

## Background

Overall Positions (OPs)<sup>1</sup> provide a statewide rank order of students from 1 (highest) to 25 (lowest) based on students' achievement in Authority subjects studied for the Queensland Senior Certificate. A student's OP shows how well that student has performed in their senior studies when compared with the performances of all other OP-eligible students in Queensland.

OPs are used in the selection of students for tertiary education courses. They are used by tertiary institutions as one basis for selecting applicants for a course when there are more eligible applicants than quota places for that course.

Students are eligible for an OP at the end of Year 12 provided they have completed a minimum of 20 semester units of Authority subjects, including at least three subjects for all four semesters, and sat for the QCS Test in that year.

Field Positions (FPs) are calculated only for OP-eligible students. A field is an area of study that emphasises particular knowledge and skills. An FP is a rank order from 1 (highest) to 10 (lowest) in that area of study. There are five fields with about 20% of students qualifying for all 5 FPs and most students qualifying for 3 or 4 fields.

## OP distribution

Figure 1 represents the distribution of the 26 924 Queensland students<sup>2</sup> who received an OP in 1993 and Table 1 includes for each band: the number, the cumulative number (from 1 up to that band), the percentage and the cumulative percentage of students.

<sup>1</sup>In 1992 OPs and FPs replaced the Tertiary Entrance (TE) Score. All data in this document relate to OPs and FPs.

<sup>2</sup> Visa students are not included unless indicated. A visa student is a student who is not a citizen or permanent resident of Australia. Visa students are not generally regarded as OP/FP-eligible. They may qualify for an equivalent-OP/FP.

