

Background

Overall Positions (OPs)¹ 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 25 442 Queensland students² who received an OP in 1997 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.

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

² 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: 1997 OP distribution

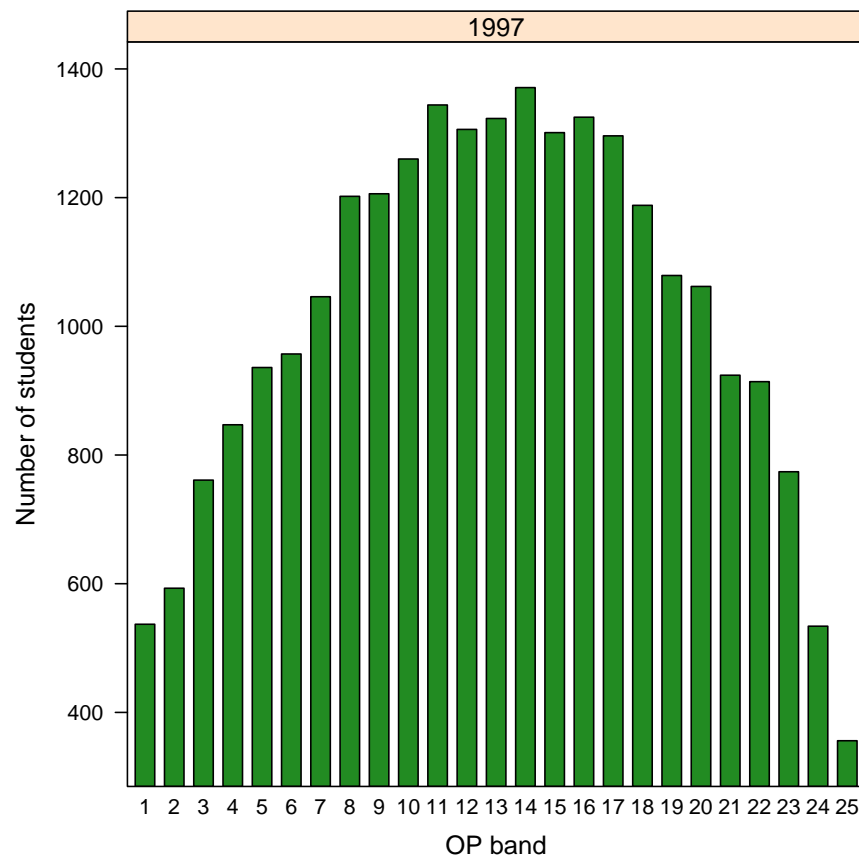


Table 1: 1997 OP distribution

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	537	593	761	847	936	957	1046	1202	1206	1260	1344	1306	1323	1371	1301	1325	1296	1188	1079	1062	924	914	774	534	356
Cumulative	537	1130	1891	2738	3674	4631	5677	6879	8085	9345	10689	11995	13318	14689	15990	17315	18611	19799	20878	21940	22864	23778	24552	25086	25442
Per cent	2.11	2.33	2.99	3.33	3.68	3.76	4.11	4.72	4.74	4.95	5.28	5.13	5.20	5.39	5.11	5.21	5.09	4.67	4.24	4.17	3.63	3.59	3.04	2.10	1.40
Cumulative	2.11	4.44	7.43	10.76	14.44	18.20	22.31	27.04	31.78	36.73	42.01	47.15	52.35	57.74	62.85	68.06	73.15	77.82	82.06	86.24	89.87	93.46	96.50	98.60	100.00

Figure 2: 1997 OP distribution by gender

Comparing OPs across years

*The Review of Tertiary Entrance in Queensland 1990*³ 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.⁴

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.

