

## 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 27 235 Queensland students<sup>2</sup> who received an OP in 2004 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: 2004 OP distribution

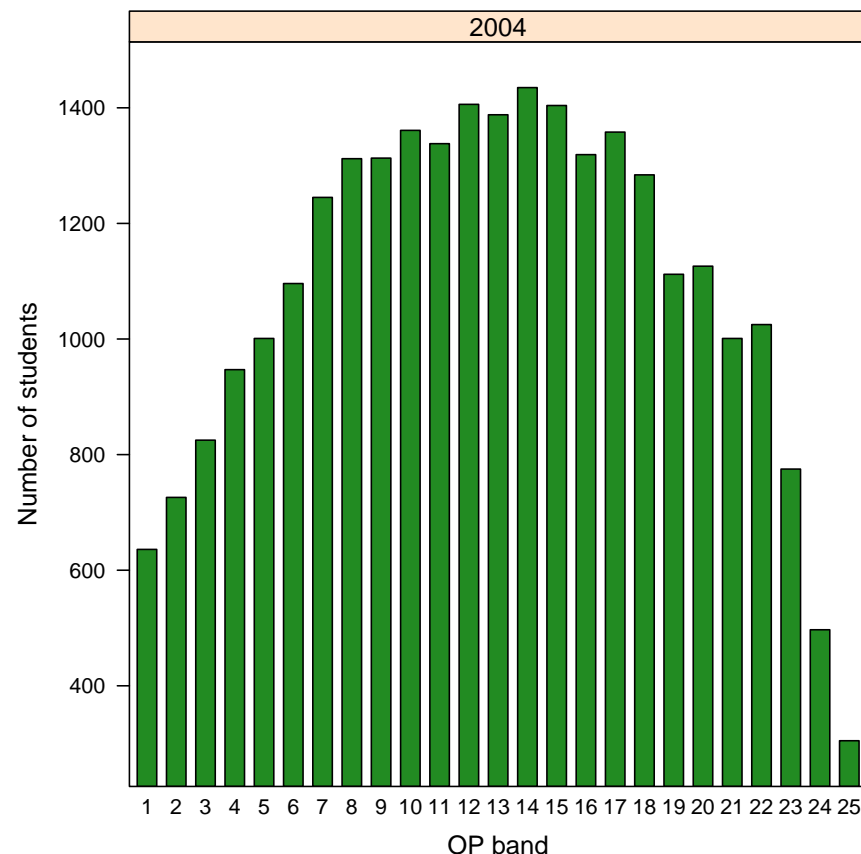


Table 1: 2004 OP distribution

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	636	726	825	947	1001	1096	1245	1312	1313	1361	1338	1406	1388	1435	1404	1319	1358	1284	1112	1126	1001	1025	775	497	305
Cumulative	636	1362	2187	3134	4135	5231	6476	7788	9101	10462	11800	13206	14594	16029	17433	18752	20110	21394	22506	23632	24633	25658	26433	26930	27235
Per cent	2.34	2.67	3.03	3.48	3.68	4.02	4.57	4.82	4.82	5.00	4.91	5.16	5.10	5.27	5.16	4.84	4.99	4.71	4.08	4.13	3.68	3.76	2.85	1.82	1.12
Cumulative	2.34	5.00	8.03	11.51	15.18	19.21	23.78	28.60	33.42	38.41	43.33	48.49	53.59	58.85	64.01	68.85	73.84	78.55	82.64	86.77	90.45	94.21	97.06	98.88	100.00

Figure 2: 2004 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.

