

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 27 973 Queensland students² who received an OP in 2003 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: 2003 OP distribution

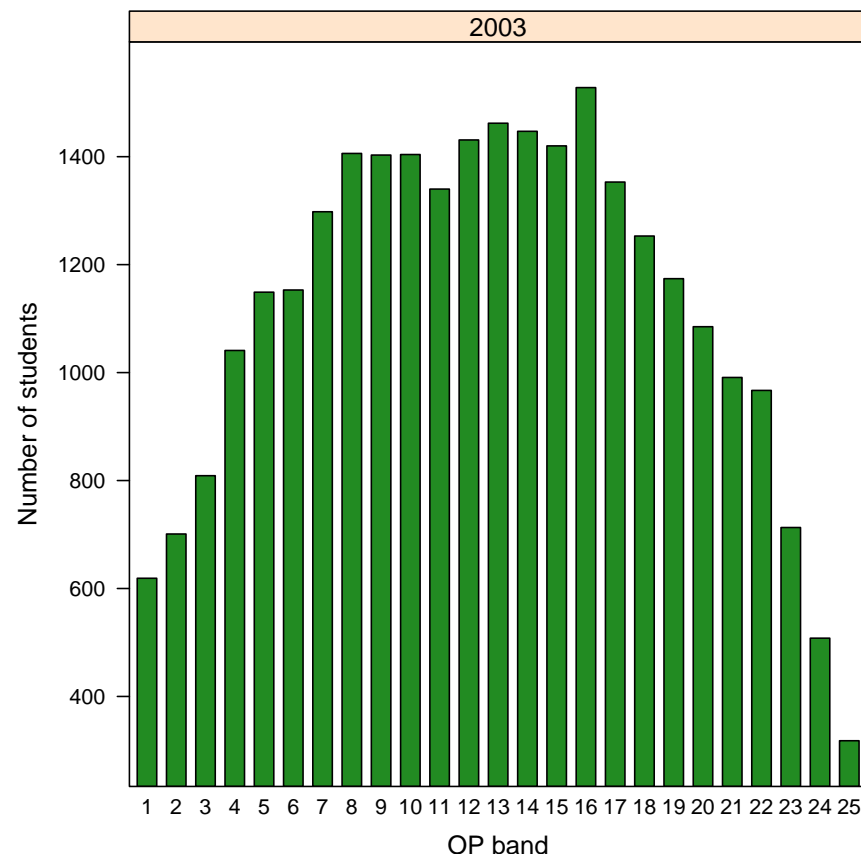


Table 1: 2003 OP distribution

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	619	701	809	1041	1149	1153	1298	1406	1403	1404	1340	1431	1462	1447	1420	1528	1353	1253	1174	1085	991	967	713	508	318
Cumulative	619	1320	2129	3170	4319	5472	6770	8176	9579	10983	12323	13754	15216	16663	18083	19611	20964	22217	23391	24476	25467	26434	27147	27655	27973
Per cent	2.21	2.51	2.89	3.72	4.11	4.12	4.64	5.03	5.02	5.02	4.79	5.12	5.23	5.17	5.08	5.46	4.84	4.48	4.20	3.88	3.54	3.46	2.55	1.82	1.14
Cumulative	2.21	4.72	7.61	11.33	15.44	19.56	24.20	29.23	34.24	39.26	44.05	49.17	54.40	59.57	64.64	70.11	74.94	79.42	83.62	87.50	91.04	94.50	97.05	98.86	100.00

Figure 2: 2003 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.

