

## 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 27 839 Queensland students<sup>2</sup> who received an OP in 2000 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: 2000 OP distribution

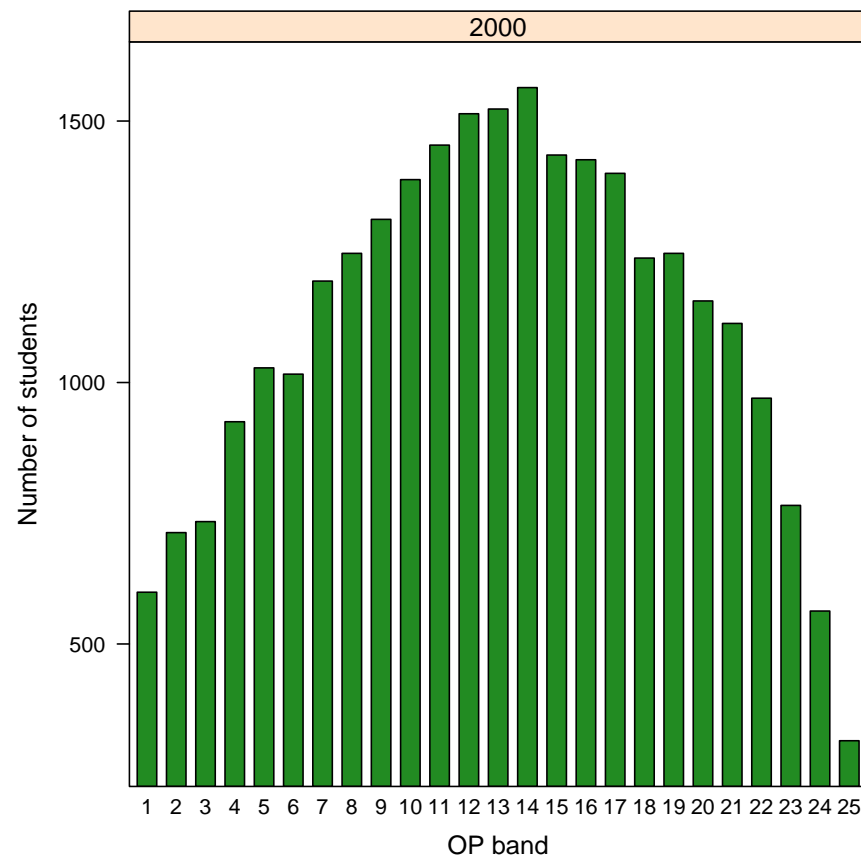


Table 1: 2000 OP distribution

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	599	713	734	925	1028	1016	1194	1247	1312	1388	1454	1514	1523	1564	1435	1426	1400	1238	1247	1156	1113	970	765	563	315
Cumulative	599	1312	2046	2971	3999	5015	6209	7456	8768	10156	11610	13124	14647	16211	17646	19072	20472	21710	22957	24113	25226	26196	26961	27524	27839
Per cent	2.15	2.56	2.64	3.32	3.69	3.65	4.29	4.48	4.71	4.99	5.22	5.44	5.47	5.62	5.15	5.12	5.03	4.45	4.48	4.15	4.00	3.48	2.75	2.02	1.13
Cumulative	2.15	4.71	7.35	10.67	14.36	18.01	22.30	26.78	31.50	36.48	41.70	47.14	52.61	58.23	63.39	68.51	73.54	77.98	82.46	86.62	90.61	94.10	96.85	98.87	100.00

Figure 2: 2000 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.

