

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 27 237 Queensland students² who received an OP in 1999 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: 1999 OP distribution

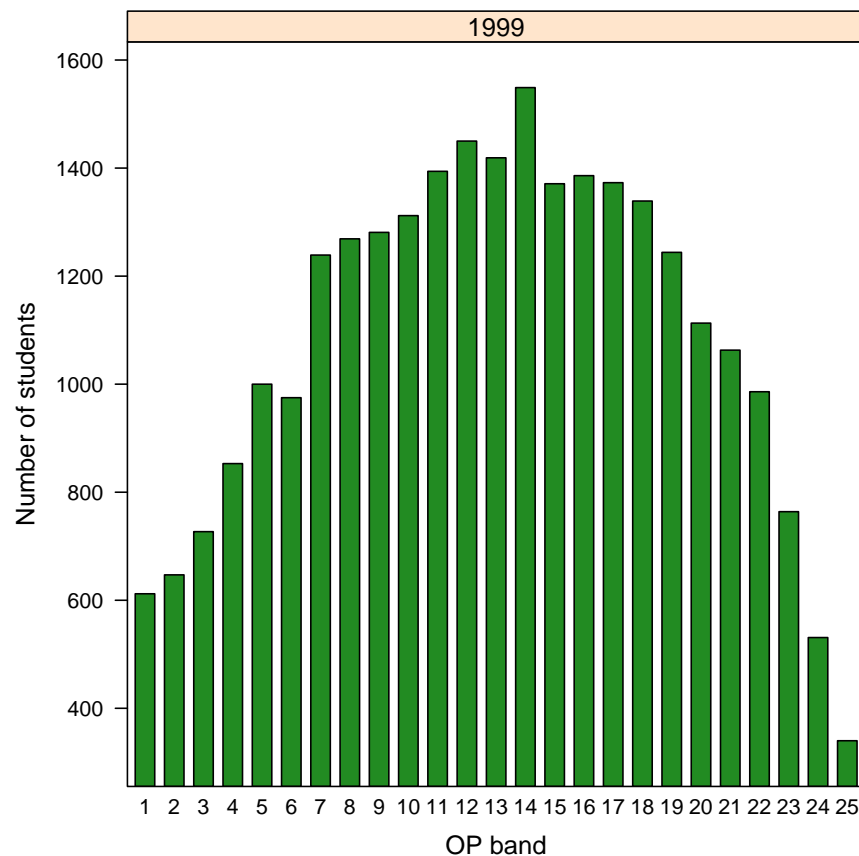


Table 1: 1999 OP distribution

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	612	647	727	853	1000	975	1239	1269	1281	1312	1394	1450	1419	1549	1371	1386	1373	1339	1244	1113	1063	986	764	531	340
Cumulative	612	1259	1986	2839	3839	4814	6053	7322	8603	9915	11309	12759	14178	15727	17098	18484	19857	21196	22440	23553	24616	25602	26366	26897	27237
Per cent	2.25	2.38	2.67	3.13	3.67	3.58	4.55	4.66	4.70	4.82	5.12	5.32	5.21	5.69	5.03	5.09	5.04	4.92	4.57	4.09	3.90	3.62	2.81	1.95	1.25
Cumulative	2.25	4.62	7.29	10.42	14.09	17.67	22.22	26.88	31.59	36.40	41.52	46.84	52.05	57.74	62.77	67.86	72.90	77.82	82.39	86.47	90.38	94.00	96.80	98.75	100.00