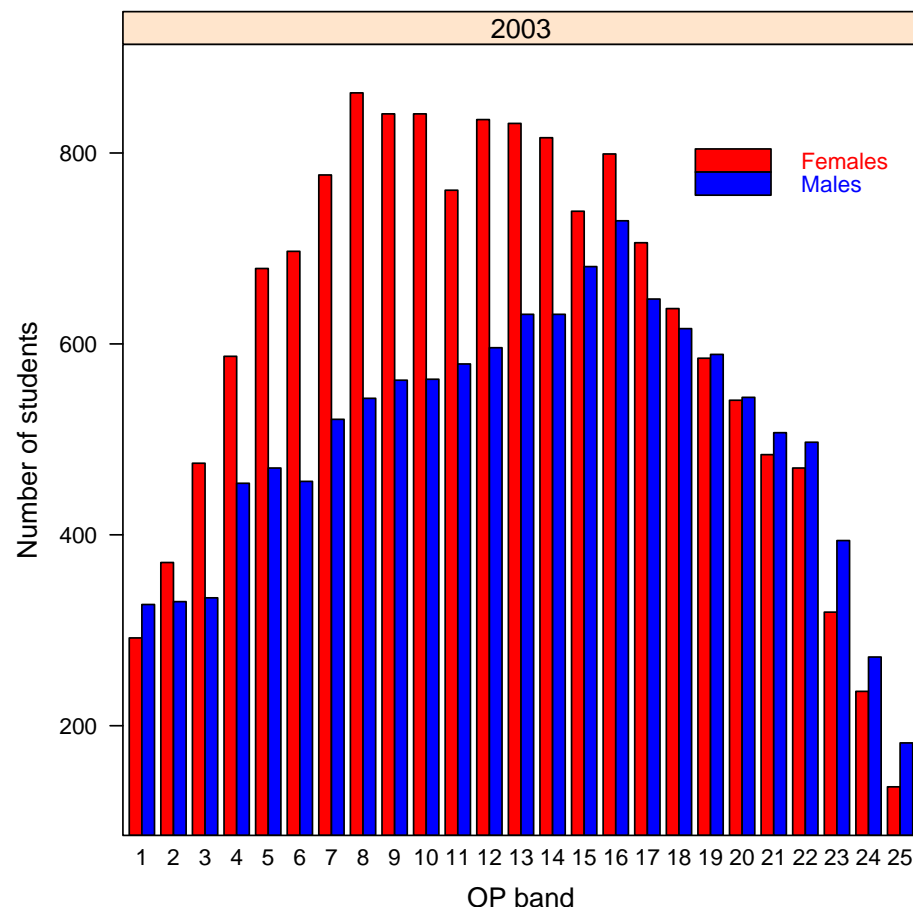


Table 2: 2003 OP distribution

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	619	701	809	1041	1149	1153	1298	1406	1403	1404	1340	1431	1462	1447	1420	1528	1353	1253	1174	1085	991	967	713	508	318	27973
Females	292	371	475	587	679	697	777	863	841	841	761	835	831	816	739	799	706	637	585	541	484	470	319	236	136	15318
Males	327	330	334	454	470	456	521	543	562	563	579	596	631	631	681	729	647	616	589	544	507	497	394	272	182	12655

Figure 3: 2003 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.