Figure 1: 1993 OP distribution

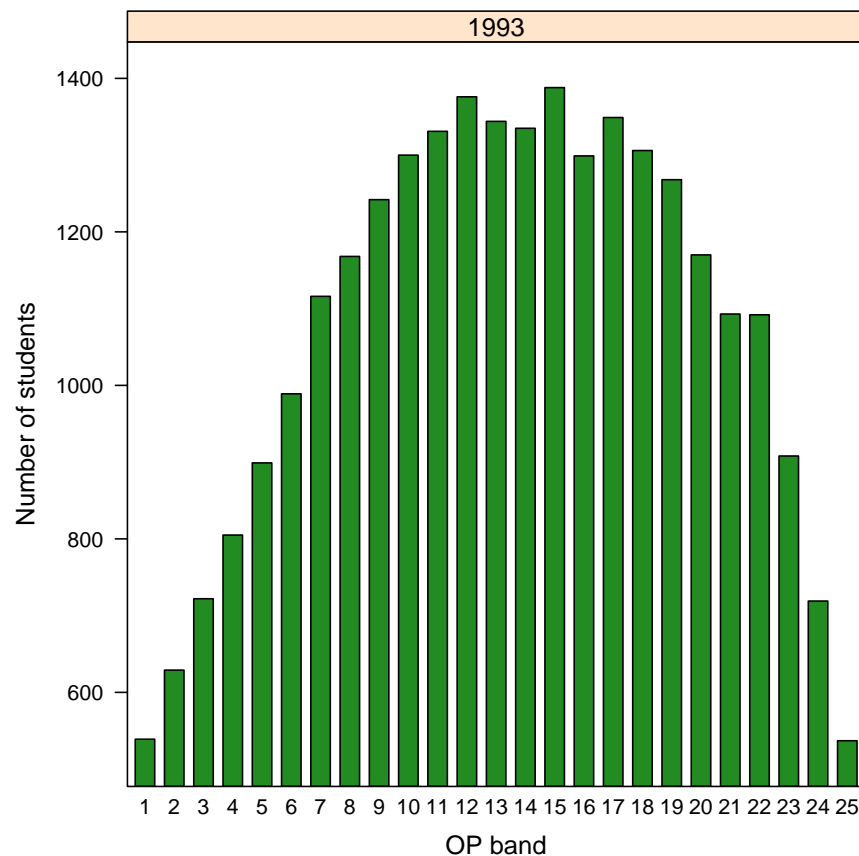


Table 1: 1993 OP distribution

OP band	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Number	539	629	722	805	899	989	1116	1168	1242	1300	1331	1376	1344	1335	1388	1299	1349	1306	1268	1170	1093	1092	908	719	537
Cumulative	539	1168	1890	2695	3594	4583	5699	6867	8109	9409	10740	12116	13460	14795	16183	17482	18831	20137	21405	22575	23668	24760	25668	26387	26924
Per cent	2.00	2.34	2.68	2.99	3.34	3.67	4.15	4.34	4.61	4.83	4.94	5.11	4.99	4.96	5.16	4.82	5.01	4.85	4.71	4.35	4.06	4.06	3.37	2.67	1.99
Cumulative	2.00	4.34	7.02	10.01	13.35	17.02	21.17	25.51	30.12	34.95	39.89	45.00	49.99	54.95	60.11	64.93	69.94	74.79	79.50	83.85	87.91	91.96	95.34	98.01	100.00

Figure 2: 1993 OP distribution by gender

## Comparing OPs across years

*The Review of Tertiary Entrance in Queensland 1990*<sup>3</sup> recommended “basic year-to-year comparability” of OPs. Consequently, a numerical process is used to equate students’ performances across years. This means that there is no fixed quota of students in each band and that year-to-year differences in the OP-eligible cohort may produce variations in the proportions of students in each band.<sup>4</sup>

## OP distribution by gender

Figure 2 and Table 2 show the distribution of OPs by gender. Care is needed when making comparisons between the numbers of females and males in each band. The participation rates are different between the genders as are the proportions of males and females choosing to be OP-eligible — Figure 3 shows a percentage distribution within each gender.

There are more females in each OP band except 1 and 25. In the higher OP bands, there are many more females than males whilst the differences are quite small in bands 19–24.

<sup>3</sup> Report submitted to the Minister for Education by the Tertiary Entrance Reviewer Professor Nancy Viviani.

<sup>4</sup> In 2006 less than one per cent of OP-eligible students received an OP 25 — this is less than half of the percentage of students receiving an OP 25 in 1992. In the same period, the percentage of OP-eligible students receiving an OP 1 has increased from 2.0 to 2.46 per cent.

