

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 26 214 Queensland students² who received an OP in 1998 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.

²Visa 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: 1998 OP distribution

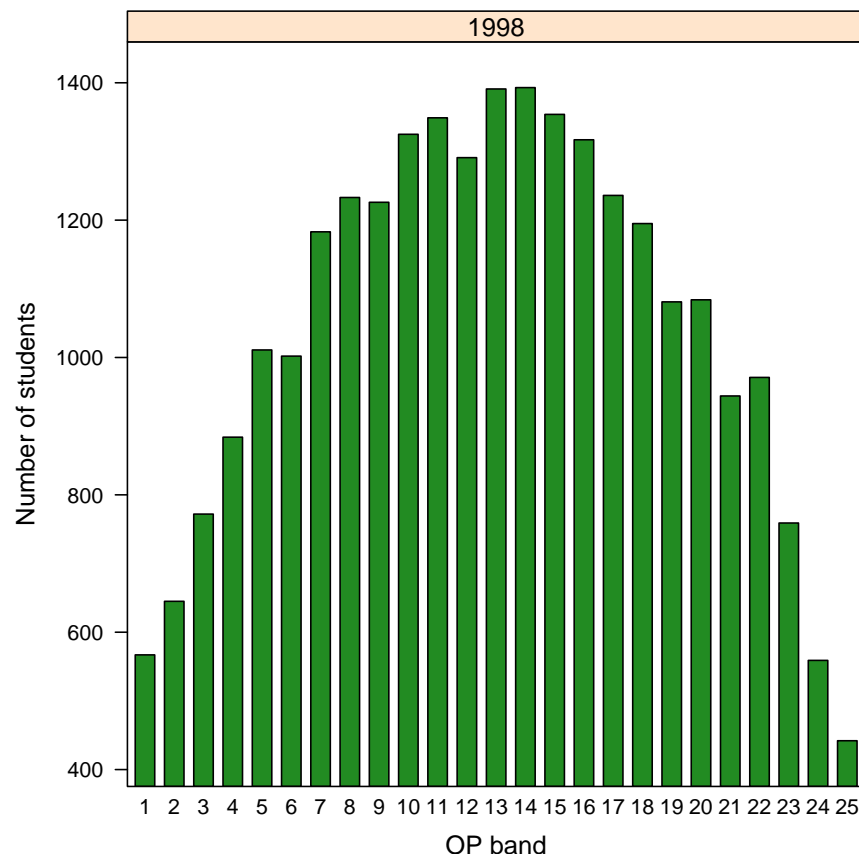


Table 1: 1998 OP distribution

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	567	645	772	884	1011	1002	1183	1233	1226	1325	1349	1291	1391	1393	1354	1317	1236	1195	1081	1084	944	971	759	559	442
Cumulative	567	1212	1984	2868	3879	4881	6064	7297	8523	9848	11197	12488	13879	15272	16626	17943	19179	20374	21455	22539	23483	24454	25213	25772	26214
Per cent	2.16	2.46	2.94	3.37	3.86	3.82	4.51	4.70	4.68	5.05	5.15	4.92	5.31	5.31	5.17	5.02	4.72	4.56	4.12	4.14	3.60	3.70	2.90	2.13	1.69
Cumulative	2.16	4.62	7.57	10.94	14.80	18.62	23.13	27.84	32.51	37.57	42.71	47.64	52.94	58.26	63.42	68.45	73.16	77.72	81.85	85.98	89.58	93.29	96.18	98.31	100.00

Figure 2: 1998 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.