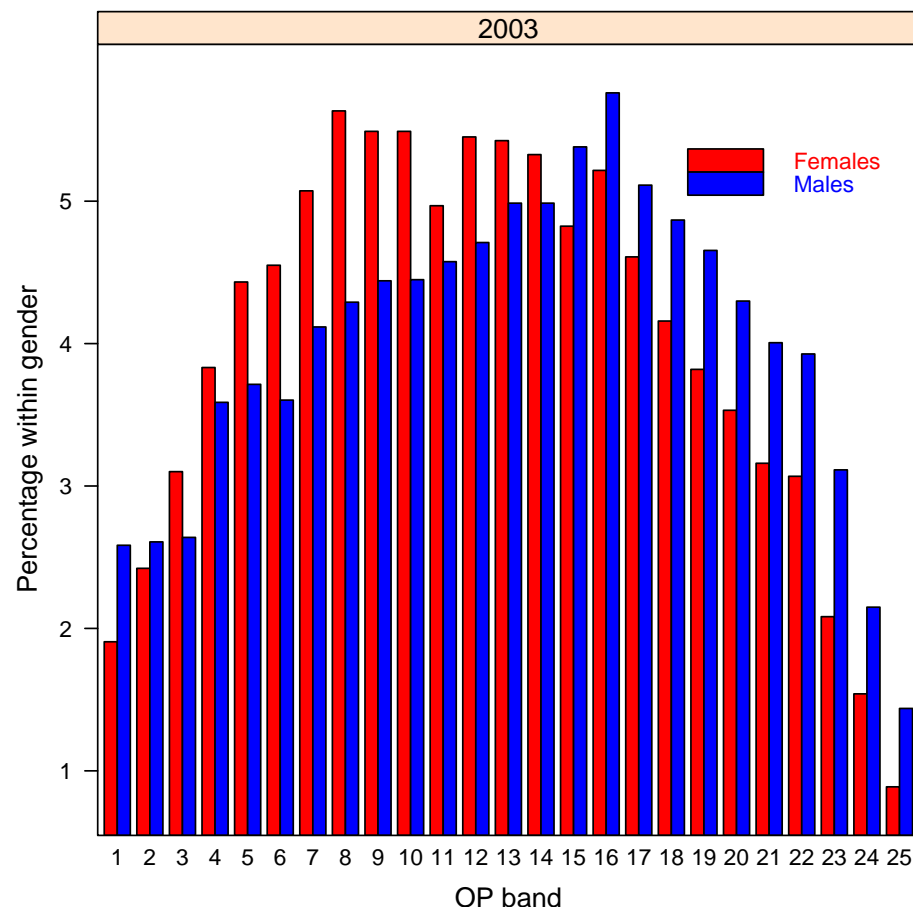


Table 3: 2003 OP percentage distribution within gender

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 %	2.21	2.51	2.89	3.72	4.11	4.12	4.64	5.03	5.02	5.02	4.79	5.12	5.23	5.17	5.08	5.46	4.84	4.48	4.20	3.88	3.54	3.46	2.55	1.82	1.14
Female %	1.91	2.42	3.10	3.83	4.43	4.55	5.07	5.63	5.49	5.49	4.97	5.45	5.42	5.33	4.82	5.22	4.61	4.16	3.82	3.53	3.16	3.07	2.08	1.54	0.89
Male %	2.58	2.61	2.64	3.59	3.71	3.60	4.12	4.29	4.44	4.45	4.58	4.71	4.99	4.99	5.38	5.76	5.11	4.87	4.65	4.30	4.01	3.93	3.11	2.15	1.44

FP distributions

Figure 4 shows the FP distributions for 2003. 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

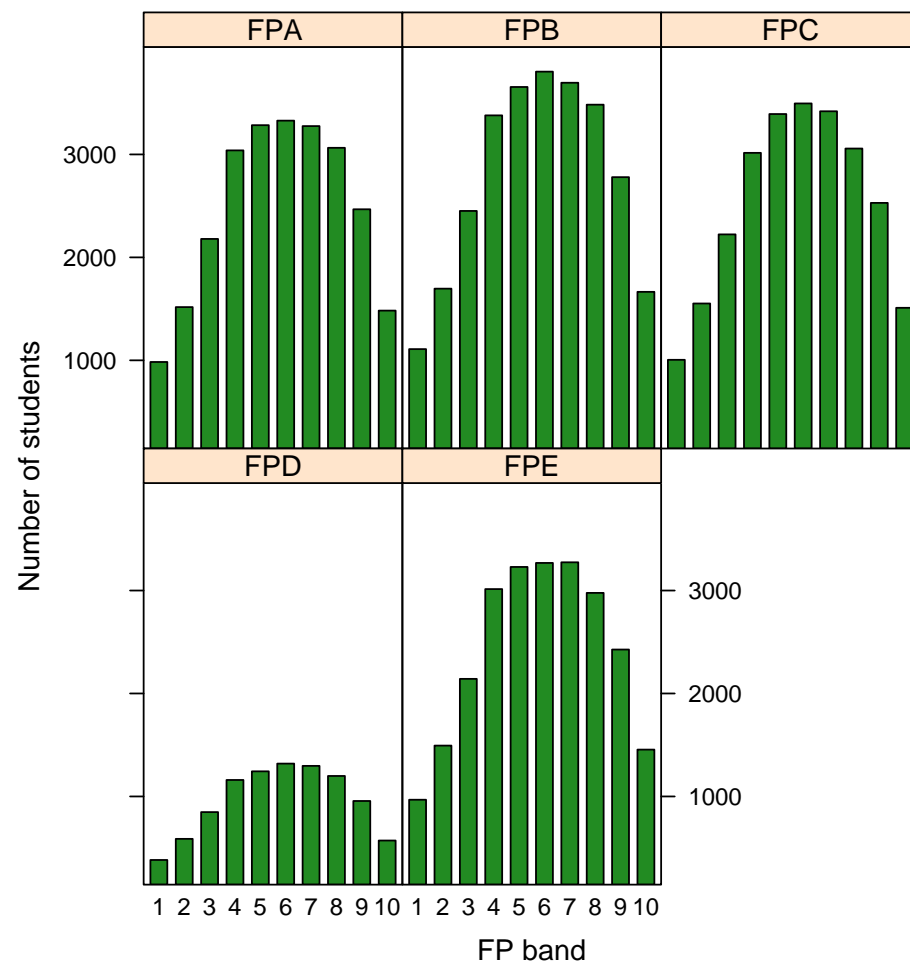
Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
A	984	1517	2179	3039	3284	3328	3275	3064	2467	1483	24620
B	1109	1696	2451	3379	3655	3804	3696	3483	2779	1665	27717
C	1005	1552	2223	3015	3392	3495	3419	3057	2529	1510	25197
D	383	588	848	1160	1244	1319	1297	1199	956	572	9566
E	968	1494	2142	3014	3229	3268	3274	2977	2427	1455	24248

