

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 26 233 Queensland students² who received an OP in 2006 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: 2006 OP distribution

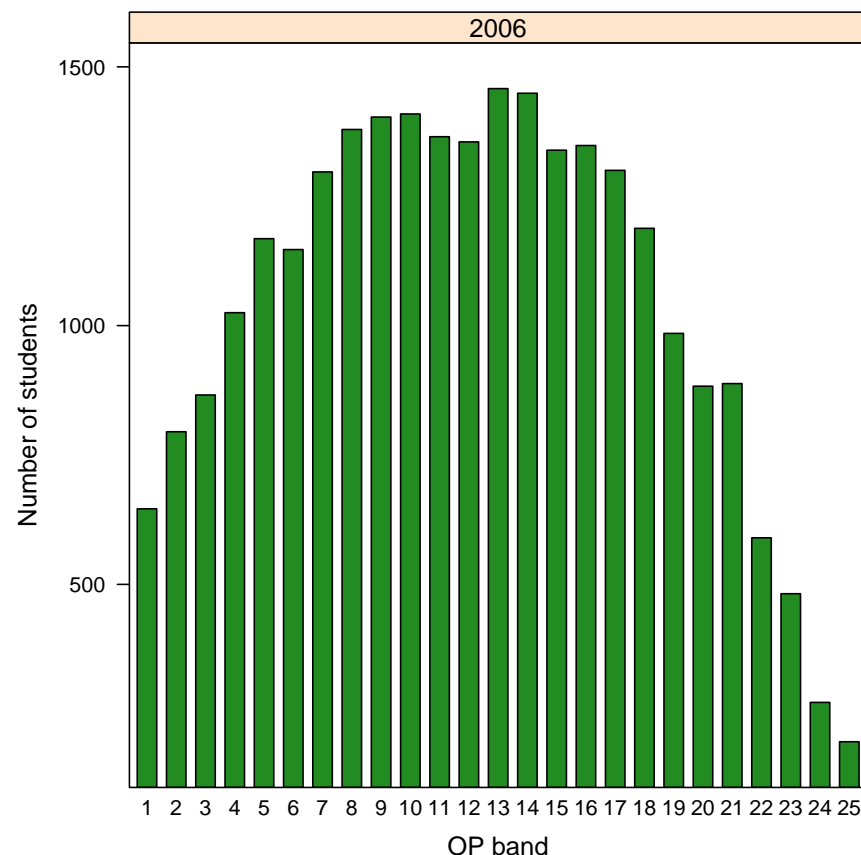


Table 1: 2006 OP distribution

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	646	795	866	1025	1168	1147	1297	1379	1403	1409	1365	1355	1458	1449	1339	1348	1300	1188	985	883	888	590	482	272	196
Cumulative	646	1441	2307	3332	4500	5647	6944	8323	9726	11135	12500	13855	15313	16762	18101	19449	20749	21937	22922	23805	24693	25283	25765	26037	26233
Per cent	2.46	3.03	3.30	3.91	4.45	4.37	4.94	5.26	5.35	5.37	5.20	5.17	5.56	5.52	5.10	5.14	4.96	4.53	3.75	3.37	3.39	2.25	1.84	1.04	0.75
Cumulative	2.46	5.49	8.79	12.70	17.15	21.53	26.47	31.73	37.08	42.45	47.65	52.82	58.37	63.90	69.00	74.14	79.10	83.62	87.38	90.74	94.13	96.38	98.22	99.25	100.00

Figure 2: 2006 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.

³ Report submitted to the Minister for Education by the Tertiary Entrance Reviewer Professor Nancy Viviani.

⁴ 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.