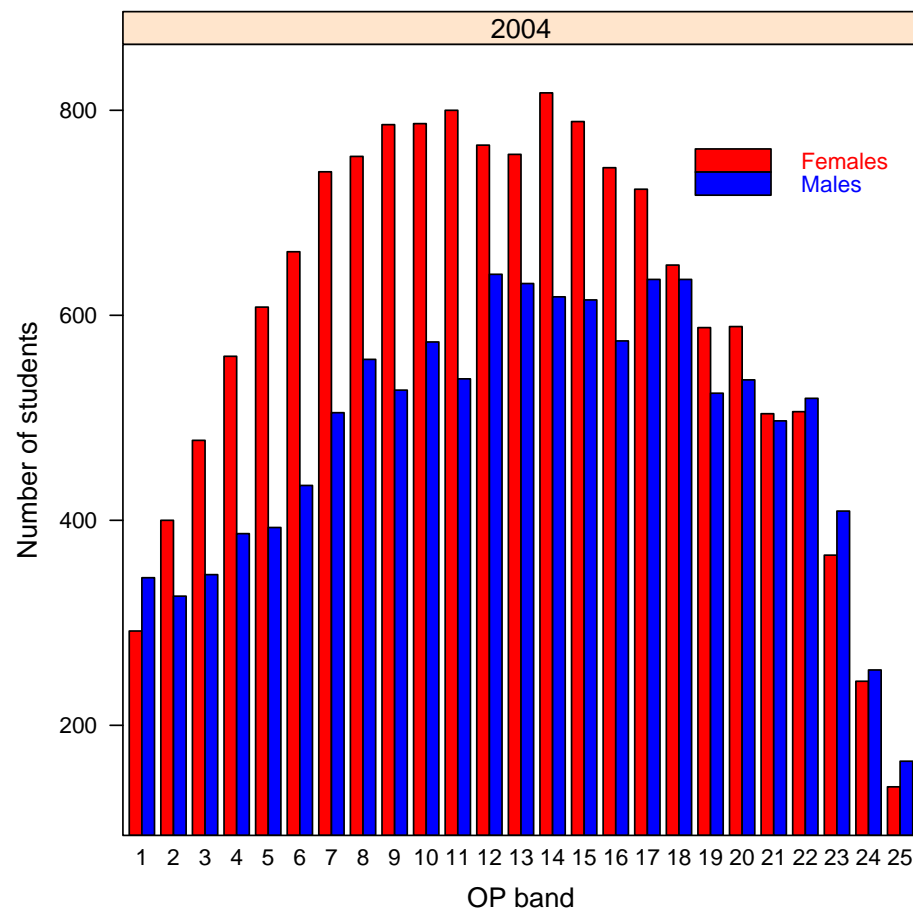


Table 2: 2004 OP distribution

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	636	726	825	947	1001	1096	1245	1312	1313	1361	1338	1406	1388	1435	1404	1319	1358	1284	1112	1126	1001	1025	775	497	305	27235
Females	292	400	478	560	608	662	740	755	786	787	800	766	757	817	789	744	723	649	588	589	504	506	366	243	140	15049
Males	344	326	347	387	393	434	505	557	527	574	538	640	631	618	615	575	635	635	524	537	497	519	409	254	165	12186

Figure 3: 2004 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.