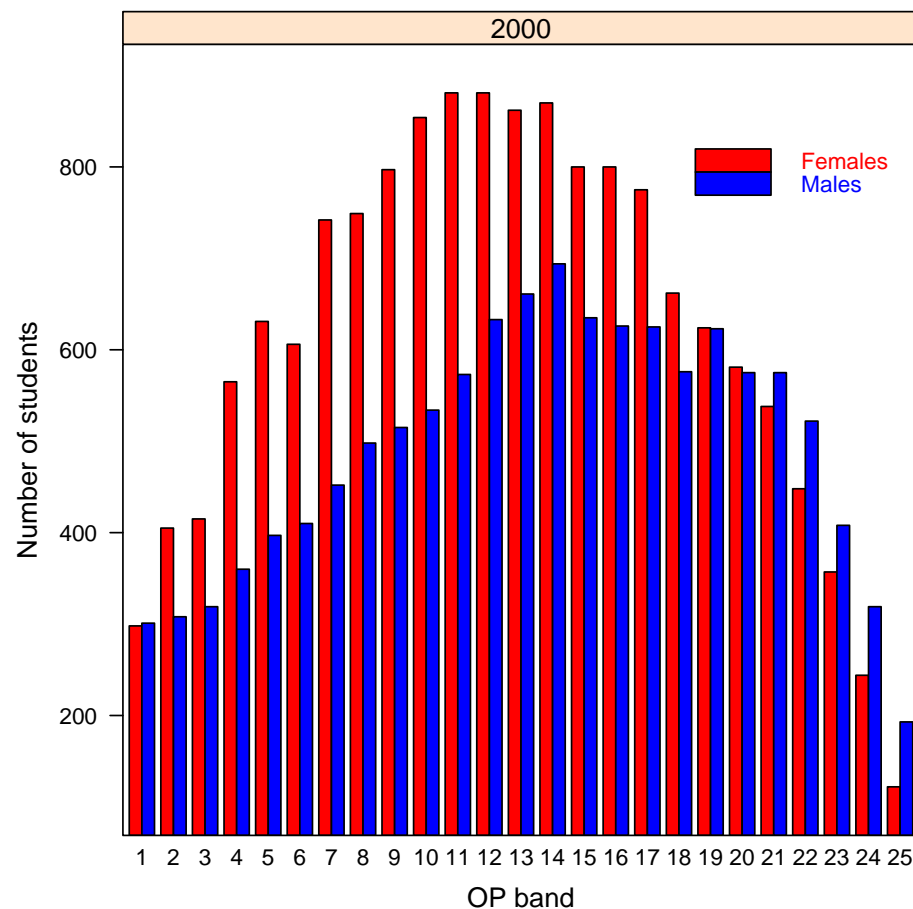


Table 2: 2000 OP distribution

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	599	713	734	925	1028	1016	1194	1247	1312	1388	1454	1514	1523	1564	1435	1426	1400	1238	1247	1156	1113	970	765	563	315	27839
Females	298	405	415	565	631	606	742	749	797	854	881	881	862	870	800	800	775	662	624	581	538	448	357	244	122	15507
Males	301	308	319	360	397	410	452	498	515	534	573	633	661	694	635	626	625	576	623	575	575	522	408	319	193	12332

Figure 3: 2000 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.