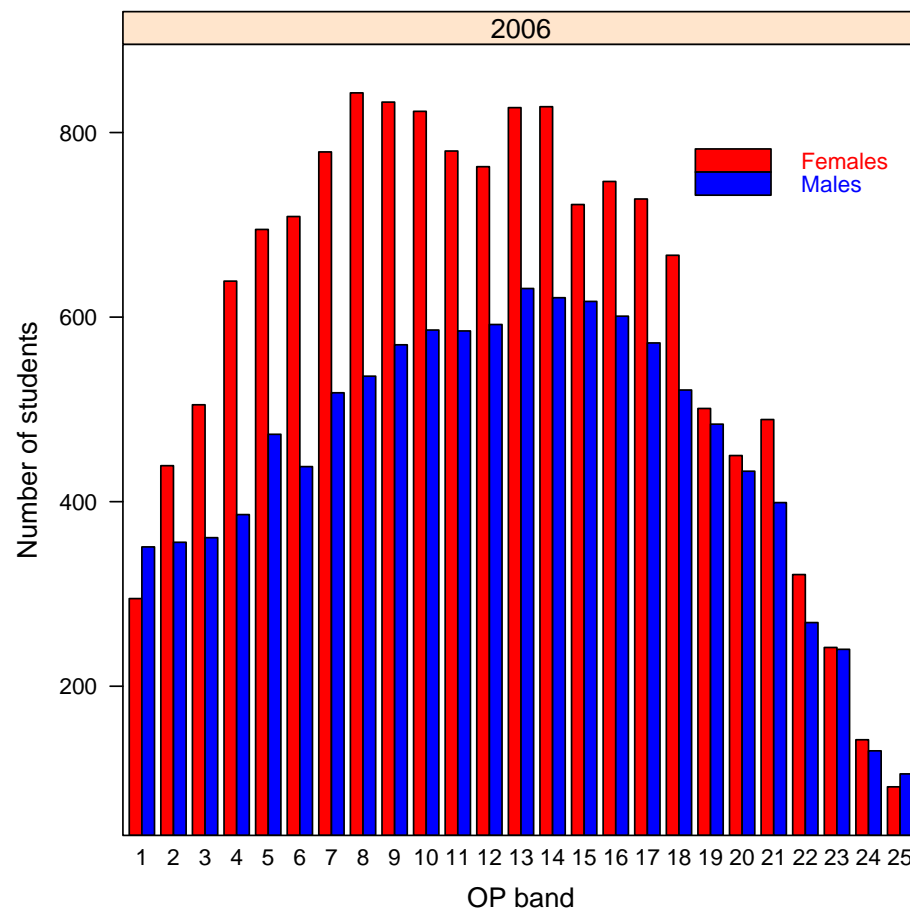


Table 2: 2006 OP distribution

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	646	795	866	1025	1168	1147	1297	1379	1403	1409	1365	1355	1458	1449	1339	1348	1300	1188	985	883	888	590	482	272	196	26233
Females	295	439	505	639	695	709	779	843	833	823	780	763	827	828	722	747	728	667	501	450	489	321	242	142	91	14858
Males	351	356	361	386	473	438	518	536	570	586	585	592	631	621	617	601	572	521	484	433	399	269	240	130	105	11375

Figure 3: 2006 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.