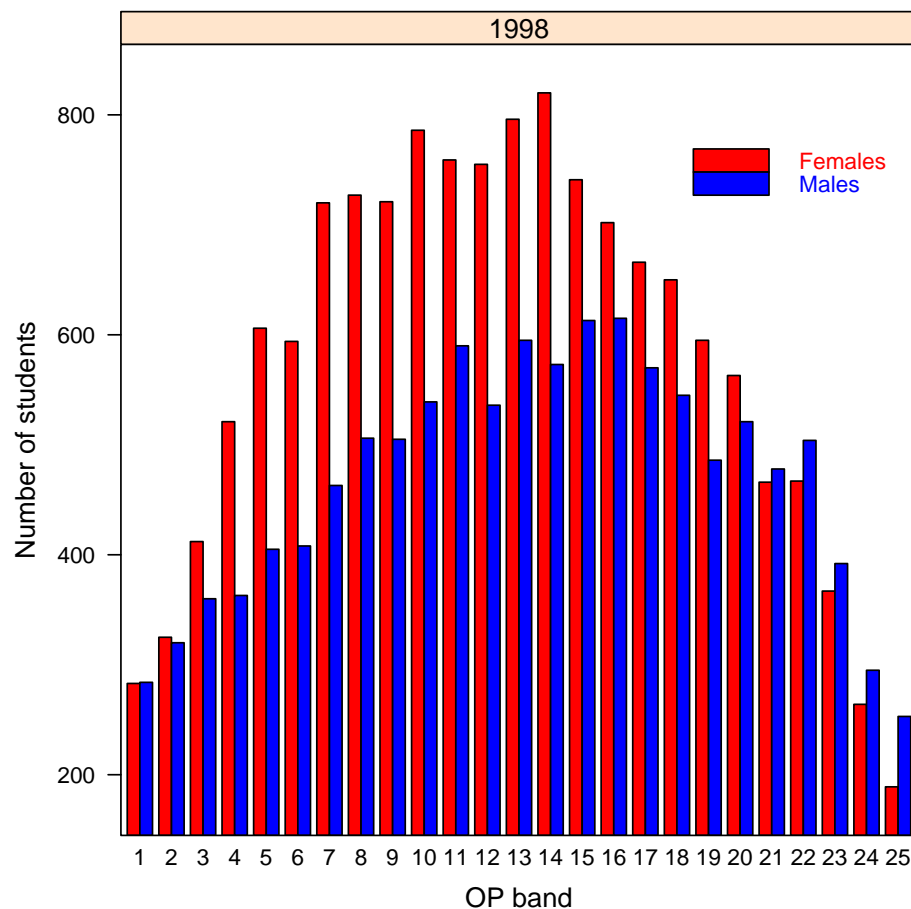


Table 2: 1998 OP distribution

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	567	645	772	884	1011	1002	1183	1233	1226	1325	1349	1291	1391	1393	1354	1317	1236	1195	1081	1084	944	971	759	559	442	26214
Females	283	325	412	521	606	594	720	727	721	786	759	755	796	820	741	702	666	650	595	563	466	467	367	264	189	14495
Males	284	320	360	363	405	408	463	506	505	539	590	536	595	573	613	615	570	545	486	521	478	504	392	295	253	11719

Figure 3: 1998 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.