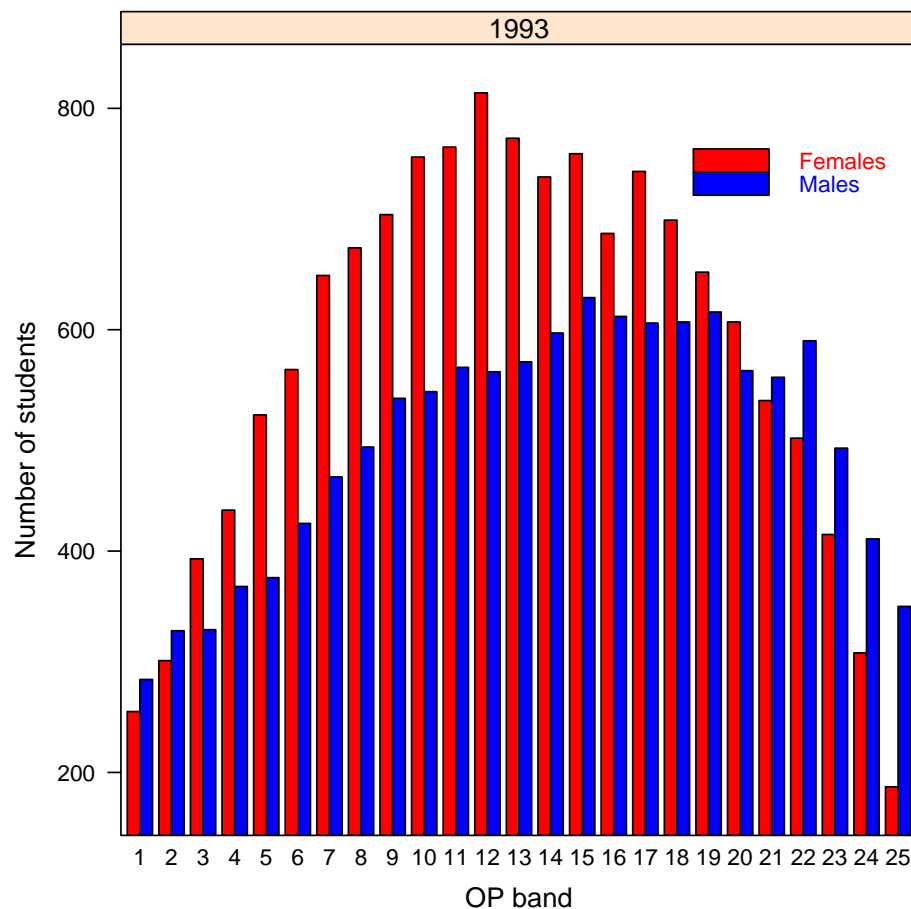


Table 2: 1993 OP distribution

OP band	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	Total
All students	539	629	722	805	899	989	1116	1168	1242	1300	1331	1376	1344	1335	1388	1299	1349	1306	1268	1170	1093	1092	908	719	537	26924
Females	255	301	393	437	523	564	649	674	704	756	765	814	773	738	759	687	743	699	652	607	536	502	415	308	187	14441
Males	284	328	329	368	376	425	467	494	538	544	566	562	571	597	629	612	606	607	616	563	557	590	493	411	350	12483

Figure 3: 1993 OP percentage distribution within gender

## Calculation of OPs

OPs are calculated each year by the Queensland Studies Authority using student assessment information from Queensland schools. The process for determining OPs is explained further in *Calculating OPs: The Basic Principles*, available at <http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/publications/te/opsbasics.pdf>.

## OP percentage distribution within gender

Figure 3 and Table 3 show the percentage distribution of OPs within each gender.<sup>5</sup> Since, more females than males are eligible for an OP, it is useful to express the figures as percentages of the total number of females or males.

In most years, except for OPs 1 and 2, the higher OP bands contain a greater percentage of the female OP-eligible students. The lower bands, have a greater percentage of males.

<sup>5</sup> The proportion of females in each OP band expressed as a percentage of the total number of females, and the same for males.