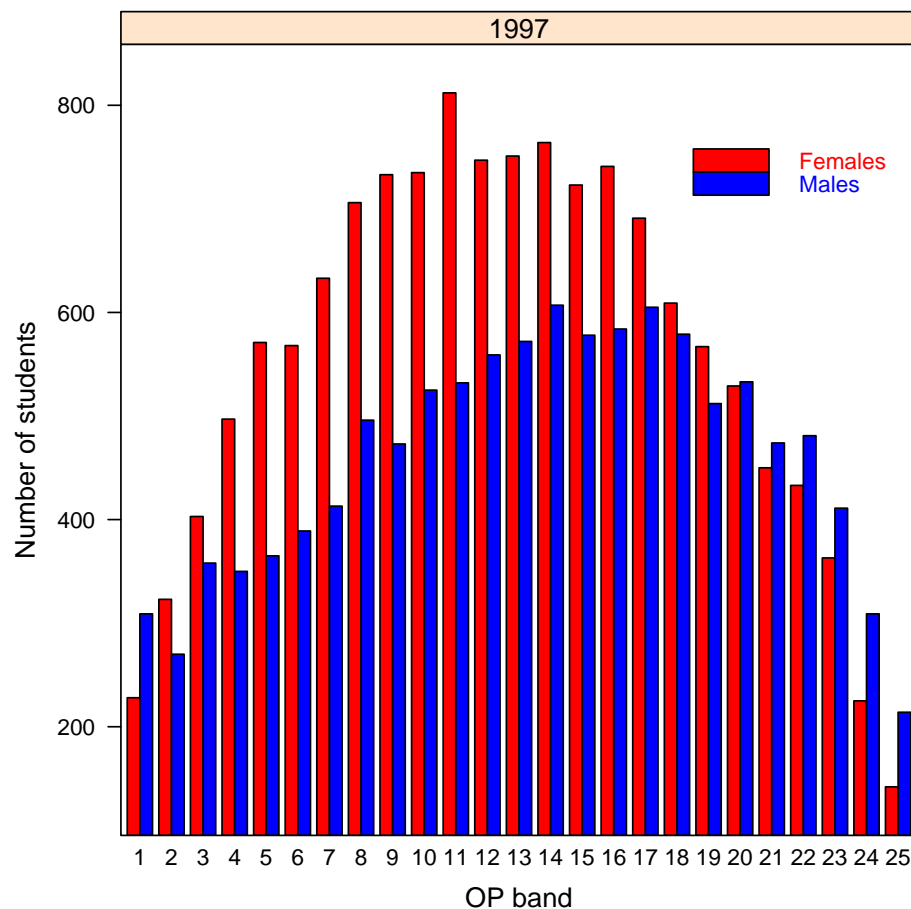


Table 2: 1997 OP distribution

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	537	593	761	847	936	957	1046	1202	1206	1260	1344	1306	1323	1371	1301	1325	1296	1188	1079	1062	924	914	774	534	356	25442
Females	228	323	403	497	571	568	633	706	733	735	812	747	751	764	723	741	691	609	567	529	450	433	363	225	142	13944
Males	309	270	358	350	365	389	413	496	473	525	532	559	572	607	578	584	605	579	512	533	474	481	411	309	214	11498

Figure 3: 1997 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.⁵ 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.