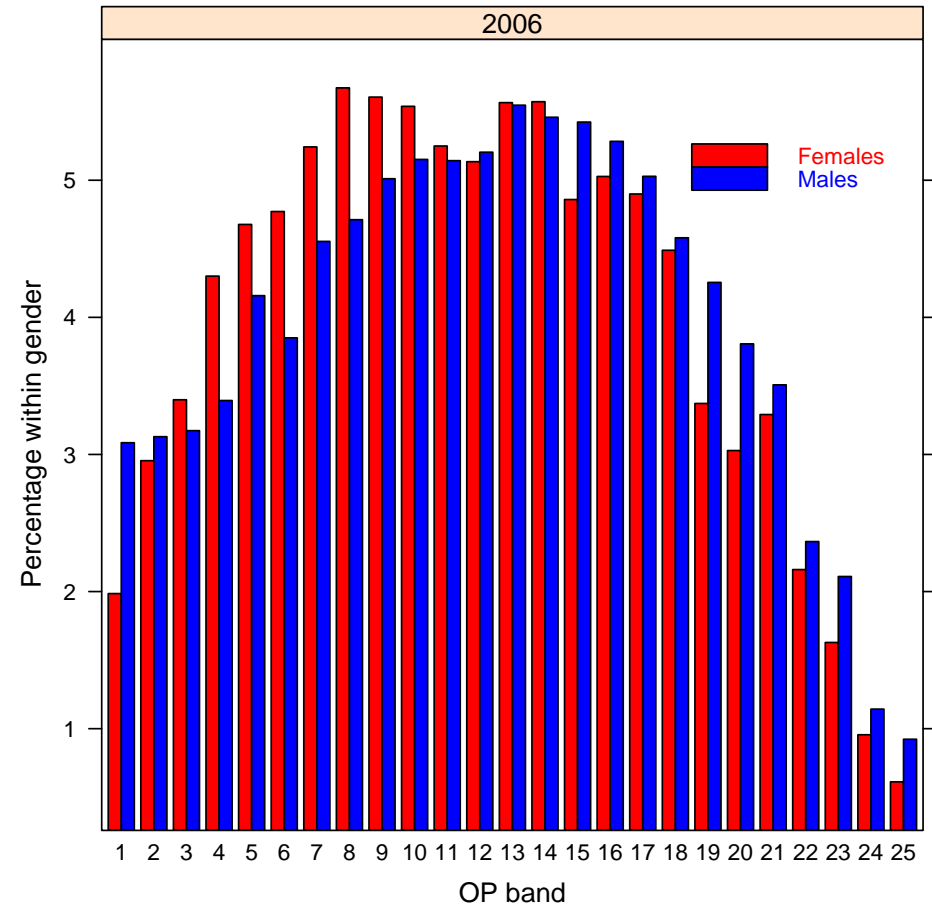


Table 3: 2006 OP percentage distribution within gender

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 %	2.46	3.03	3.30	3.91	4.45	4.37	4.94	5.26	5.35	5.37	5.20	5.17	5.56	5.52	5.10	5.14	4.96	4.53	3.75	3.37	3.39	2.25	1.84	1.04	0.75
Female %	1.99	2.95	3.40	4.30	4.68	4.77	5.24	5.67	5.61	5.54	5.25	5.14	5.57	5.57	4.86	5.03	4.90	4.49	3.37	3.03	3.29	2.16	1.63	0.96	0.61
Male %	3.09	3.13	3.17	3.39	4.16	3.85	4.55	4.71	5.01	5.15	5.14	5.20	5.55	5.46	5.42	5.28	5.03	4.58	4.25	3.81	3.51	2.36	2.11	1.14	0.92

FP distributions

Figure 4 shows the FP distributions for 2006. 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

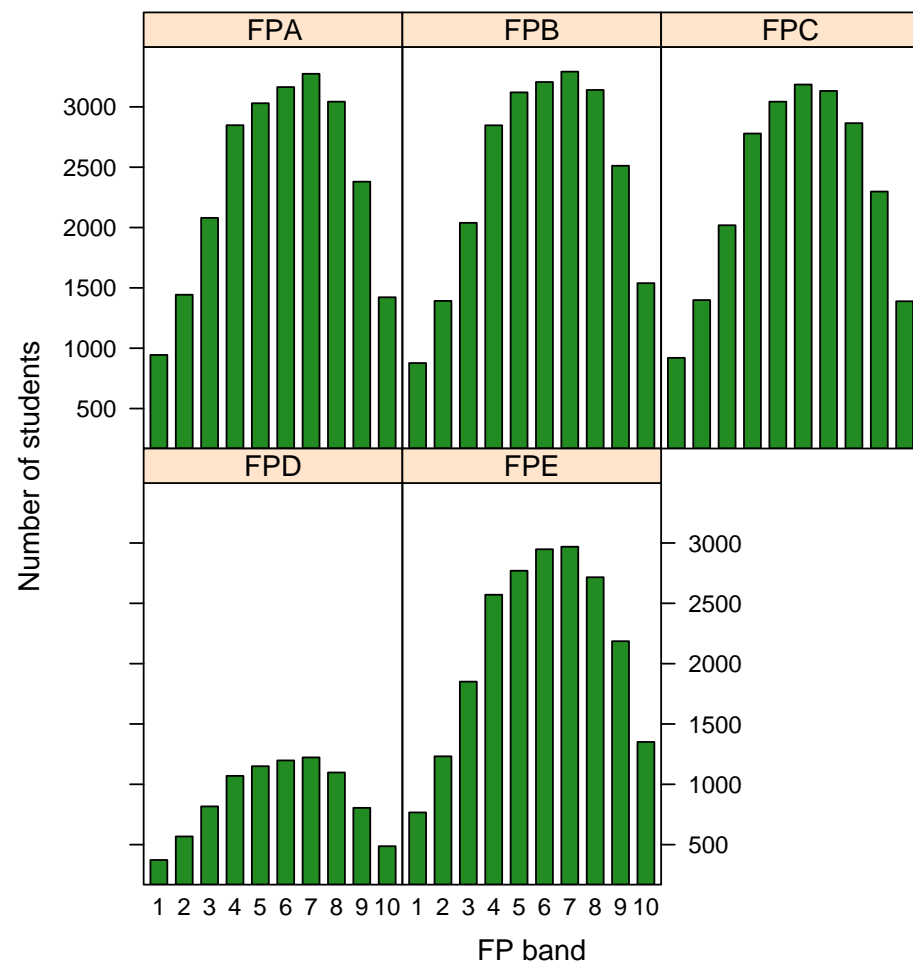
Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
A	944	1443	2080	2848	3030	3164	3274	3043	2380	1422	23628
B	877	1392	2039	2847	3120	3206	3292	3140	2512	1539	23964
C	920	1399	2019	2779	3043	3185	3132	2865	2298	1389	23029
D	373	568	817	1070	1150	1198	1223	1098	805	487	8789
E	767	1232	1851	2571	2770	2948	2969	2716	2186	1351	21361