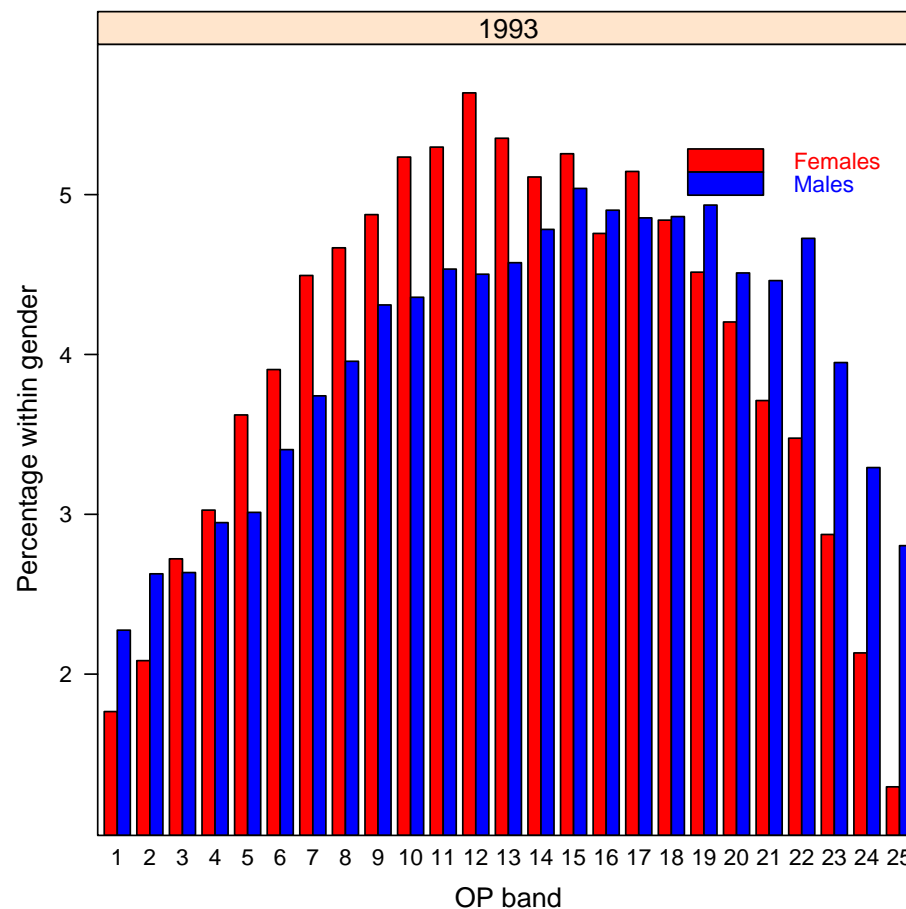


Table 3: 1993 OP percentage distribution within gender

OP band	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
All students %	2.00	2.34	2.68	2.99	3.34	3.67	4.15	4.34	4.61	4.83	4.94	5.11	4.99	4.96	5.16	4.82	5.01	4.85	4.71	4.35	4.06	4.06	3.37	2.67	1.99
Female %	1.77	2.08	2.72	3.03	3.62	3.91	4.49	4.67	4.88	5.24	5.30	5.64	5.35	5.11	5.26	4.76	5.15	4.84	4.51	4.20	3.71	3.48	2.87	2.13	1.29
Male %	2.28	2.63	2.64	2.95	3.01	3.40	3.74	3.96	4.31	4.36	4.53	4.50	4.57	4.78	5.04	4.90	4.85	4.86	4.93	4.51	4.46	4.73	3.95	3.29	2.80

## FP distributions

Figure 4 shows the FP distributions for 1993. In up to five fields, FPs show a student's rank on a 1 to 10 scale (with 1 being the highest) based on their achievement in Authority subjects. These fields identify areas of study that emphasise particular knowledge and skills. FPs are determined only for OP-eligible students and students only receive FPs in the fields for which they are eligible, according to the Authority Subjects they studied.

The five fields are:

- Field A** — extended written expression involving complex analysis and synthesis of ideas
- Field B** — short written communication involving reading, comprehension and expression in English or a foreign language
- Field C** — basic numeracy involving simple calculations, and graphical and tabular interpretation
- Field D** — solving complex problems involving mathematical symbols and abstractions
- Field E** — substantial practical performance involving physical or creative arts or expressive skills

Table 4: FP distributions

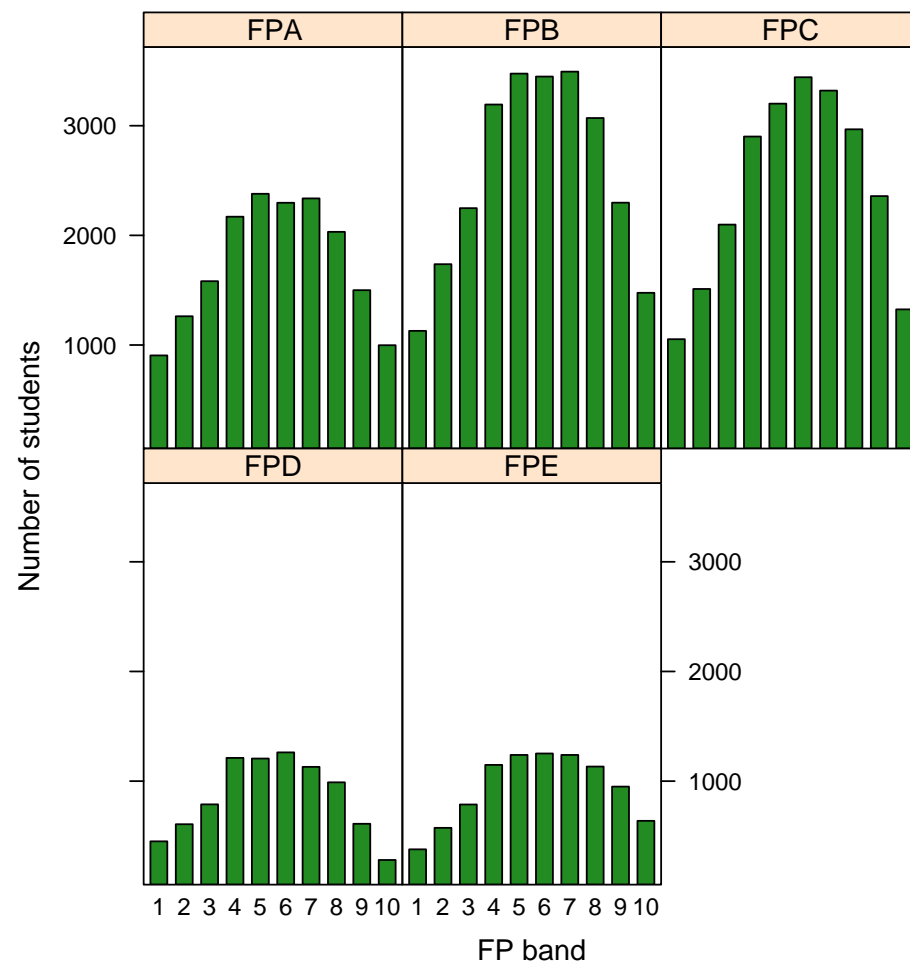
Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
A	905	1262	1582	2170	2379	2297	2337	2032	1500	998	17462
B	1129	1737	2248	3193	3475	3448	3493	3070	2298	1476	25567
C	1053	1511	2098	2901	3201	3442	3320	2967	2358	1325	24176
D	451	607	788	1212	1206	1262	1130	989	611	281	8537
E	378	574	787	1148	1239	1252	1239	1133	950	638	9338