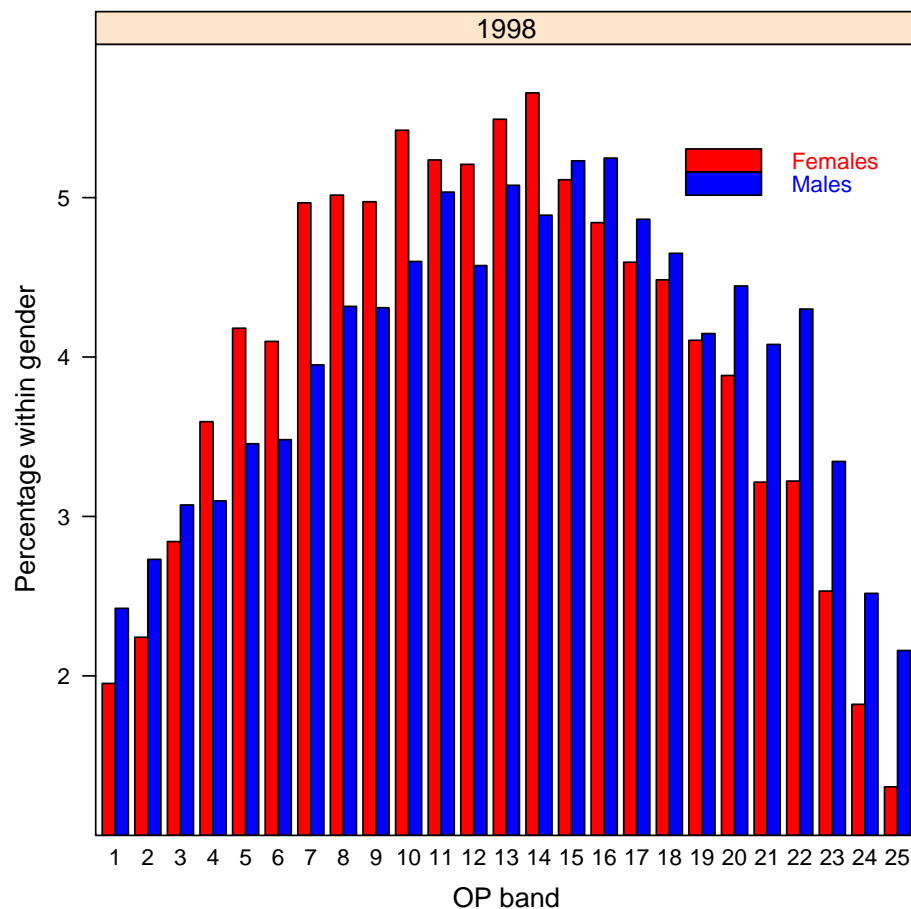


Table 3: 1998 OP percentage distribution within gender

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 %	2.16	2.46	2.94	3.37	3.86	3.82	4.51	4.70	4.68	5.05	5.15	4.92	5.31	5.31	5.17	5.02	4.72	4.56	4.12	4.14	3.60	3.70	2.90	2.13	1.69
Female %	1.95	2.24	2.84	3.59	4.18	4.10	4.97	5.02	4.97	5.42	5.24	5.21	5.49	5.66	5.11	4.84	4.59	4.48	4.10	3.88	3.21	3.22	2.53	1.82	1.30
Male %	2.42	2.73	3.07	3.10	3.46	3.48	3.95	4.32	4.31	4.60	5.03	4.57	5.08	4.89	5.23	5.25	4.86	4.65	4.15	4.45	4.08	4.30	3.34	2.52	2.16

FP distributions

Figure 4 shows the FP distributions for 1998. 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

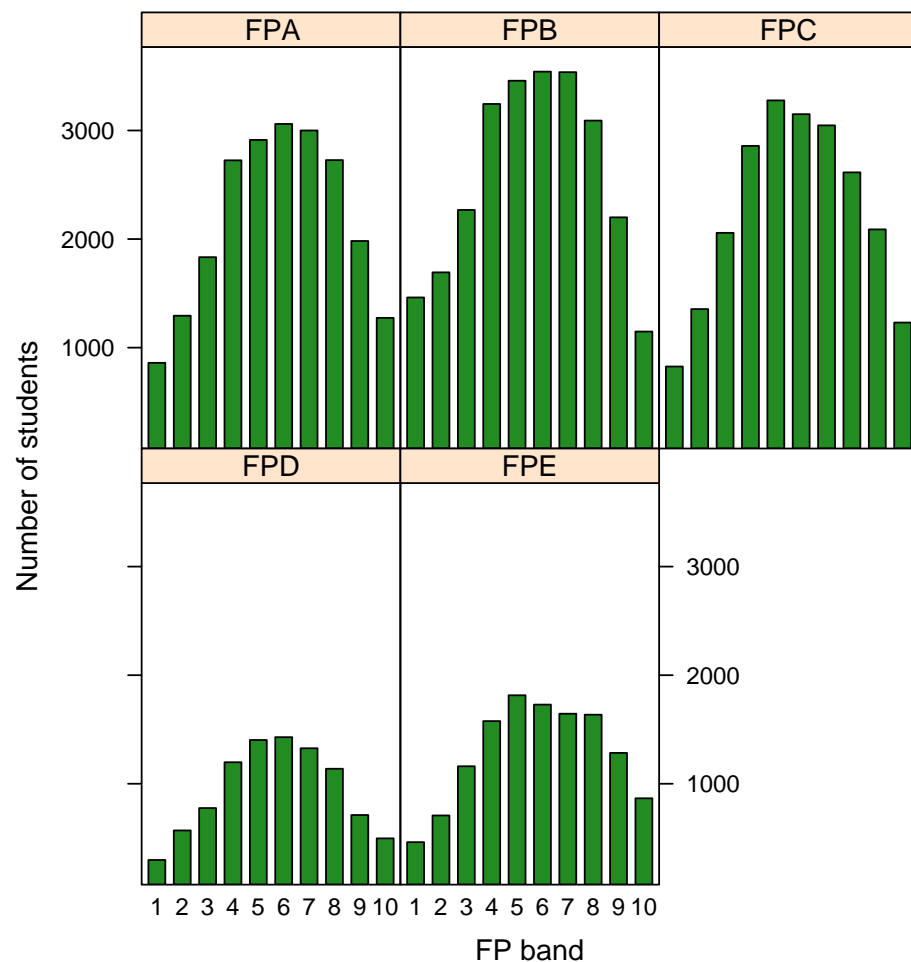
Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
A	860	1294	1833	2725	2913	3060	3000	2727	1982	1274	21668
B	1462	1693	2268	3244	3458	3542	3537	3091	2200	1148	25643
C	826	1355	2057	2858	3277	3150	3047	2614	2089	1231	22504
D	298	570	776	1198	1403	1429	1327	1138	712	497	9348
E	462	708	1161	1577	1815	1729	1645	1636	1284	866	12883