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

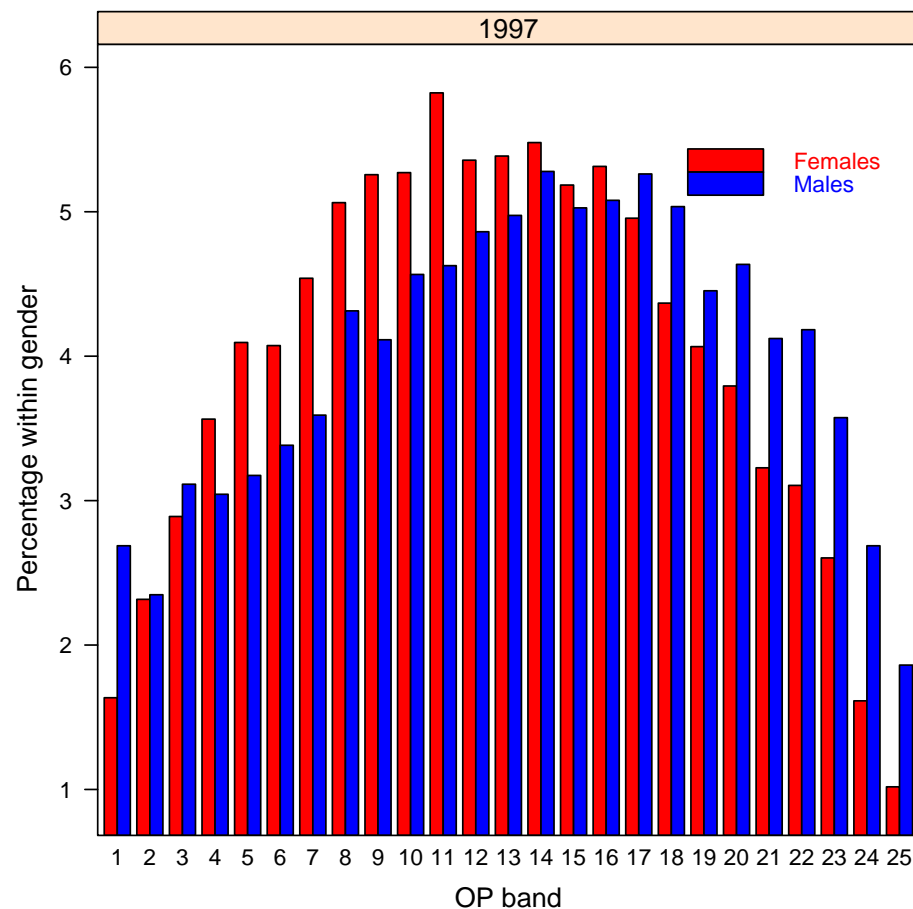


Table 3: 1997 OP percentage distribution within gender

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 %	2.11	2.33	2.99	3.33	3.68	3.76	4.11	4.72	4.74	4.95	5.28	5.13	5.20	5.39	5.11	5.21	5.09	4.67	4.24	4.17	3.63	3.59	3.04	2.10	1.40
Female %	1.64	2.32	2.89	3.56	4.09	4.07	4.54	5.06	5.26	5.27	5.82	5.36	5.39	5.48	5.19	5.31	4.96	4.37	4.07	3.79	3.23	3.11	2.60	1.61	1.02
Male %	2.69	2.35	3.11	3.04	3.17	3.38	3.59	4.31	4.11	4.57	4.63	4.86	4.97	5.28	5.03	5.08	5.26	5.04	4.45	4.64	4.12	4.18	3.57	2.69	1.86

FP distributions

Figure 4 shows the FP distributions for 1997. 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

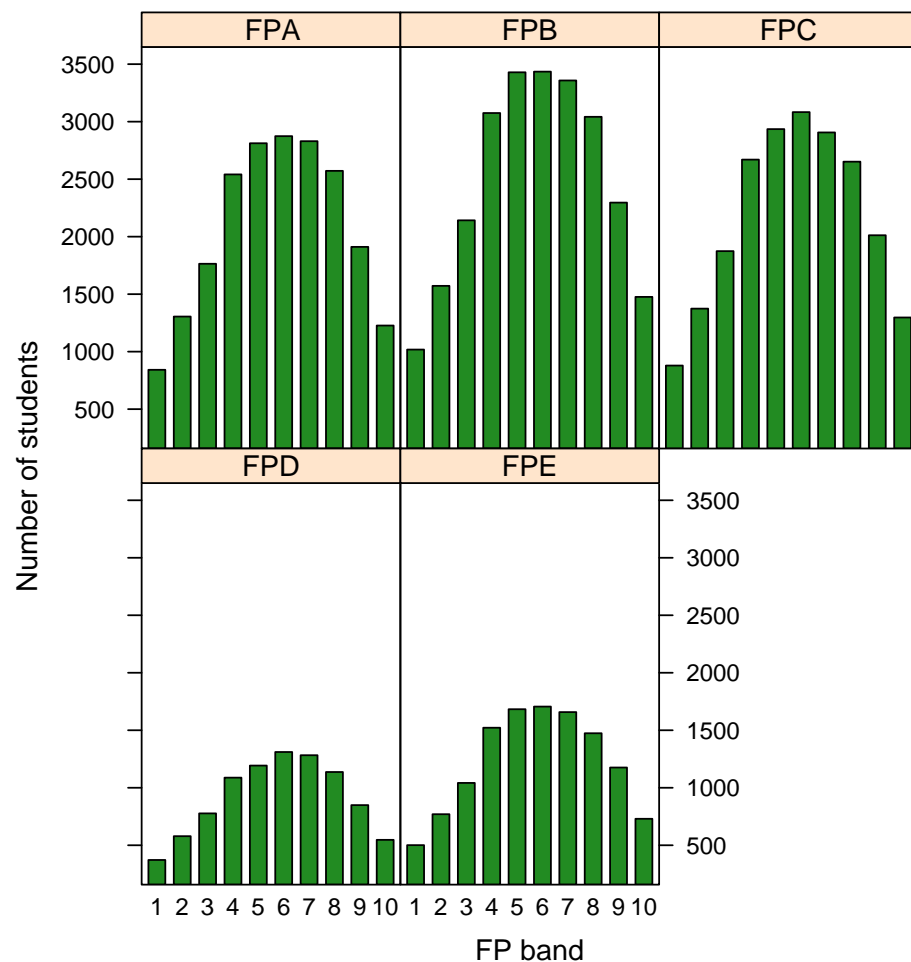
Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
A	842	1305	1764	2541	2812	2874	2830	2572	1911	1227	20678
B	1018	1572	2142	3075	3429	3435	3358	3042	2296	1476	24844
C	879	1374	1874	2670	2935	3083	2906	2652	2012	1297	21683
D	372	579	777	1088	1193	1311	1283	1137	849	547	9136
E	501	770	1042	1522	1683	1706	1658	1474	1176	730	12262