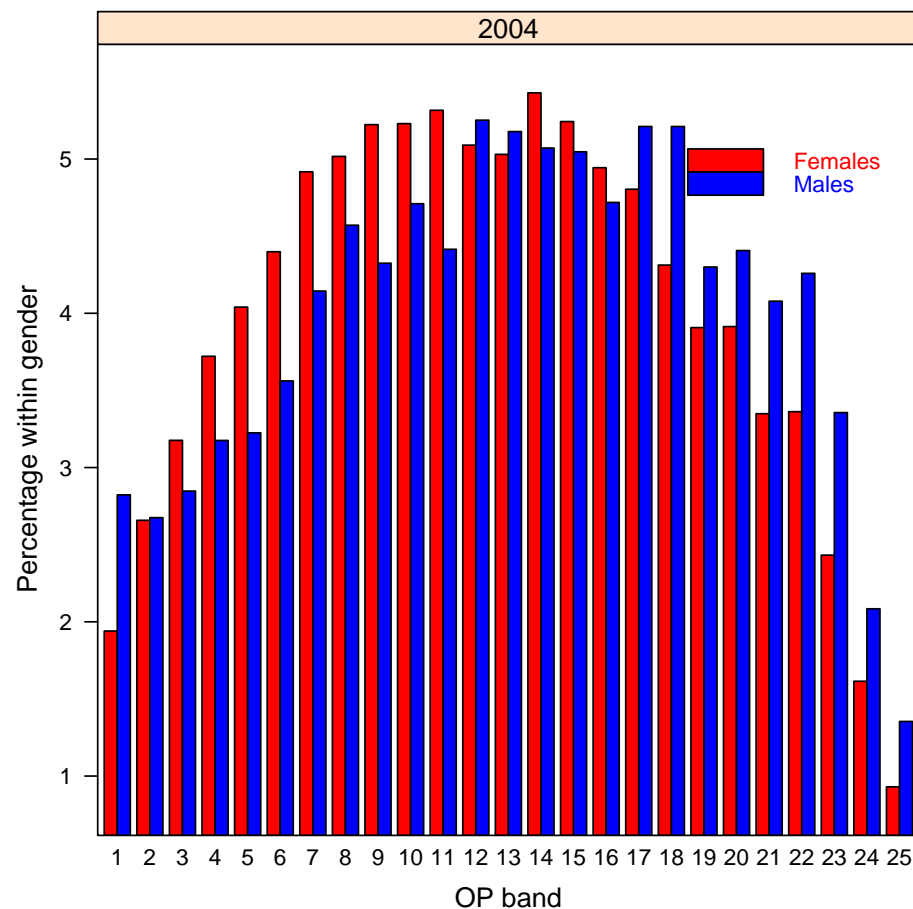


Table 3: 2004 OP percentage distribution within gender

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 %	2.34	2.67	3.03	3.48	3.68	4.02	4.57	4.82	4.82	5.00	4.91	5.16	5.10	5.27	5.16	4.84	4.99	4.71	4.08	4.13	3.68	3.76	2.85	1.82	1.12
Female %	1.94	2.66	3.18	3.72	4.04	4.40	4.92	5.02	5.22	5.23	5.32	5.09	5.03	5.43	5.24	4.94	4.80	4.31	3.91	3.91	3.35	3.36	2.43	1.61	0.93
Male %	2.82	2.68	2.85	3.18	3.23	3.56	4.14	4.57	4.32	4.71	4.41	5.25	5.18	5.07	5.05	4.72	5.21	5.21	4.30	4.41	4.08	4.26	3.36	2.08	1.35

## FP distributions

Figure 4 shows the FP distributions for 2004. 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

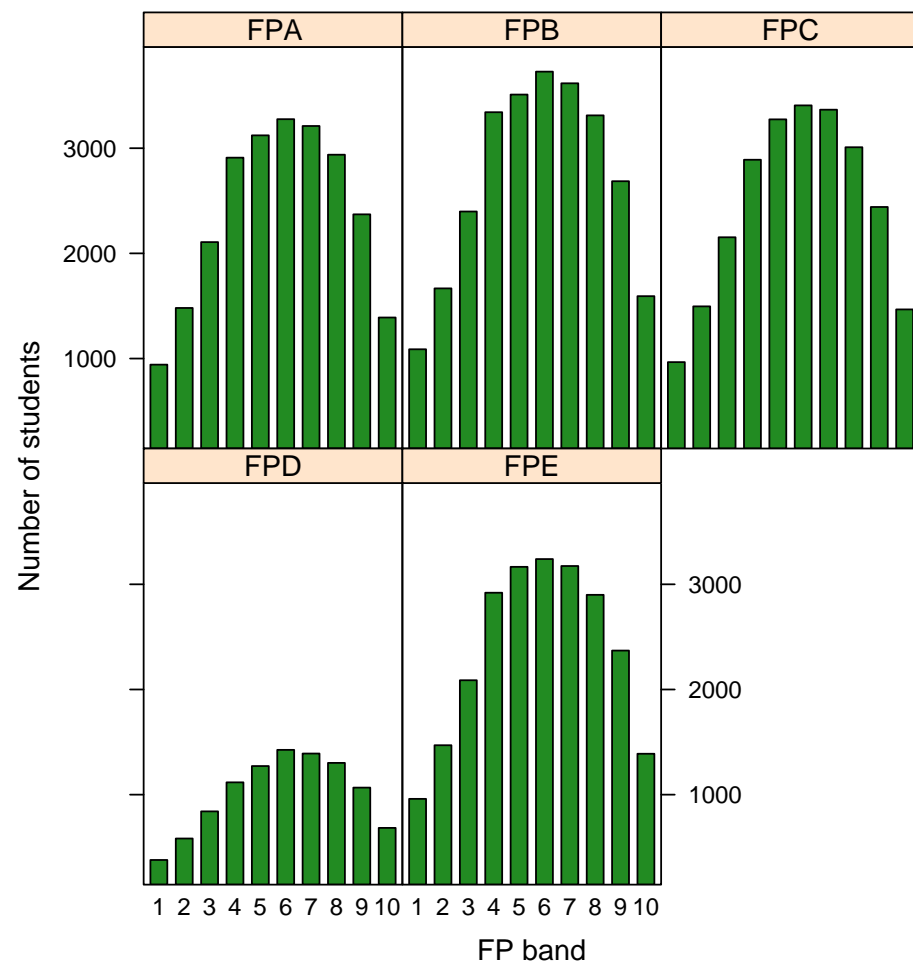
Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
A	942	1481	2107	2910	3122	3276	3211	2938	2371	1390	23748
B	1088	1667	2398	3342	3510	3728	3617	3312	2686	1593	26941
C	966	1496	2153	2890	3274	3407	3366	3009	2441	1467	24469
D	379	583	841	1117	1272	1426	1391	1302	1067	684	10062
E	960	1470	2088	2920	3166	3240	3174	2900	2370	1389	23677