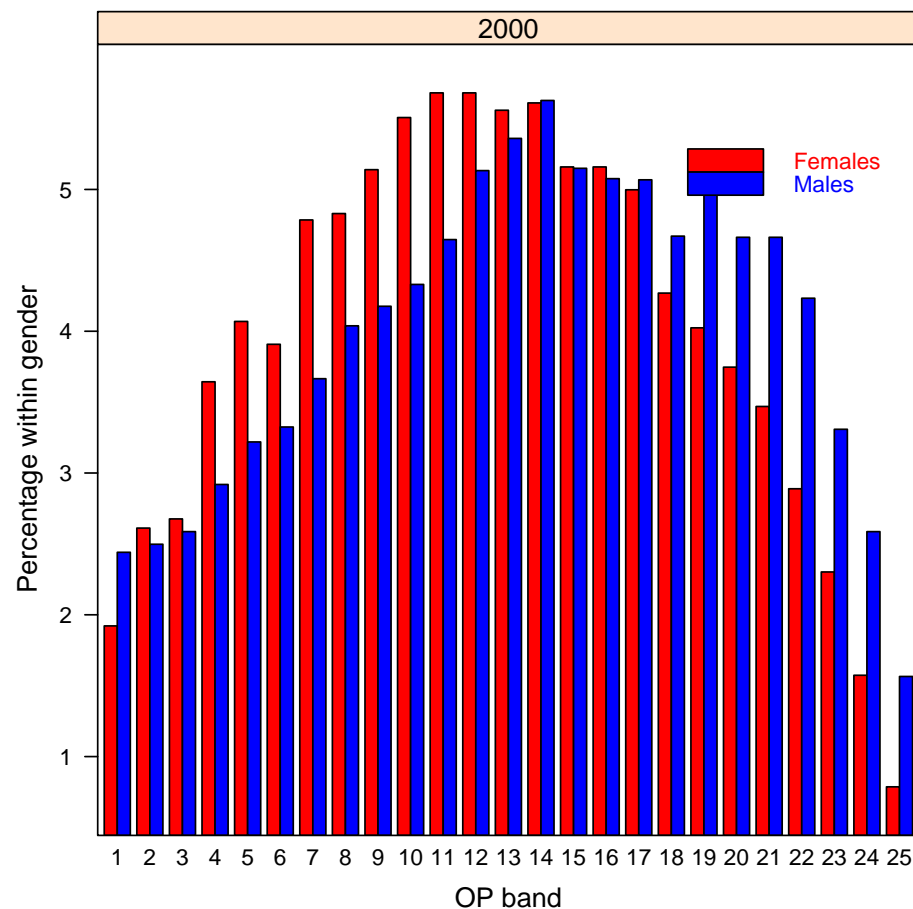


Table 3: 2000 OP percentage distribution within gender

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 %	2.15	2.56	2.64	3.32	3.69	3.65	4.29	4.48	4.71	4.99	5.22	5.44	5.47	5.62	5.15	5.12	5.03	4.45	4.48	4.15	4.00	3.48	2.75	2.02	1.13
Female %	1.92	2.61	2.68	3.64	4.07	3.91	4.78	4.83	5.14	5.51	5.68	5.68	5.56	5.61	5.16	5.16	5.00	4.27	4.02	3.75	3.47	2.89	2.30	1.57	0.79
Male %	2.44	2.50	2.59	2.92	3.22	3.32	3.67	4.04	4.18	4.33	4.65	5.13	5.36	5.63	5.15	5.08	5.07	4.67	5.05	4.66	4.66	4.23	3.31	2.59	1.57

## FP distributions

Figure 4 shows the FP distributions for 2000. 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

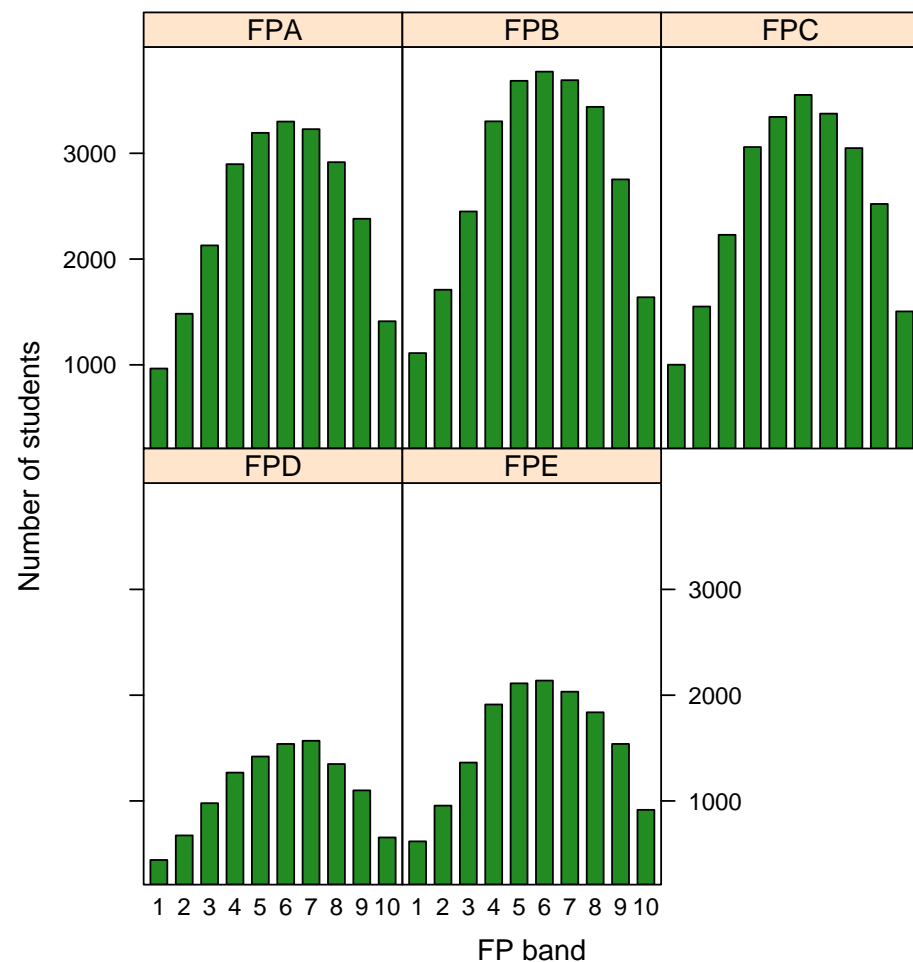
Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
A	965	1483	2129	2897	3193	3300	3228	2916	2381	1412	23904
B	1111	1710	2450	3302	3685	3772	3691	3439	2753	1639	27552
C	1001	1551	2229	3059	3344	3552	3375	3049	2521	1505	25186
D	442	674	979	1268	1420	1539	1569	1349	1100	655	10995
E	618	956	1363	1912	2112	2138	2033	1838	1539	916	15425