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 2006 and the weights for each field position.

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

Figure 4: 2006 FP distribution



2006 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	5	5	4	1	0	4	38	Mathematics C	5	1	1	5	5	1
2	English Extension (Literature)	5	5	4	1	0	3	40	Chemistry (1995)	5	2	3	5	5	3
4	Indonesian Extension	5	3	5	1	0	4	40	Chemistry (2004 Extended Trial-Pilot)	5	3	3	5	5	3
5	French	5	2	5	1	0	4	41	Physics (1995)	5	1	2	5	5	2
6	German	5	2	5	1	0	4	41	Physics (2004 Extended Trial-Pilot)	5	3	3	5	5	3
7	Indonesian	5	2	5	1	0	4	42	Biology	5	3	3	5	3	3
8	Italian	5	2	5	1	0	4	43	Earth Science	5	3	3	5	3	3
9	Japanese	5	2	5	1	0	4	44	Multi-Strand Science	5	2	3	5	3	3
10	Russian	5	2	5	1	0	4	45	Marine Studies	5	3	3	5	3	4
11	Chinese	5	2	5	1	0	4	46	Science21	5	4	3	5	3	3
12	Vietnamese	5	2	5	1	0	4	51	Agricultural Science (1999)	5	3	3	5	3	3
13	Korean	5	2	5	1	0	4	51	Agricultural Science (2004)	5	3	3	5	3	3
14	Modern Greek	5	2	5	1	0	4	60	Accounting	5	3	3	5	4	2
15	French Extension	5	3	5	1	0	4	62	Business Organisation & Management	5	4	4	4	2	3
16	German Extension	5	3	5	1	0	4	63	Business Communication & Technologies	5	3	3	5	2	3
17	Latin	5	3	5	1	0	2	65	Information Technology Systems (2002 Pilot)	5	3	3	5	4	3
18	Spanish	5	2	5	1	0	4	65	Information Technology Systems (2004 Extended Pilot)	5	3	3	5	4	4
19	Polish	5	2	5	1	0	4	67	Health Education	5	5	4	3	2	2
20	Ancient History (1995)	5	5	5	2	0	2	68	Physical Education	5	3	3	3	2	5
20	Ancient History (2004)	5	5	5	2	0	2	71	Home Economics	5	3	3	3	2	4
21	Modern History (1995)	5	5	5	2	0	2	72	Hospitality Studies	5	3	3	3	2	4
21	Modern History (2004)	5	5	5	2	0	2	74	Engineering Technology	5	3	3	5	4	3
22	Futures	5	5	5	3	1	3	76	Graphics	5	2	3	5	4	4
23	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies	5	5	5	2	0	3	78	Technology Studies (1999)	5	3	3	5	3	4
24	Geography	5	5	5	4	2	3	78	Technology Studies (2003)	5	3	3	5	3	4
25	Political Studies	5	5	5	2	0	2	80	Visual Art	5	4	3	2	0	5
27	Economics	5	5	5	4	2	2	85	Dance	5	3	3	2	0	5
28	Study of Society	5	5	5	3	0	2	86	Study of Religion	5	5	4	2	0	2
29	Legal Studies	5	5	5	2	0	2	87	Information Processing & Technology	5	3	3	4	4	3
30	Logic	5	5	5	3	2	2	88	Drama	5	4	3	1	0	5
33	Philosophy & Reason	5	5	5	3	2	2	89	Film & Television	5	4	3	2	0	5
36	Mathematics A	5	1	2	5	5	1	91	Music	5	3	3	2	0	5
37	Mathematics B	5	1	1	5	5	1	92	Music Extension (Performance)	5	2	2	2	2	5

FP distributions by gender

Figure 5 shows the FPs and their distributions in the state for 2006 by gender.