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 2003 and the weights for each field position.

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

Figure 4: 2003 FP distribution



2003 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 (1987)	5	5	5	1	0	4
1	English (1999 Trial-Pilot)	5	5	5	1	0	4
2	English Extension (Literature)	5	5	4	1	0	3
5	French	5	2	5	1	0	4
6	German	5	2	5	1	0	4
7	Indonesian	5	2	5	1	0	4
8	Italian	5	2	5	1	0	4
9	Japanese	5	2	5	1	0	4
10	Russian	5	2	5	1	0	4
11	Chinese	5	2	5	1	0	4
12	Vietnamese	5	2	5	1	0	4
13	Korean	5	2	5	1	0	4
14	Modern Greek	5	2	5	1	0	4
15	French Extension	5	3	5	1	0	4
16	German Extension	5	3	5	1	0	4
17	Latin	5	3	5	1	0	2
18	Spanish	5	2	5	1	0	4
20	Ancient History (1995)	5	5	5	2	0	2
20	Ancient History (2001 Trial-Pilot)	5	5	5	2	0	2
21	Modern History (1995)	5	5	5	2	0	2
21	Modern History (2001 Trial-Pilot)	5	5	5	2	0	2
22	Futures	5	5	5	2	0	2
23	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies	5	4	5	2	0	2
24	Geography	5	5	5	4	2	2
25	Political Studies	5	5	5	2	1	2
27	Economics	5	5	5	5	3	2
28	Study of Society	5	5	5	3	1	2
29	Legal Studies	5	5	5	2	0	2
30	Logic	5	4	5	5	4	1
36	Mathematics A	5	1	2	5	5	1
37	Mathematics B	5	1	1	5	5	1
38	Mathematics C	5	1	1	5	5	1
40	Chemistry (1995)	5	2	3	5	5	3
40	Chemistry (2001 Trial-Pilot)	5	3	3	5	5	3
41	Physics (1995)	5	1	3	5	5	3
41	Physics (2001 Trial-Pilot)	5	3	3	5	5	3
42	Biology	5	3	3	5	3	4
43	Earth Science	5	3	3	5	3	3
44	Multi-Strand Science	5	2	3	5	3	3
45	Marine Studies (1994)	5	3	3	5	3	4
45	Marine Studies (2001 Trial-Pilot)	5	3	3	5	3	4
51	Agricultural Science	5	3	3	5	3	4
60	Accounting	5	3	3	5	4	2
62	Business Organisation & Management	5	4	4	5	2	3
63	Business Communication & Technologies	5	3	3	5	2	4
65	Information Technology Systems	5	3	3	5	3	4
67	Health Education	5	5	4	3	1	3
68	Physical Education	5	3	3	3	2	5
71	Home Economics (1992)	5	3	3	3	1	4
71	Home Economics (2001)	5	4	3	4	2	4
72	Hospitality Studies	5	3	3	3	1	4
74	Engineering Technology	5	3	3	5	4	4
76	Graphics	5	1	3	5	4	4
78	Technology Studies	5	3	3	5	3	4
80	Visual Art	5	4	3	2	0	5
85	Dance	5	3	3	2	0	5
86	Study of Religion	5	5	4	2	0	2
87	Information Processing & Technology	5	4	3	5	4	3
88	Drama	5	4	3	1	0	5
89	Film & Television	5	4	3	2	1	5
91	Music	5	3	3	2	0	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

FP distributions by gender

Figure 5 shows the FPs and their distributions in the state for 2003 by gender.