## 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 2004 and the weights for each field position.

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

Figure 4: 2004 FP distribution



# 2004 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 (1987)	5	5	5	1	0	4	37	Mathematics B	5	1	1	5	5	1
1	English (1999 Trial-Pilot)	5	5	5	1	0	4	38	Mathematics C	5	1	1	5	5	1
1	English (2002)	5	5	5	1	0	4	40	Chemistry (1995)	5	2	3	5	5	3
2	English Extension (Literature)	5	5	4	1	0	3	40	Chemistry (2001 Trial-Pilot)	5	3	3	5	5	3
4	Indonesian Extension	5	3	5	1	0	4	41	Physics (1995)	5	1	3	5	5	3
5	French	5	2	5	1	0	4	41	Physics (2001 Trial-Pilot)	5	3	3	5	5	3
6	German	5	2	5	1	0	4	42	Biology	5	3	3	5	3	4
7	Indonesian	5	2	5	1	0	4	43	Earth Science	5	3	3	5	3	3
8	Italian	5	2	5	1	0	4	44	Multi-Strand Science	5	2	3	5	3	3
9	Japanese	5	2	5	1	0	4	45	Marine Studies (1994)	5	3	3	5	3	4
10	Russian	5	2	5	1	0	4	45	Marine Studies (2001 Trial-Pilot)	5	3	3	5	3	4
11	Chinese	5	2	5	1	0	4	51	Agricultural Science	5	3	3	5	3	4
12	Vietnamese	5	2	5	1	0	4	60	Accounting	5	3	3	5	4	2
13	Korean (1997 Pre-Trial)	5	2	5	1	0	4	62	Business Organisation & Management	5	4	4	5	2	3
13	Korean (2002)	5	2	5	1	0	4	63	Business Communication & Technologies (1998)	5	3	3	5	2	4
14	Modern Greek	5	2	5	1	0	4	63	Business Communication & Technologies (2002)	5	3	3	5	3	4
15	French Extension (1995 Pre-Trial)	5	3	5	1	0	4	65	Information Technology Systems (1999 Trial)	5	3	3	5	3	4
15	French Extension (2002)	5	3	5	1	0	4	65	Information Technology Systems (2002 Pilot)	5	3	3	5	4	4
16	German Extension (1995 Pre-Trial)	5	3	5	1	0	4	67	Health Education	5	5	4	3	1	3
16	German Extension (2002)	5	3	5	1	0	4	68	Physical Education	5	3	3	3	2	5
17	Latin	5	3	5	1	0	2	71	Home Economics (1992)	5	3	3	3	1	4
18	Spanish	5	2	5	1	0	4	71	Home Economics (2001)	5	4	3	4	2	4
20	Ancient History (1995)	5	5	5	2	0	2	72	Hospitality Studies	5	3	3	3	1	4
20	Ancient History (2001 Trial-Pilot)	5	5	5	2	0	2	74	Engineering Technology	5	3	3	5	4	4
21	Modern History (1995)	5	5	5	2	0	2	76	Graphics	5	1	3	5	4	4
21	Modern History (2001 Trial-Pilot)	5	5	5	2	0	2	78	Technology Studies	5	3	3	5	3	4
22	Futures	5	5	5	2	0	2	80	Visual Art	5	4	3	2	0	5
23	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies	5	4	5	2	0	2	85	Dance	5	3	3	2	0	5
24	Geography	5	5	5	4	2	2	86	Study of Religion	5	5	4	2	0	2
25	Political Studies	5	5	5	2	1	2	87	Information Processing & Technology	5	4	3	5	4	3
27	Economics	5	5	5	5	3	2	88	Drama	5	4	3	1	0	5
28	Study of Society	5	5	5	3	1	2	89	Film & Television	5	4	3	2	1	5
29	Legal Studies	5	5	5	2	0	2	91	Music	5	3	3	2	0	5
30	Logic	5	4	5	5	4	1	92	Music Extension (Performance)	5	2	2	2	1	5
36	Mathematics A	5	1	2	5	5	1	99	A Short Course in the Australian Constitution	5	3	3	1	0	0