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 1998 and the weights for each field position.

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

Figure 4: 1998 FP distribution



1998 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	Id	Syllabus	OP	A	B	C	D	E
1	English (1996 Trial-Pilot)	5	5	5	1		4	38	Mathematics C	5	1	1	5	5	
1	English (1987)	5	5	5	1		4	40	Chemistry	5	2	3	5	5	2
2	English Extension (Literature)	5	5	5	1	0	4	41	Physics	5	2	3	5	5	2
5	French	5	2	5	1		4	42	Biology	5	3	3	5	3	3
6	German	5	2	5	1		4	43	Earth Science	5	3	3	5	3	2
7	Indonesian	5	2	5	1		4	44	Multi-Strand Science	5	2	3	5	3	2
8	Italian	5	2	5	1		4	45	Marine Studies	5	3	3	5	3	4
9	Japanese	5	2	5	1		4	51	Agricultural Science (1992)	5	3	3	5	3	3
10	Russian	5	2	5	1		4	51	Agricultural Science (1995 Trial-Pilot)	5	4	3	5	3	3
11	Chinese	5	2	5	1		4	60	Accounting	5	3	3	5	4	2
12	Vietnamese	5	2	5	1		4	61	Secretarial Studies	5	1	3	2	1	4
13	Korean	5	2	5	1		4	62	Business Organisation & Management	5	4	3	5	2	3
14	Modern Greek	5	2	5	1		4	63	Business Communication & Technologies	5	3	3	5	2	4
15	French Extension	5	3	5	1		4	67	Health Education	5	4	3	2	1	2
16	German Extension	5	3	5	1		4	68	Physical Education	5	3	3	4	2	5
17	Latin	5	3	5	1		2	71	Home Economics	5	4	3	2	1	4
18	Spanish	5	2	5	1		4	72	Hospitality Studies	5	3	3	3	1	4
20	Ancient History	5	5	5	2		1	74	Engineering Technology	5	3	3	5	4	3
21	Modern History	5	5	5	2		1	76	Graphics	5	1	2	5	4	4
22	Futures	5	4	4	3	2	1	78	Technology Studies (1991)	5	3	3	5	3	4
23	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies	5	4	4	2		2	78	Technology Studies (1995 Trial-Pilot)	5	3	3	5	3	4
24	Geography (1996 Trial-Pilot)	5	4	4	4	2	2	80	Visual Art	5	4	3	1		5
24	Geography (1992)	5	4	4	4	2	2	84	Film & Television	5	4	3	2	1	5
25	Political Studies	5	5	5	3	1	2	85	Dance	5	3	3	1		5
27	Economics (1995 Trial-Pilot)	5	4	4	5	3	1	86	Study of Religion	5	4	5	2		2
27	Economics (1992)	5	4	5	5	2	1	87	Information Processing & Technology	5	3	3	5	4	3
28	Study of Society	5	5	4	3	1	1	88	Drama	5	4	3	1		5
29	Legal Studies	5	4	5	2		2	89	Film & Television	5	4	3	2	1	5
30	Logic	5	4	4	4	4		90	Health & Physical Education	5	3	3	3	1	5
36	Mathematics A	5	1	2	5	5		91	Music	5	3	3	2	2	5
37	Mathematics B	5	1	1	5	5		92	Music Extension (Performance)	5	2	2	2	1	5

1998 State Distribution of Overall Positions (OPs) and Field Positions (FPs)

FP distributions by gender

Figure 5 shows the FPs and their distributions in the state for 1998 by gender.