## 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 2000 and the weights for each field position.

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

Figure 4: 2000 FP distribution



# 2000 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 (1996 Trial-Pilot)	5	5	5	1		4
1	English (1987)	5	5	5	1		4
2	English Extension (Literature)	5	5	5	1		3
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
13	Korean	5	2	5	1		3
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		1
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	5	5	3	1	2
23	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies	5	4	4	2		2
24	Geography (1992)	5	4	4	4	2	2
24	Geography (1996 Trial-Pilot)	5	4	4	4	2	2
25	Political Studies	5	5	5	3		1
27	Economics (1992)	5	5	5	5	2	
27	Economics (1998)	5	5	5	5	3	2
28	Study of Society	5	5	5	3	1	
29	Legal Studies	5	5	5	2		2
30	Logic	5	4	4	5	4	1
36	Mathematics A	5	1	2	5	5	
37	Mathematics B	5	1	1	5	5	
38	Mathematics C	5	1	1	5	5	

Id	Syllabus	OP	A	B	C	D	E
40	Chemistry	5	2	3	5	5	3
41	Physics	5	1	3	5	5	2
42	Biology	5	3	3	5	4	3
43	Earth Science	5	3	3	5	3	3
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	4
51	Agricultural Science (1995 Trial-Pilot)	5	4	3	5	3	4
60	Accounting	5	3	3	5	4	2
61	Secretarial Studies	5	1	3	3	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	4	3	1	2
68	Physical Education	5	3	3	3	2	5
71	Home Economics (1992)	5	4	3	3	1	4
71	Home Economics (1998 Trial-Pilot)	5	4	3	3	1	4
72	Hospitality Studies	5	3	3	3	1	4
74	Engineering Technology	5	4	3	5	4	3
76	Graphics	5	2	3	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	2		5
85	Dance	5	3	3	1		5
86	Study of Religion	5	4	4	2		2
87	Information Processing & Technology	5	4	3	5	4	3
88	Drama	5	4	3	1		5
89	Film & Television	5	4	3	2	1	5
90	Health & Physical Education	5	3	3	3	1	5
91	Music	5	3	3	3	1	5
92	Music Extension (Performance)	5	2	2	2	1	5
99	A Short Course in the Australian Constitution	5	3	3	1	0	0