# 2004 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 2004 by gender.

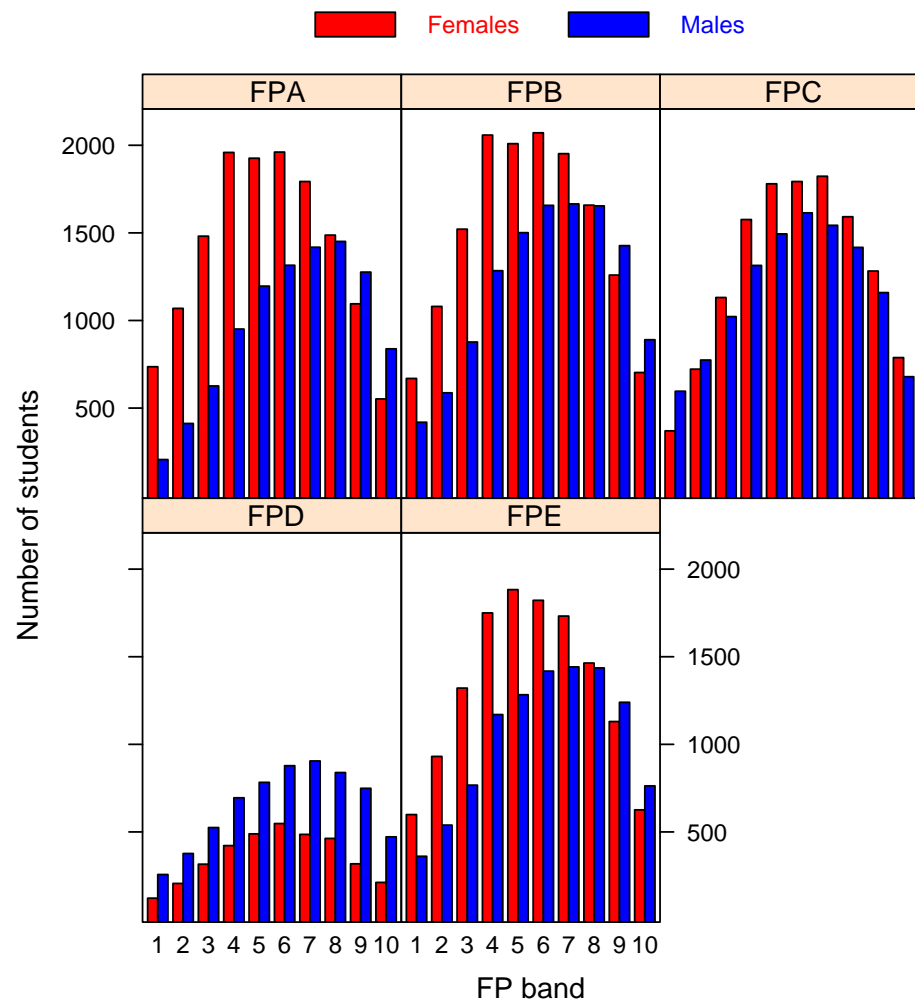
Table 6: Numbers of students eligible for each FP by gender

Gender	Field A	Field B	Field C	Field D	Field E
Female	14059	14980	12857	3582	13258
Male	9689	11961	11612	6480	10419

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	13.2	13.8	13.5	12.4	10.0	5.9
	Female	5.2	7.6	10.5	13.9	13.7	14.0	12.8	10.6	7.8	3.9
	Male	2.1	4.3	6.5	9.8	12.3	13.6	14.6	15.0	13.2	8.7
B	All students	4.0	6.2	8.9	12.4	13.0	13.8	13.4	12.3	10.0	5.9
	Female	4.5	7.2	10.2	13.7	13.4	13.8	13.0	11.1	8.4	4.7
	Male	3.5	4.9	7.3	10.7	12.6	13.9	13.9	13.8	11.9	7.4
C	All students	4.0	6.1	8.8	11.8	13.4	13.9	13.8	12.3	10.0	6.0
	Female	2.9	5.6	8.8	12.3	13.8	14.0	14.2	12.4	10.0	6.1
	Male	5.1	6.7	8.8	11.3	12.9	13.9	13.3	12.2	10.0	5.9
D	All students	3.8	5.8	8.4	11.1	12.6	14.2	13.8	12.9	10.6	6.8
	Female	3.4	5.8	8.8	11.8	13.7	15.3	13.6	12.9	8.9	5.9
	Male	4.0	5.8	8.1	10.7	12.1	13.6	14.0	13.0	11.6	7.3
E	All students	4.1	6.2	8.8	12.3	13.4	13.7	13.4	12.3	10.0	5.9
	Female	4.5	7.0	10.0	13.2	14.2	13.7	13.1	11.0	8.5	4.7
	Male	3.5	5.2	7.4	11.2	12.3	13.6	13.8	13.8	11.9	7.3