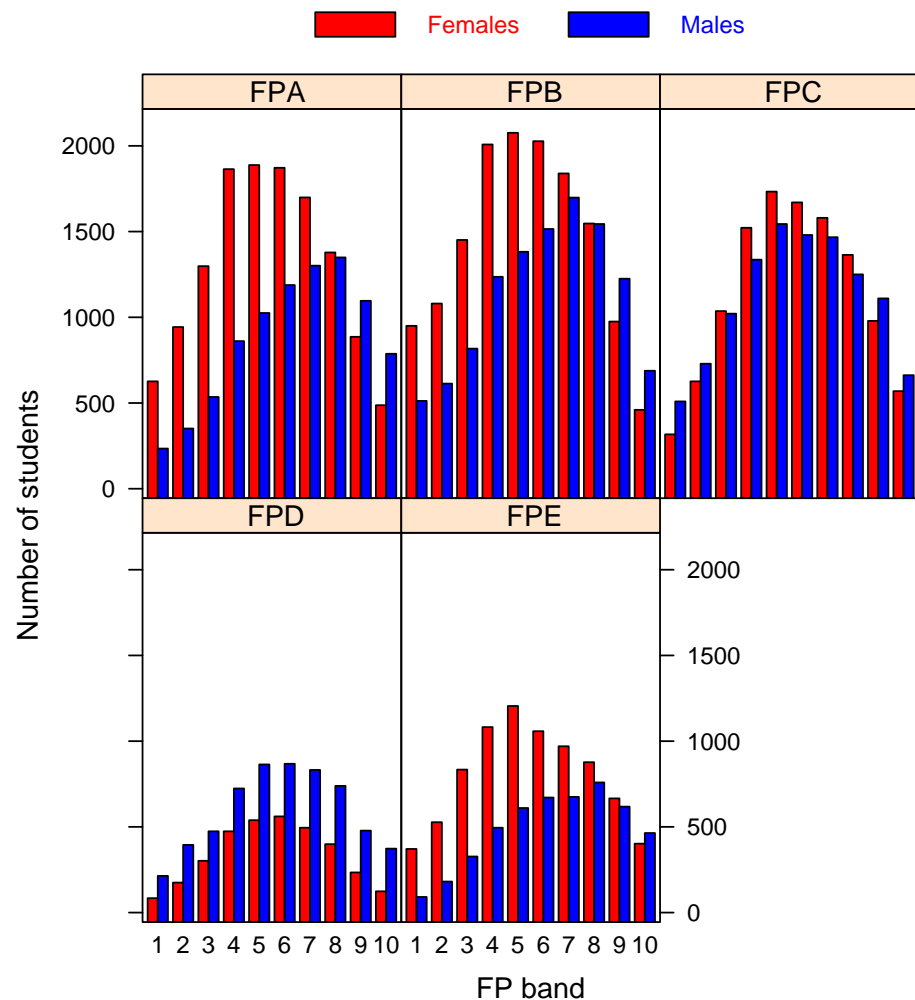
Table 6: Numbers of students eligible for each FP by gender

Gender	Field A	Field B	Field C	Field D	Field E
Female	12941	14413	11396	3387	7992
Male	8727	11230	11108	5961	4891

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	4.0	6.0	8.5	12.6	13.4	14.1	13.9	12.6	9.2	5.9
	Female	4.8	7.3	10.0	14.4	14.6	14.5	13.1	10.7	6.9	3.8
	Male	2.7	4.0	6.1	9.9	11.8	13.6	14.9	15.5	12.6	9.0
B	All students	5.7	6.6	8.8	12.7	13.5	13.8	13.8	12.1	8.6	4.5
	Female	6.6	7.5	10.1	13.9	14.4	14.1	12.8	10.7	6.8	3.2
	Male	4.6	5.5	7.3	11.0	12.3	13.5	15.1	13.8	10.9	6.1
C	All students	3.7	6.0	9.1	12.7	14.6	14.0	13.5	11.6	9.3	5.5
	Female	2.8	5.5	9.1	13.4	15.2	14.7	13.9	12.0	8.6	5.0
	Male	4.6	6.6	9.2	12.0	13.9	13.3	13.2	11.3	10.0	6.0
D	All students	3.2	6.1	8.3	12.8	15.0	15.3	14.2	12.2	7.6	5.3
	Female	2.5	5.2	8.9	14.0	15.9	16.6	14.6	11.8	6.9	3.7
	Male	3.6	6.6	8.0	12.2	14.5	14.6	14.0	12.4	8.0	6.3
E	All students	3.6	5.5	9.0	12.2	14.1	13.4	12.8	12.7	10.0	6.7
	Female	4.6	6.6	10.4	13.5	15.1	13.2	12.1	11.0	8.3	5.0
	Male	1.9	3.7	6.7	10.1	12.5	13.7	13.8	15.5	12.6	9.5