# 2000 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 2000 by gender.

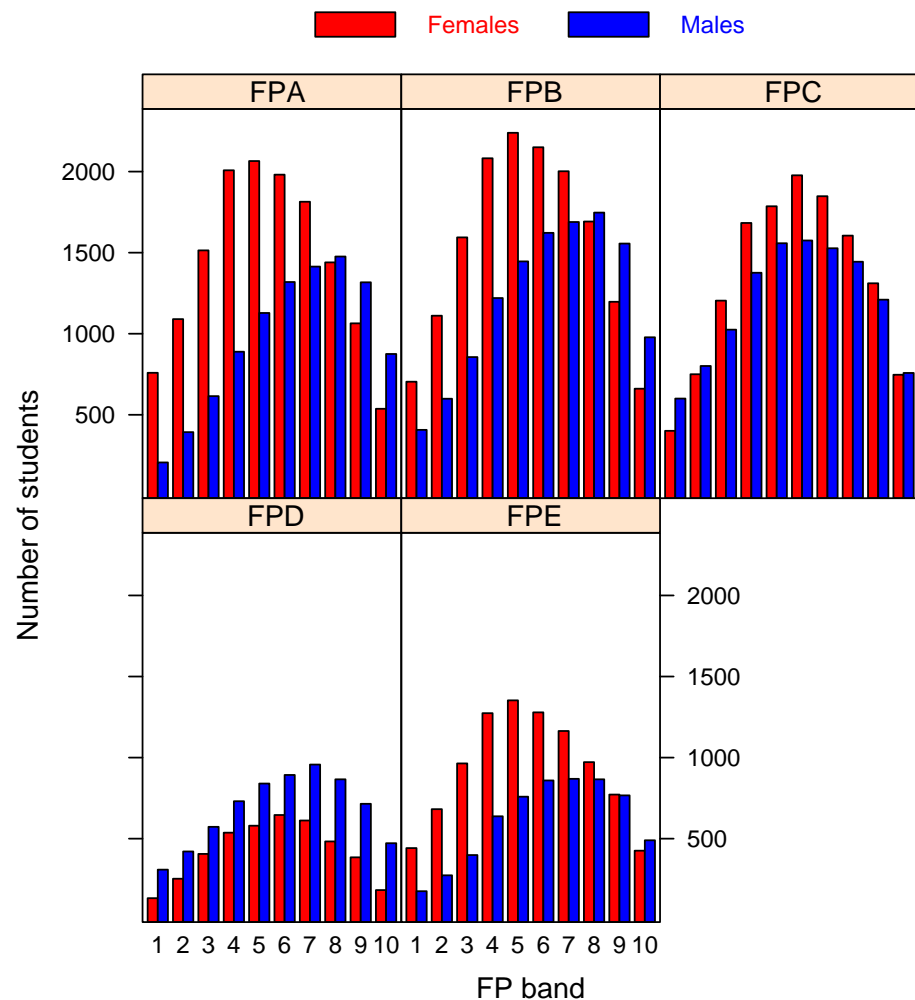
Table 6: Numbers of students eligible for each FP by gender

Gender	Field A	Field B	Field C	Field D	Field E
Female	14272	15432	13312	4218	9328
Male	9632	12120	11874	6777	6097

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	6.2	8.9	12.1	13.4	13.8	13.5	12.2	10.0	5.9
	Female	5.3	7.6	10.6	14.1	14.5	13.9	12.7	10.1	7.5	3.8
	Male	2.1	4.1	6.4	9.2	11.7	13.7	14.7	15.3	13.7	9.1
B	All students	4.0	6.2	8.9	12.0	13.4	13.7	13.4	12.5	10.0	6.0
	Female	4.6	7.2	10.3	13.5	14.5	13.9	13.0	11.0	7.8	4.3
	Male	3.4	4.9	7.1	10.1	11.9	13.4	13.9	14.4	12.8	8.1
C	All students	4.0	6.2	8.9	12.2	13.3	14.1	13.4	12.1	10.0	6.0
	Female	3.0	5.6	9.0	12.6	13.4	14.9	13.9	12.1	9.9	5.6
	Male	5.1	6.8	8.6	11.6	13.1	13.3	12.9	12.2	10.2	6.4
D	All students	4.0	6.1	8.9	11.5	12.9	14.0	14.3	12.3	10.0	6.0
	Female	3.2	6.0	9.6	12.7	13.8	15.3	14.5	11.5	9.1	4.3
	Male	4.6	6.2	8.5	10.8	12.4	13.2	14.1	12.8	10.6	7.0
E	All students	4.0	6.2	8.8	12.4	13.7	13.9	13.2	11.9	10.0	5.9
	Female	4.7	7.3	10.3	13.7	14.5	13.7	12.5	10.4	8.3	4.6
	Male	2.9	4.5	6.5	10.5	12.5	14.1	14.3	14.2	12.6	8.0