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 field⁶. 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 1997 and the weights for each field position.

⁶ For the calculation of OPs, all subjects are weighted equally.

Figure 4: 1997 FP distribution



1997 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		4
5	French	5	2	5	1		4
6	German	5	2	5	1		4
7	Indonesian	5	2	5	1		4
8	Italian	5	2	5	1		4
9	Japanese	5	2	5	1		4
10	Russian	5	2	5	1		4
11	Chinese	5	2	5	1		4
12	Vietnamese	5	2	5	1		4
14	Modern Greek	5	2	5	1		4
15	French Extension	5	3	5	1		4
16	German Extension	5	3	5	1		4
17	Latin	5	3	5	1		2
18	Spanish	5	2	5	1		4
20	Ancient History	5	5	5	2		1
21	Modern History	5	5	5	2		1
22	Futures	5	4	4	3	2	1
23	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies	5	4	4	2		2
24	Geography	5	4	4	4	2	2
25	Political Studies	5	5	5	3	1	2
27	Economics (1995 Trial-Pilot)	5	4	4	5	3	1
27	Economics (1992)	5	4	5	5	2	1
28	Study of Society	5	5	4	3	1	1
29	Legal Studies	5	4	5	2		2
30	Logic	5	4	4	4	4	
36	Mathematics A	5	1	2	5	5	
37	Mathematics B	5	1	1	5	5	
38	Mathematics C	5	1	1	5	5	
40	Chemistry	5	2	3	5	5	2
41	Physics	5	2	3	5	5	2
42	Biology	5	3	3	5	3	3

Id	Syllabus	OP	A	B	C	D	E
43	Earth Science	5	3	3	5	3	2
44	Multi-Strand Science	5	2	3	5	3	2
45	Marine Studies	5	3	3	5	3	4
51	Agricultural Science (1992)	5	3	3	5	3	3
51	Agricultural Science (1995 Trial-Pilot)	5	4	3	5	3	3
60	Accounting	5	3	3	5	4	2
61	Secretarial Studies	5	1	3	2	1	4
62	Business Organisation & Management	5	4	3	5	2	3
63	Business Communication & Technologies	5	3	3	5	2	4
67	Health Education	5	4	3	2	1	2
68	Physical Education	5	3	3	4	2	5
71	Home Economics	5	4	3	2	1	4
72	Hospitality Studies	5	3	3	3	1	4
74	Engineering Technology	5	3	3	5	4	3
76	Graphics	5	1	2	5	4	4
78	Technology Studies (1991)	5	3	3	5	3	4
78	Technology Studies (1995 Trial-Pilot)	5	3	3	5	3	4
80	Visual Art	5	4	3	1		5
81	Music	5	2	2	2	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	3	3	1		5
86	Study of Religion	5	4	5	2		2
87	Information Processing & Technology	5	3	3	5	4	3
88	Drama	5	4	3	1		5
89	Film & Television	5	4	3	1	1	5
90	Health & Physical Education	5	3	3	3	1	5
91	Music	5	3	3	2	2	5
92	Music Extension (Performance)	5	2	2	2	1	5

FP distributions by gender

Figure 5 shows the FPs and their distributions in the state for 1997 by gender.