Figure 5: 1998 FP distribution by gender



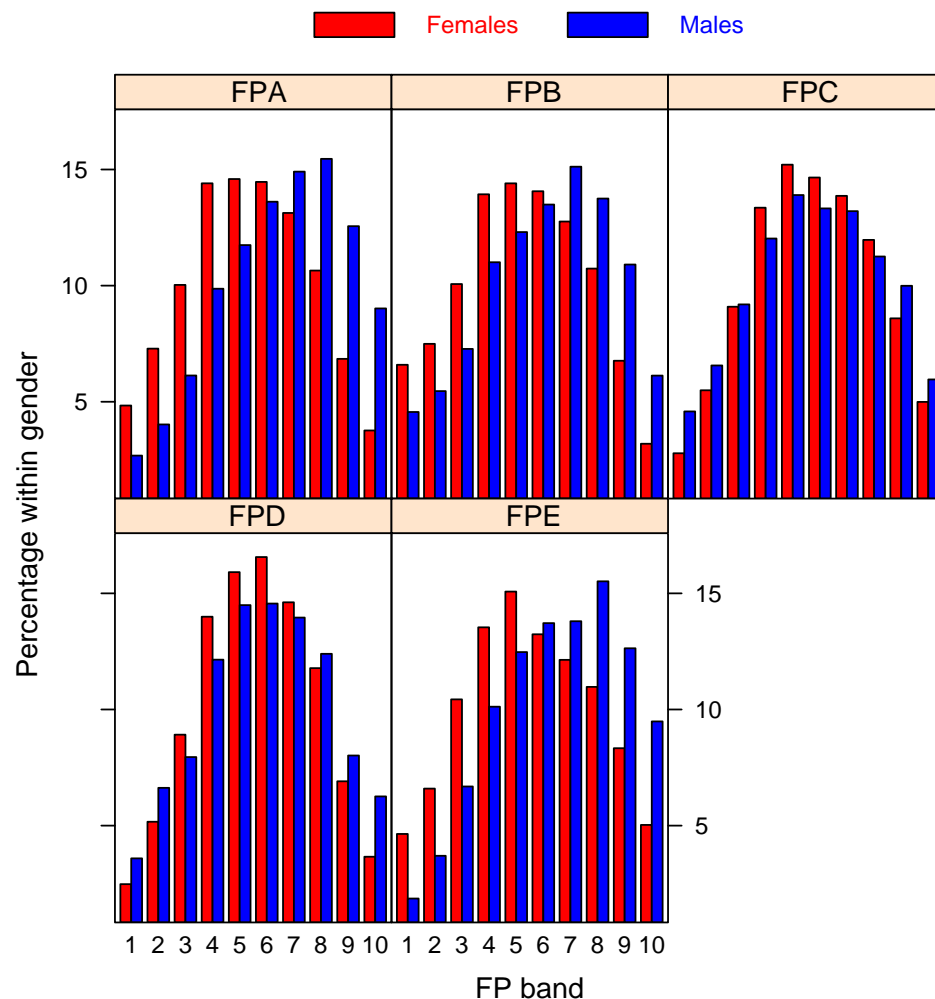
FPs percentage distribution within gender

Figure 6 shows FPs and their distributions in the state for 1998 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 1998.

Table 8: Numbers of students per FP combination

Sets of FPs	Students	Total	Per cent	
ABCDE	2965	5 FPs	2965	11.31
ABCD	3443			
ABCE	6358			
BCDE	294	4 FPs	10095	38.51
ABC	5487			
ABE	2484			
ACD	3			
ACE	2			
BCD	2220			
BCE	409			
CDE	34	3 FPs	10639	40.59
AB	913			
AC	2			
AE	10			
BC	771			
BE	217			
CD	389			
CE	107	2 FPs	2409	9.19
A	1			
B	82			
C	20			
E	3	1 FP	106	0.4

Figure 6: 1998 FP distribution within gender



Contact Us

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