## Subject Weights

While FPs are calculated using a similar process to OPs, Authority subjects are not weighted equally for the calculations of FPs. Field weights mean that different subjects contribute differently to the calculations for each field<sup>6</sup>. For example, English (5) is more heavily weighted than Maths B (1) when calculating its contribution to FP A. Table 5 lists all Authority subjects offered in 1993 and the weights for each field position.

<sup>6</sup> For the calculation of OPs, all subjects are weighted equally.

Figure 4: 1993 FP distribution



# 1993 State Distribution of Overall Positions (OPs) and Field Positions (FPs)

Table 5: Subject weights for calculating OPs and FPs

Id	Syllabus	OP	A	B	C	D	E
1	English	5	5	5	1		3
5	French	5	3	5	1		3
6	German	5	3	5	1		3
7	Indonesian	5	3	5	1		3
8	Italian	5	3	5	1		3
9	Japanese	5	3	5	1		3
10	Russian	5	3	5	1		3
11	Chinese	5	3	5	1		3
12	Vietnamese	5	3	5	1		3
14	Modern Greek	5	3	5	1		3
17	Latin	5	3	5	1		1
20	Ancient History	5	5	5	2		1
21	Modern History	5	5	5	2		1
24	Geography	5	4	5	4	2	2
25	Political Studies	5	4	5	3	1	1
27	Economics	5	4	5	5	2	
28	Study of Society	5	4	5	3	1	2
29	Legal Studies	5	4	5	2	1	2
30	Logic	5	4	4	3	3	
31	Mathematics I	5		1	5	5	
32	Mathematics II	5		1	5	5	
35	Mathematics in Society	5	1	2	5	4	
36	Mathematics A	5	2	3	5	4	
37	Mathematics B	5	2	2	5	5	

Id	Syllabus	OP	A	B	C	D	E
38	Mathematics C	5	2	2	5	5	
40	Chemistry	5	2	3	5	5	3
41	Physics	5	1	2	5	5	2
42	Biology	5	3	3	5	3	3
43	Earth Science	5	2	3	4	3	3
44	Multi-Strand Science	5	3	3	5	3	3
45	Marine Studies	5	2	3	4	2	4
50	Agriculture & Animal Production	5	2	3	4	2	3
60	Accounting	5	3	3	5	3	2
61	Secretarial Studies	5	2	3	3	1	4
71	Home Economics	5	3	3	3	1	4
76	Graphics	5	1	2	5	3	4
78	Technology Studies	5	1	3	4	2	4
80	Visual Art	5	3	3	1		5
81	Music	5	2	3	1	1	5
82	Speech & Drama	5	3	3	1		5
83	Theatre	5	3	3	1		5
84	Film & Television	5	3	3	1		5
85	Dance	5	2	3	1		5
86	Study of Religion	5	4	5	1		1
87	Information Processing & Technology	5	2	3	4	4	3
88	Drama	5	3	3	1		5
90	Health & Physical Education	5	2	3	3	1	5

## FP distributions by gender

Figure 5 shows the FPs and their distributions in the state for 1993 by gender.