Figure 5: 2004 FP distribution by gender



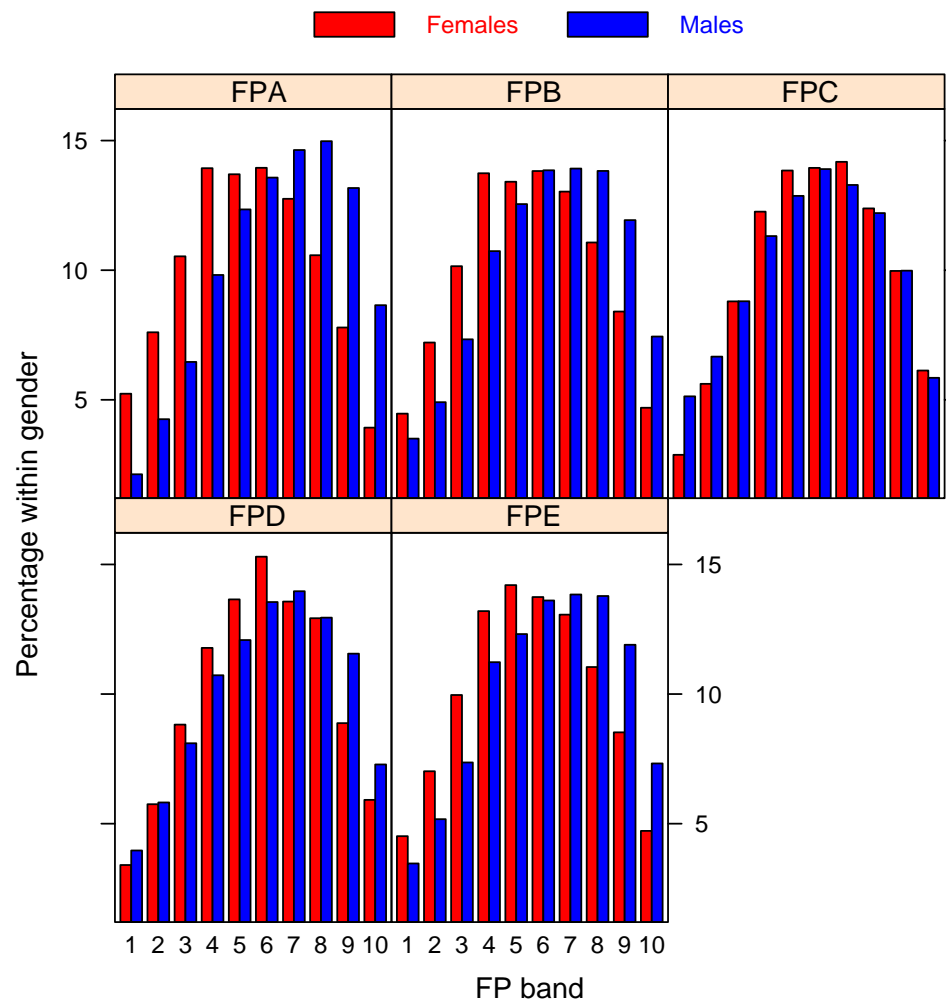
## FPs percentage distribution within gender

Figure 6 shows FPs and their distributions in the state for 2004 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 2004.

Table 8: Numbers of students per FP combination

Sets of FPs	Students	Total	Per cent	
ABCDE	6502	5 FPs	6502	23.87
ABCD	748			
ABCE	11828			
ACDE	2			
BCDE	2290	4 FPs	14868	54.59
ABC	1926			
ABE	2375			
ACD	3			
ACE	4			
BCD	252			
BCE	590			
CDE	39	3 FPs	5189	19.05
AB	357			
AC	2			
AE	1			
BC	40			
BE	33			
CD	226			
CE	13	2 FPs	672	2.47
C	4	1 FP	4	0.01

Figure 6: 2004 FP distribution within gender



## Contact Us

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