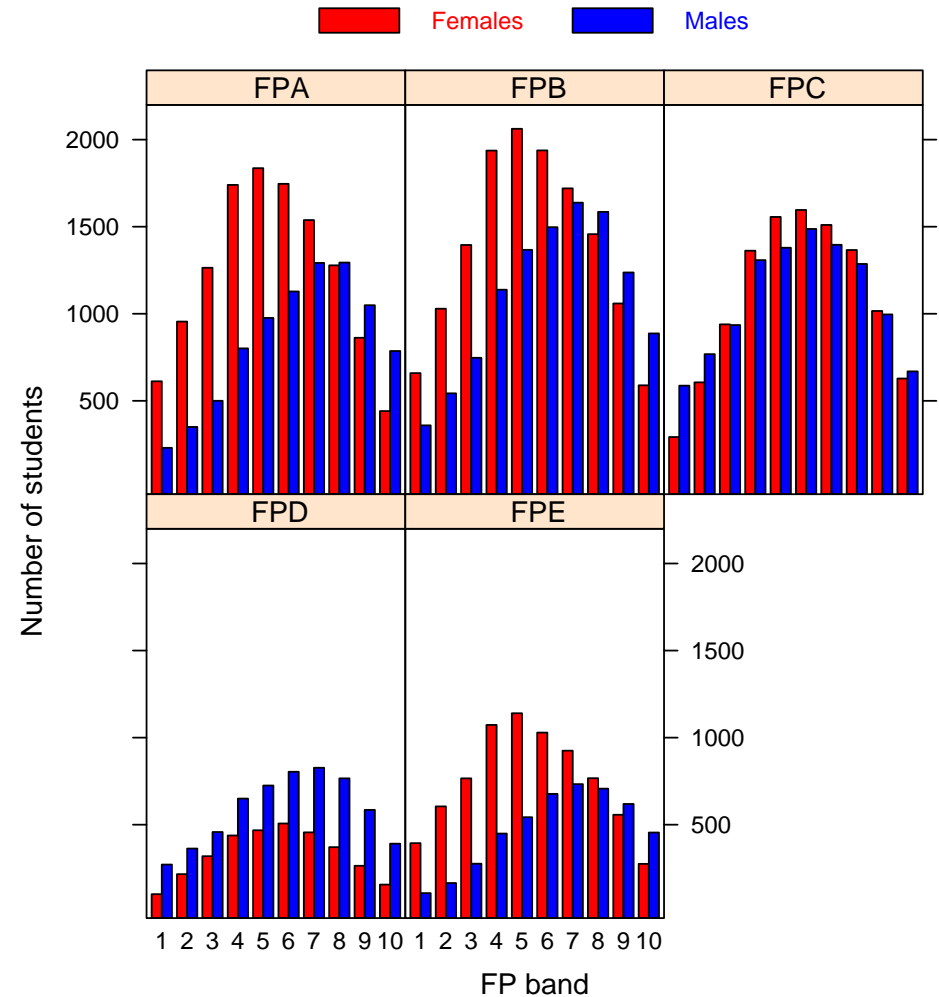
Table 6: Numbers of students eligible for each FP by gender

Gender	Field A	Field B	Field C	Field D	Field E
Female	12272	13846	10872	3296	7531
Male	8406	10998	10811	5840	4731

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	4.1	6.3	8.5	12.3	13.6	13.9	13.7	12.4	9.2	5.9
	Female	5.0	7.8	10.3	14.2	15.0	14.2	12.5	10.4	7.0	3.6
	Male	2.7	4.2	6.0	9.5	11.6	13.4	15.4	15.4	12.5	9.4
B	All students	4.1	6.3	8.6	12.4	13.8	13.8	13.5	12.2	9.2	5.9
	Female	4.8	7.4	10.1	14.0	14.9	14.0	12.4	10.5	7.7	4.3
	Male	3.3	4.9	6.8	10.4	12.4	13.6	14.9	14.4	11.3	8.1
C	All students	4.1	6.3	8.6	12.3	13.5	14.2	13.4	12.2	9.3	6.0
	Female	2.7	5.6	8.6	12.5	14.3	14.7	13.9	12.6	9.4	5.8
	Male	5.4	7.1	8.7	12.1	12.8	13.8	12.9	11.9	9.2	6.2
D	All students	4.1	6.3	8.5	11.9	13.1	14.4	14.0	12.5	9.3	6.0
	Female	3.1	6.6	9.7	13.3	14.2	15.4	13.8	11.3	8.0	4.7
	Male	4.6	6.2	7.8	11.1	12.4	13.8	14.2	13.1	10.0	6.7
E	All students	4.1	6.3	8.5	12.4	13.7	13.9	13.5	12.0	9.6	6.0
	Female	5.2	8.0	10.2	14.3	15.1	13.7	12.3	10.2	7.4	3.7
	Male	2.3	3.5	5.8	9.5	11.5	14.3	15.5	14.9	13.1	9.6