Figure 5: 2000 FP distribution by gender



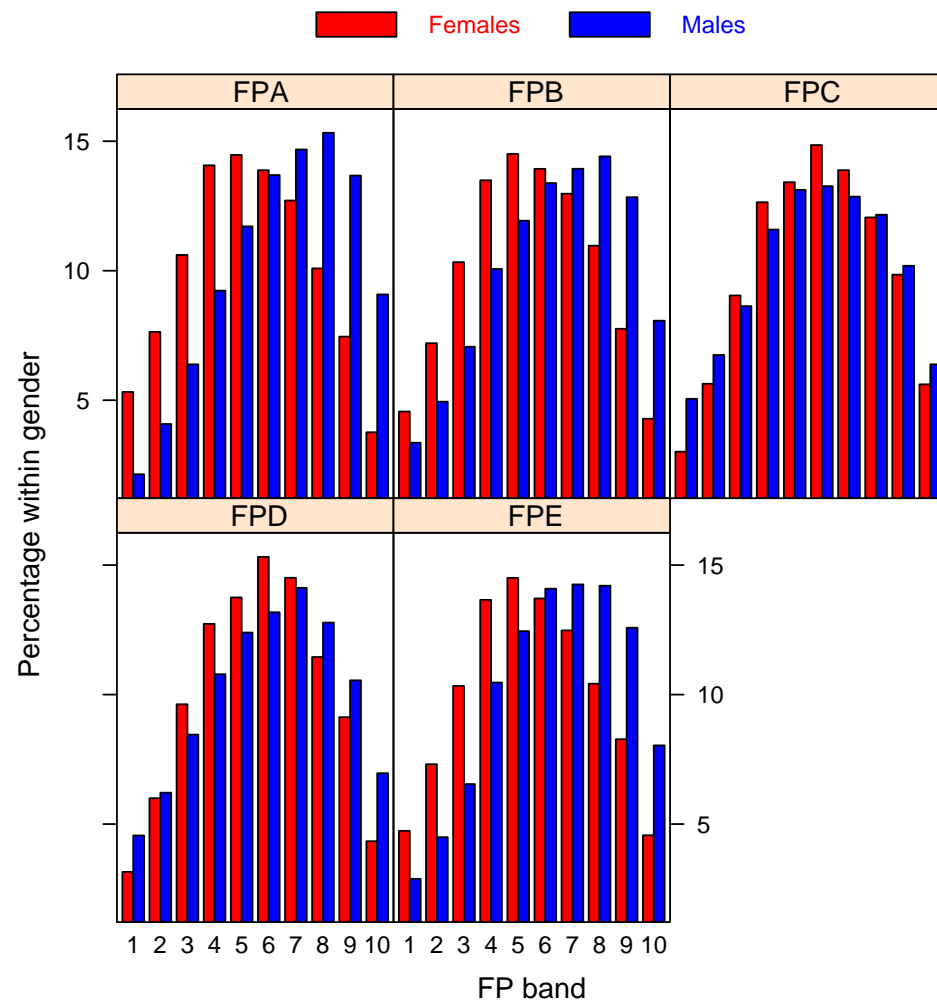
## FPs percentage distribution within gender

Figure 6 shows FPs and their distributions in the state for 2000 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 2000.

Table 8: Numbers of students per FP combination

Sets of FPs	Students	Total	Per cent	
ABCDE	4847	5 FPs	4847	17.41
ABCD	3023			
ABCE	7774			
BCDE	537	4 FPs	11334	40.71
ABC	5633			
ABE	1884			
ACD	8			
BCD	2331			
BCE	341			
CDE	7	3 FPs	10204	36.65
AB	732			
AC	2			
AE	1			
BC	415			
BE	28			
CD	242			
CE	6	2 FPs	1426	5.12
B	7			
C	20	1 FP	27	0.1

Figure 6: 2000 FP distribution within gender



## Contact Us

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