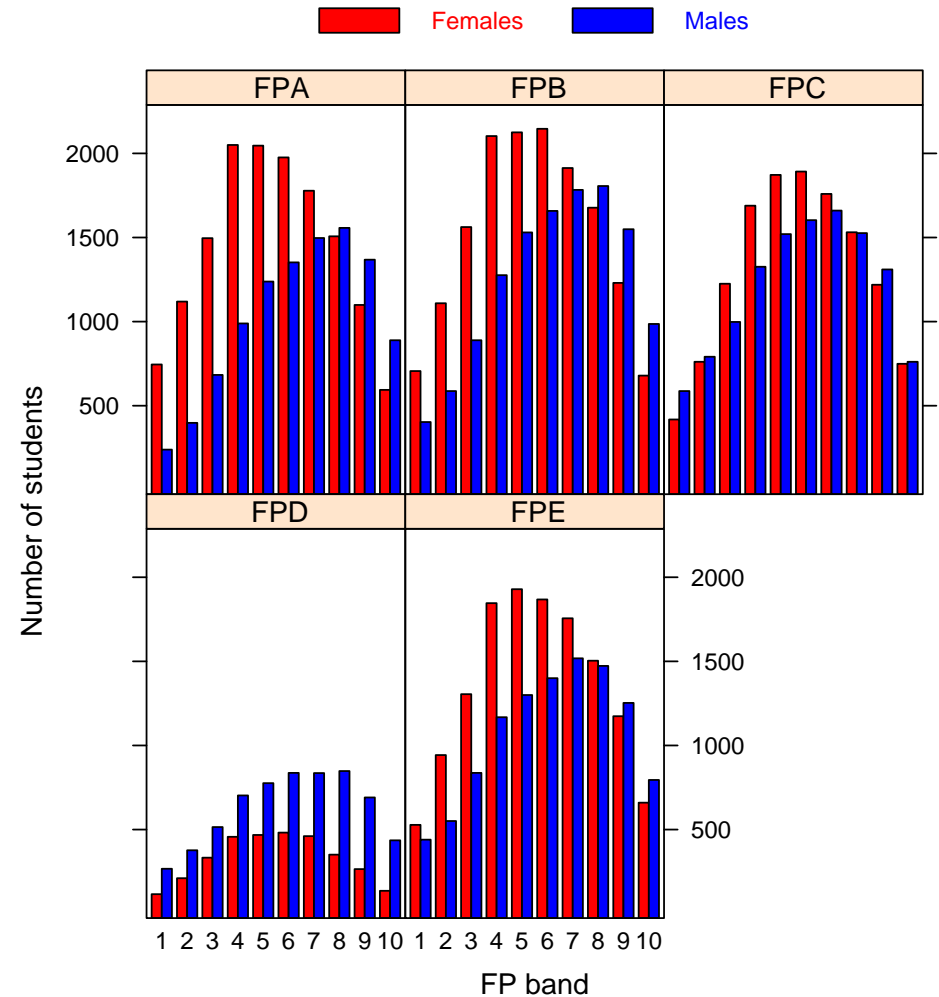
Table 6: Numbers of students eligible for each FP by gender

Gender	Field A	Field B	Field C	Field D	Field E
Female	14410	15250	13115	3280	13513
Male	10210	12467	12082	6286	10735

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	12.3	13.3	13.5	13.3	12.5	10.0	6.0
	Female	5.2	7.8	10.4	14.2	14.2	13.7	12.3	10.5	7.6	4.1
	Male	2.3	3.9	6.7	9.7	12.1	13.2	14.7	15.3	13.4	8.7
B	All students	4.0	6.1	8.8	12.2	13.2	13.7	13.3	12.6	10.0	6.0
	Female	4.6	7.3	10.2	13.8	13.9	14.1	12.5	11.0	8.1	4.5
	Male	3.2	4.7	7.1	10.2	12.3	13.3	14.3	14.5	12.4	7.9
C	All students	4.0	6.2	8.8	12.0	13.5	13.9	13.6	12.1	10.0	6.0
	Female	3.2	5.8	9.3	12.9	14.3	14.4	13.4	11.7	9.3	5.7
	Male	4.9	6.6	8.3	11.0	12.6	13.3	13.7	12.6	10.8	6.3
D	All students	4.0	6.2	8.9	12.1	13.0	13.8	13.6	12.5	10.0	6.0
	Female	3.5	6.4	10.2	13.9	14.3	14.7	14.1	10.7	8.1	4.2
	Male	4.3	6.0	8.2	11.2	12.3	13.3	13.3	13.5	11.0	6.9
E	All students	4.0	6.2	8.8	12.4	13.3	13.5	13.5	12.3	10.0	6.0
	Female	3.9	7.0	9.7	13.7	14.3	13.8	13.0	11.1	8.7	4.9
	Male	4.1	5.1	7.8	10.9	12.1	13.0	14.1	13.7	11.7	7.4