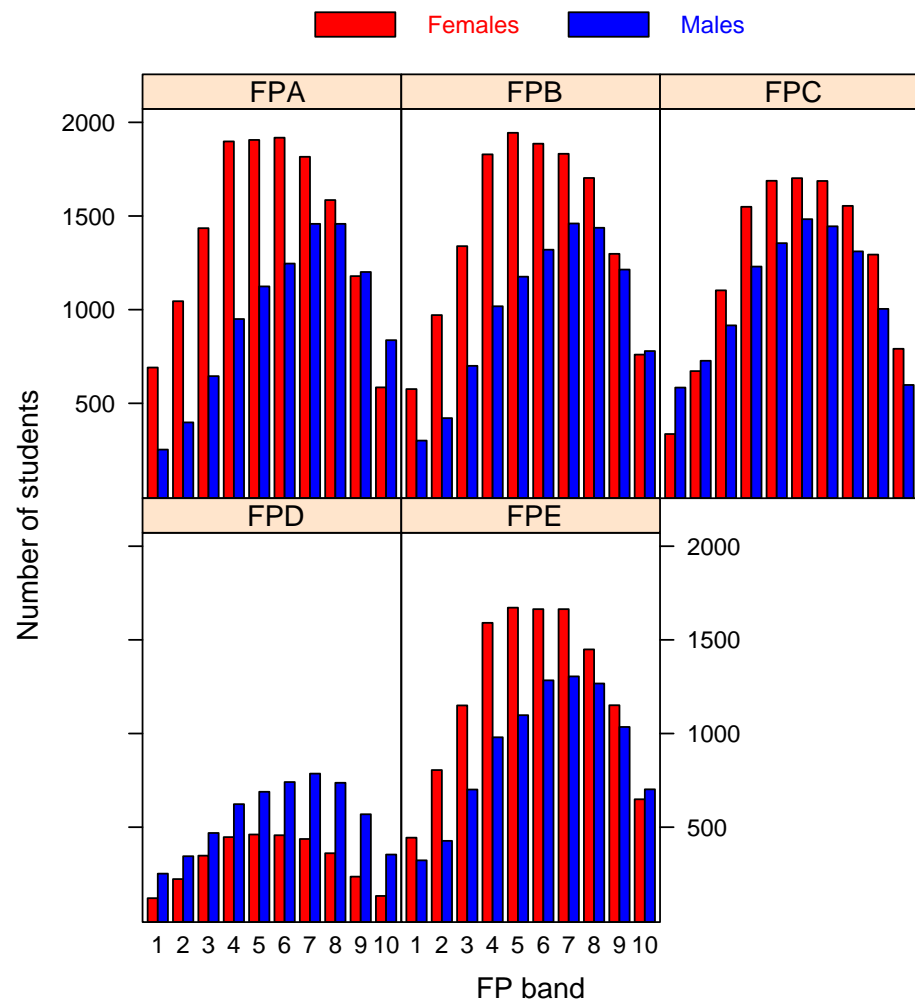
Table 6: Numbers of students eligible for each FP by gender

Gender	Field A	Field B	Field C	Field D	Field E
Female	14058	14138	12376	3224	12239
Male	9570	9826	10653	5565	9122

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	6.1	8.8	12.1	12.8	13.4	13.9	12.9	10.1	6.0
	Female	4.9	7.4	10.2	13.5	13.6	13.6	12.9	11.3	8.4	4.2
	Male	2.6	4.2	6.7	9.9	11.8	13.0	15.2	15.2	12.6	8.8
B	All students	3.7	5.8	8.5	11.9	13.0	13.4	13.7	13.1	10.5	6.4
	Female	4.1	6.9	9.5	12.9	13.8	13.3	13.0	12.1	9.2	5.4
	Male	3.1	4.3	7.1	10.4	12.0	13.4	14.9	14.6	12.4	7.9
C	All students	4.0	6.1	8.8	12.1	13.2	13.8	13.6	12.4	10.0	6.0
	Female	2.7	5.4	8.9	12.5	13.6	13.8	13.6	12.6	10.5	6.4
	Male	5.5	6.8	8.6	11.6	12.7	13.9	13.6	12.3	9.4	5.6
D	All students	4.2	6.5	9.3	12.2	13.1	13.6	13.9	12.5	9.2	5.5
	Female	3.8	6.9	10.8	13.9	14.3	14.2	13.6	11.2	7.3	4.1
	Male	4.5	6.2	8.4	11.2	12.4	13.3	14.1	13.2	10.2	6.4
E	All students	3.6	5.8	8.7	12.0	13.0	13.8	13.9	12.7	10.2	6.3
	Female	3.6	6.6	9.4	13.0	13.7	13.6	13.6	11.8	9.4	5.3
	Male	3.5	4.7	7.7	10.7	12.0	14.1	14.3	13.9	11.4	7.7

