Key Note

# Chapter 14: Attention and awareness

## **Key note 14D: Distinguishing between attention and (conscious) awareness in blindsight**

Lack of awareness in blindsight is not the same as lack of attention. Kentridge et al. (1999) showed that Patient GY was faster and more accurate at detecting a visual target presented to his blind field if the position of the target was cued by an arrow in his sighted field. However, he was no more likely to report awareness of the visual target. In subsequent work using a Posner cuing paradigm, the speed at which GY made orientation discrimination judgements to blind field targets was facilitated by valid cues, but the cues did not result in greater accuracy (Kentridge et al., 2004). These studies reinforce the view that attention and (conscious) awareness should not be conflated and that successful attentional performance does not always rely on processing within primary visual areas (Danckert et al., 2021).

Danckert J, Striemer C, Rossetti Y (2021) Blindsight. In *Handbook of clinical neurology* Vol. 178 (eds: JJS Barton, A Leff). Amsterdam: Elsevier, pp. 297–310.

Kentridge RW, Heywood CA, Weiskrantz L (1999) Attention without awareness in blindsight. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London B* 266: 1805–1811.

Kentridge RW, Heywood CA, Weiskrantz L (2004) Spatial attention speeds discrimination without awareness. *Neuropsychologia* 42(6): 831–835.