC recommends that assessors take a critical look at the sub-tests of the DTVP-A:2 or 3 before rushing to use them as straightforward substitutes for the SDMT or using them oversimplistically. They could be useful, but their use and interpretation need to be carefully considered. Some sub-tests may not be appropriate for use in a remote assessment. SASC recommends the need for training to understand what the tests can reveal.

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