Figure 5: 2003 FP distribution by gender



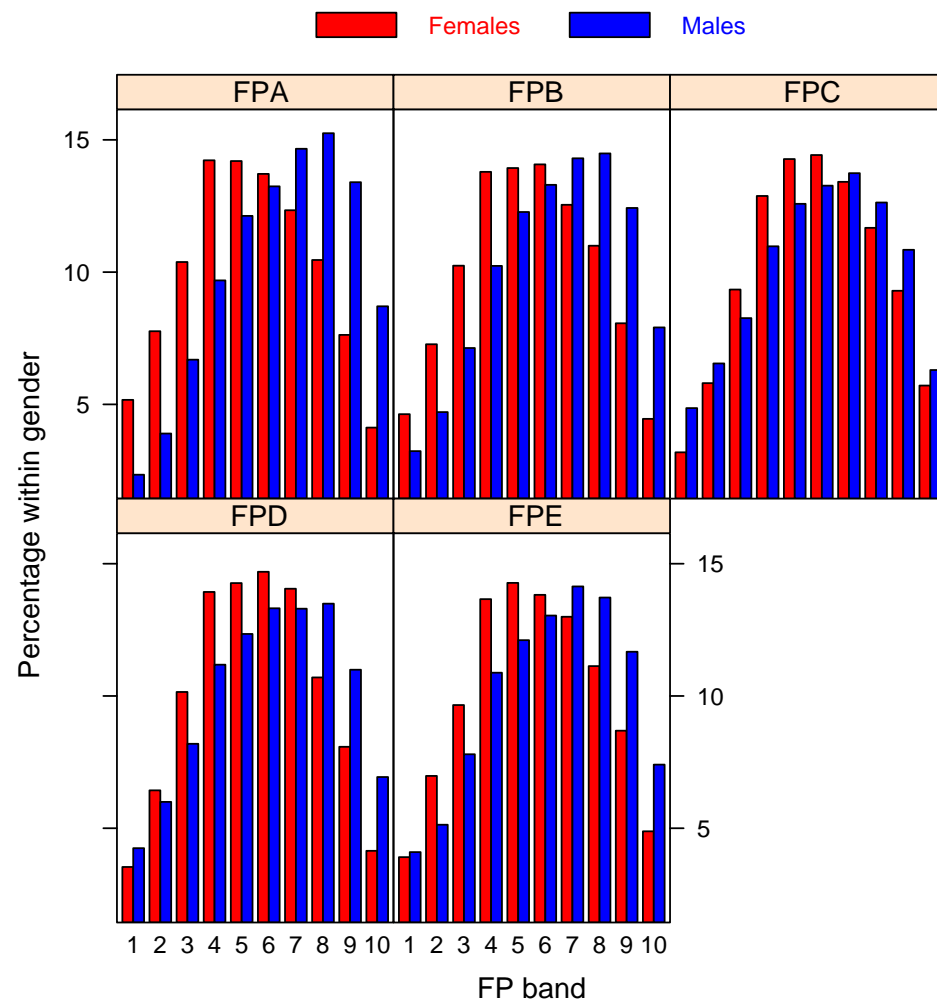
FPs percentage distribution within gender

Figure 6 shows FPs and their distributions in the state for 2003 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 2003.

Table 8: Numbers of students per FP combination

Sets of FPs	Students	Total	Per cent	
ABCDE	6266	5 FPs	6266	22.4
ABCD	724			
ABCE	12743			
BCDE	2095	4 FPs	15562	55.63
ABC	2127			
ABE	2398			
ACD	4			
ACE	5			
BCD	253			
BCE	674			
CDE	27	3 FPs	5488	19.62
AB	349			
AC	3			
AE	1			
BC	61			
BE	25			
CD	197			
CE	13	2 FPs	649	2.32
B	2			
C	5			
E	1	1 FP	8	0.03

Figure 6: 2003 FP distribution within gender



Contact Us

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