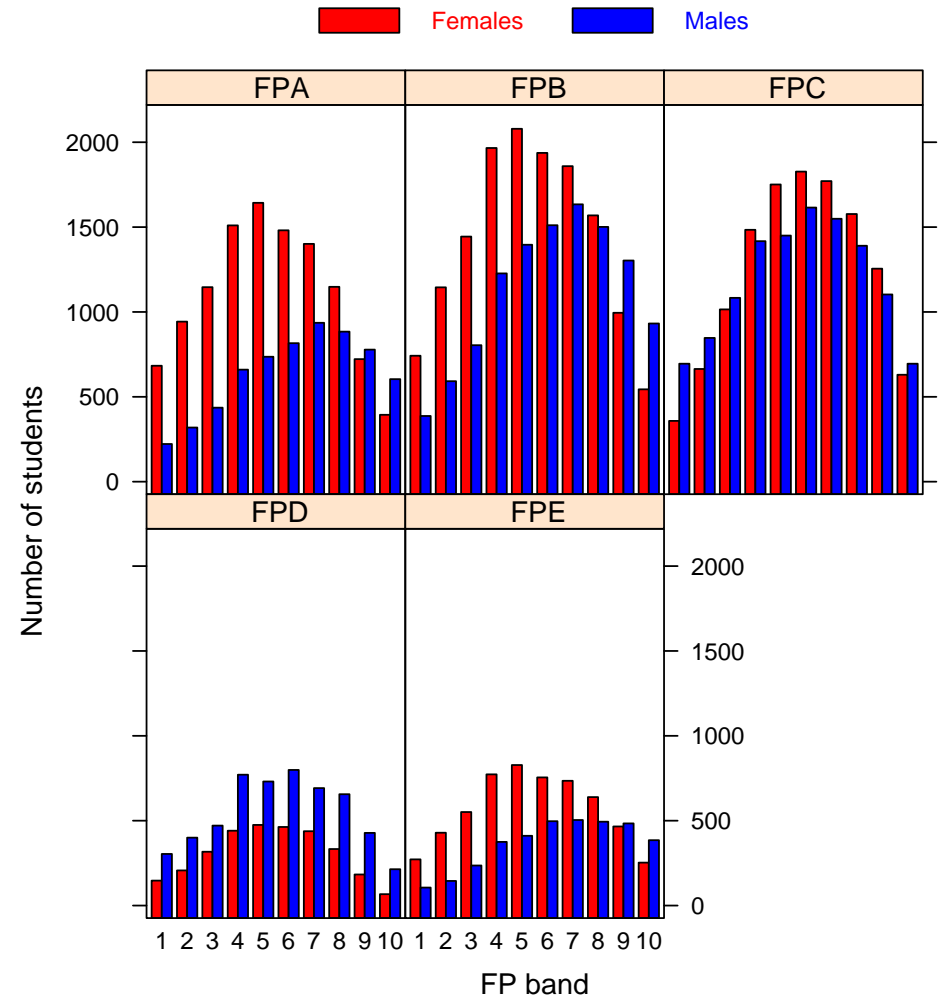
Table 6: Numbers of students eligible for each FP by gender

Gender	Field A	Field B	Field C	Field D	Field E
Female	11071	14280	12332	3071	5701
Male	6391	11287	11844	5466	3637

Table 7: Percentages of students per FP band, by gender

Field	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A	All students	5.2	7.2	9.1	12.4	13.6	13.2	13.4	11.6	8.6	5.7
	Female	6.2	8.5	10.4	13.6	14.8	13.4	12.7	10.4	6.5	3.6
	Male	3.5	5.0	6.8	10.3	11.5	12.8	14.7	13.8	12.2	9.5
B	All students	4.4	6.8	8.8	12.5	13.6	13.5	13.7	12.0	9.0	5.8
	Female	5.2	8.0	10.1	13.8	14.6	13.6	13.0	11.0	7.0	3.8
	Male	3.4	5.2	7.1	10.9	12.4	13.4	14.5	13.3	11.5	8.3
C	All students	4.4	6.3	8.7	12.0	13.2	14.2	13.7	12.3	9.8	5.5
	Female	2.9	5.4	8.2	12.0	14.2	14.8	14.4	12.8	10.2	5.1
	Male	5.9	7.2	9.1	12.0	12.2	13.6	13.1	11.7	9.3	5.9
D	All students	5.3	7.1	9.2	14.2	14.1	14.8	13.2	11.6	7.2	3.3
	Female	4.8	6.7	10.3	14.4	15.5	15.1	14.3	10.8	6.0	2.2
	Male	5.6	7.3	8.6	14.1	13.4	14.6	12.7	12.0	7.8	3.9
E	All students	4.1	6.2	8.4	12.3	13.3	13.4	13.3	12.1	10.2	6.8
	Female	4.8	7.5	9.7	13.6	14.5	13.2	12.9	11.2	8.2	4.4
	Male	2.9	4.0	6.5	10.3	11.3	13.7	13.9	13.6	13.3	10.6