Figure 5: 1997 FP distribution by gender



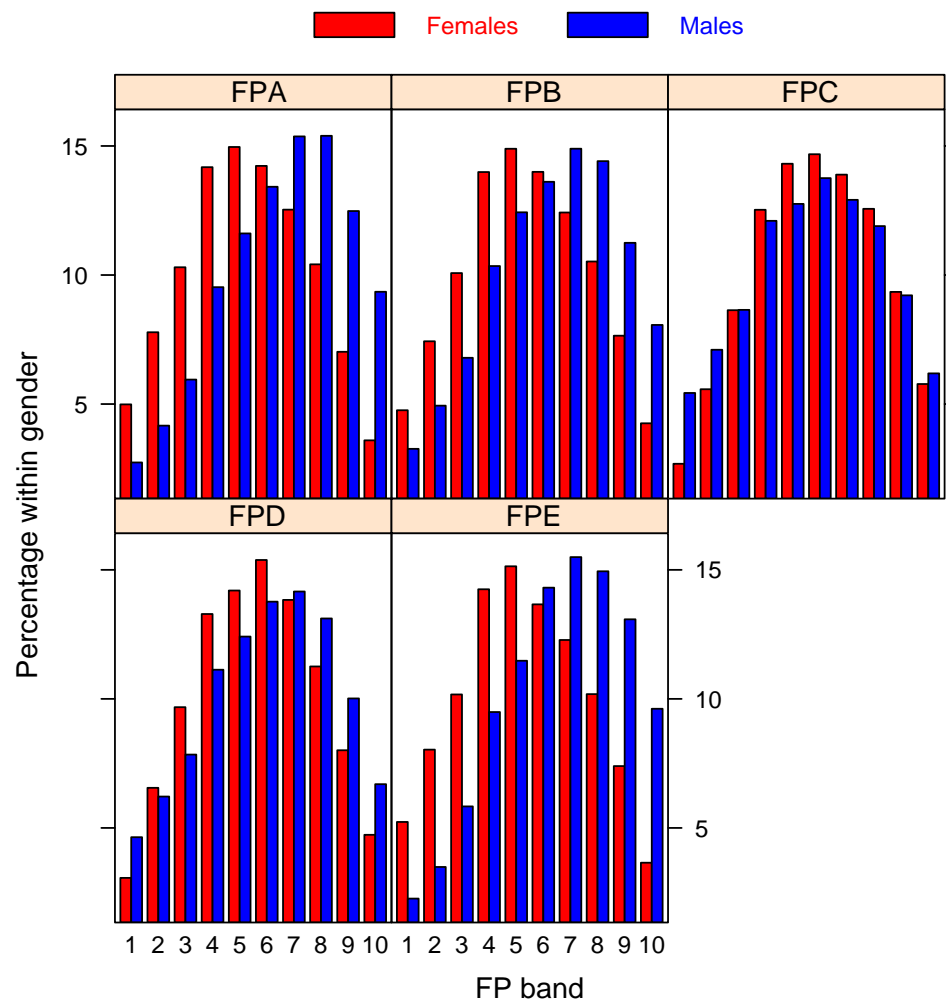
FPs percentage distribution within gender

Figure 6 shows FPs and their distributions in the state for 1997 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 1997.

Table 8: Numbers of students per FP combination

Sets of FPs	Students	Total	Per cent	
ABCDE	2695	5 FPs	2695	10.59
ABCD	3407			
ABCE	5891			
BCDE	315	4 FPs	9613	37.78
ABC	5242			
ABE	2483			
ACD	2			
ACE	3			
BCD	2284			
BCE	458			
CDE	37	3 FPs	10509	41.31
AB	944			
AC	1			
AE	10			
BC	809			
BE	251			
CD	396			
CE	112	2 FPs	2523	9.92
B	65			
C	31			
E	7	1 FP	103	0.4

Figure 6: 1997 FP distribution within gender



Contact Us

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