Figure 5: 2006 FP distribution by gender



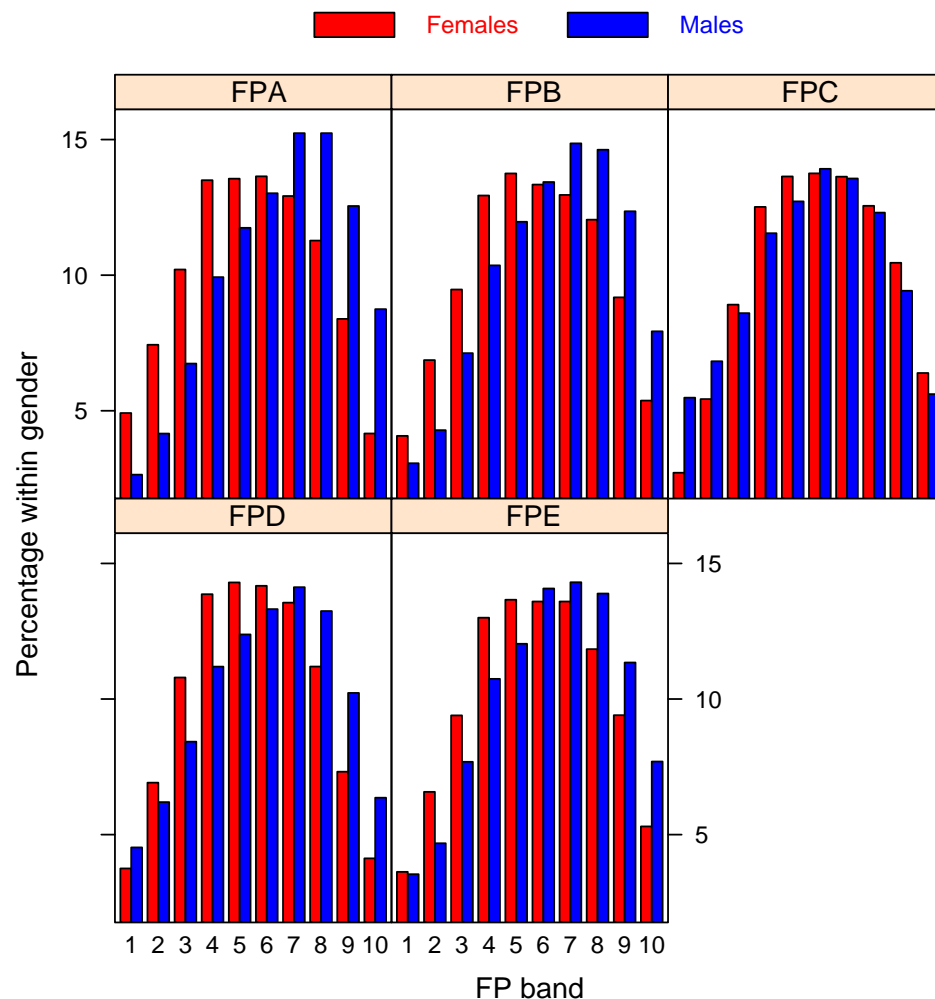
FPs percentage distribution within gender

Figure 6 shows FPs and their distributions in the state for 2006 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 2006.

Table 8: Numbers of students per FP combination

Sets of FPs	Students	Total	Per cent	
ABCDE	5716	5 FPs	5716	21.79
ABCD	855			
ABCE	10905			
ACDE	137			
BCDE	449	4 FPs	12346	47.06
ABC	2428			
ABE	2694			
ACD	108			
ACE	268			
BCD	70			
BCE	328			
CDE	607	3 FPs	6503	24.79
AB	410			
AC	46			
AE	61			
BC	75			
BE	33			
CD	847			
CE	158	2 FPs	1630	6.21
B	1			
C	32			
E	5	1 FP	38	0.14

Figure 6: 2006 FP distribution within gender



Contact Us

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