Figure 5: 1993 FP distribution by gender



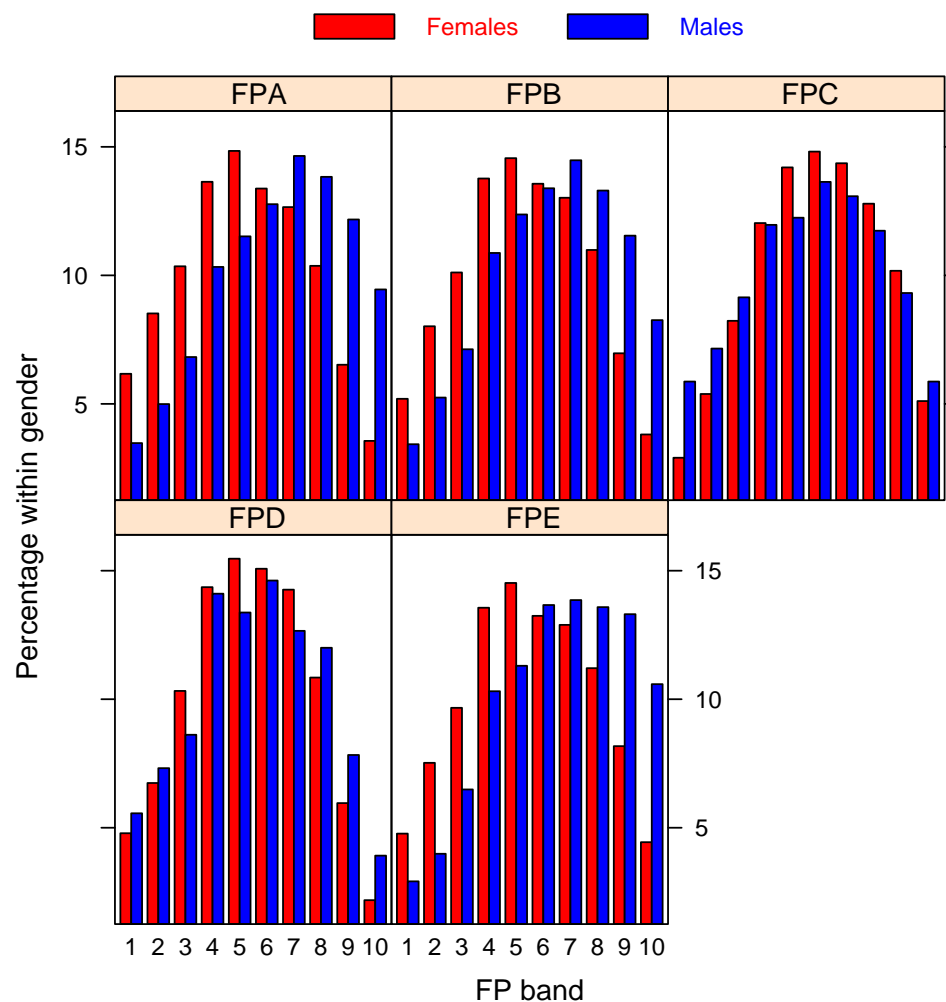
## FPs percentage distribution within gender

Figure 6 shows FPs and their distributions in the state for 1993 by gender. These show the number of boys that achieved each FP as a percentage of FP-eligible boys, and the same for girls. Table 8 shows the combinations of fields for which students were eligible in 1993.

Table 8: Numbers of students per FP combination

Sets of FPs	Students	Total	Per cent	
ABCDE	648	5 FPs	648	2.41
ABCD	2138			
ABCE	4570			
BCDE	986	4 FPs	7694	28.58
ABC	7914			
ABE	1188			
BCD	3633			
BCE	1370			
CDE	5	3 FPs	14110	52.41
AB	1004			
BC	1570			
BE	476			
CD	1127			
CE	86	2 FPs	4263	15.83
B	70			
C	129			
E	9	1 FP	208	0.77

Figure 6: 1993 FP distribution within gender



## Contact Us

For further information about this document contact: Analysis and Evaluation Unit, Queensland Studies Authority; Phone: (07) 3864 0256, Email: [analysis\\_evaluation@qsa.qld.edu.au](mailto:analysis_evaluation@qsa.qld.edu.au).