Figure 2: 1999 OP distribution by gender

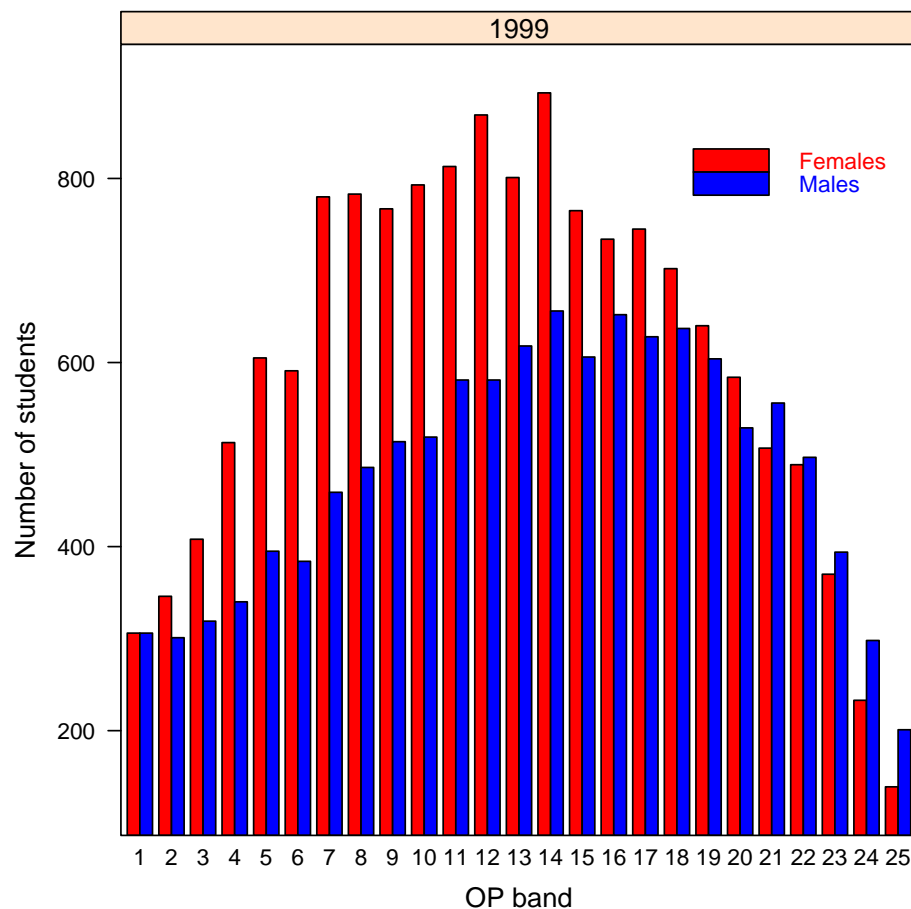
Comparing OPs across years

*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: 1999 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	612	647	727	853	1000	975	1239	1269	1281	1312	1394	1450	1419	1549	1371	1386	1373	1339	1244	1113	1063	986	764	531	340	27237
Females	306	346	408	513	605	591	780	783	767	793	813	869	801	893	765	734	745	702	640	584	507	489	370	233	139	15176
Males	306	301	319	340	395	384	459	486	514	519	581	581	618	656	606	652	628	637	604	529	556	497	394	298	201	12061

Figure 3: 1999 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.

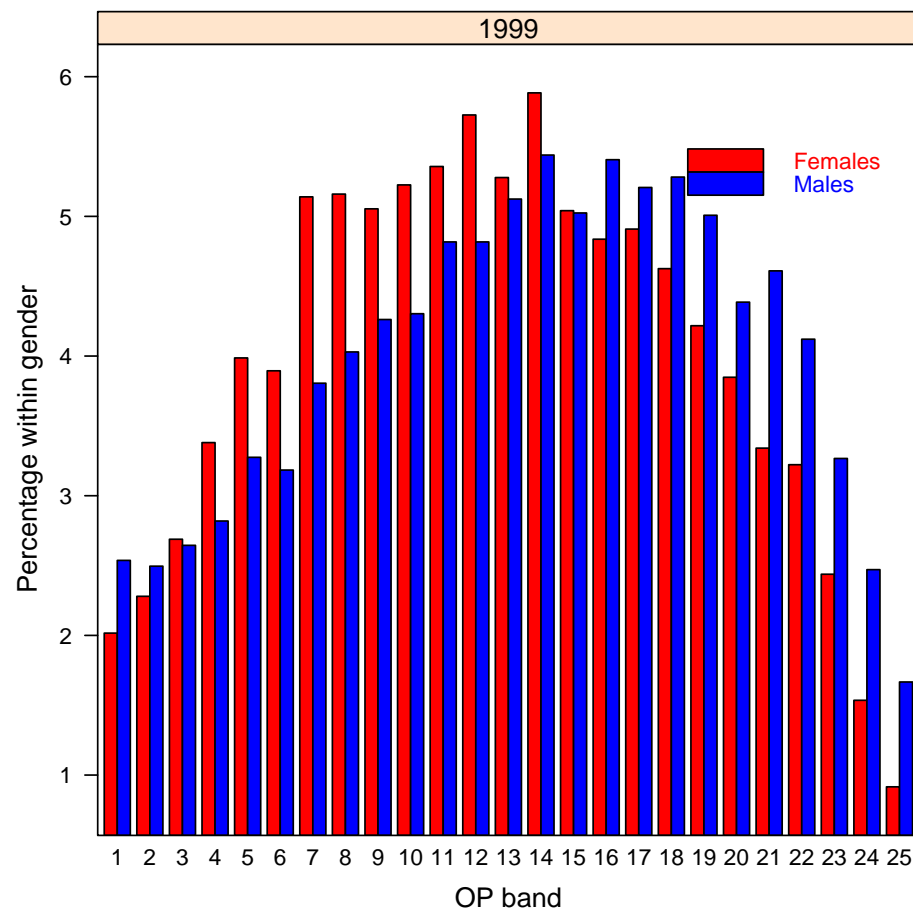


Table 3: 1999 OP percentage distribution within gender

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 %	2.25	2.38	2.67	3.13	3.67	3.58	4.55	4.66	4.70	4.82	5.12	5.32	5.21	5.69	5.03	5.09	5.04	4.92	4.57	4.09	3.90	3.62	2.81	1.95	1.25
Female %	2.02	2.28	2.69	3.38	3.99	3.89	5.14	5.16	5.05	5.23	5.36	5.73	5.28	5.88	5.04	4.84	4.91	4.63	4.22	3.85	3.34	3.22	2.44	1.54	0.92
Male %	2.54	2.50	2.64	2.82	3.28	3.18	3.81	4.03	4.26	4.30	4.82	4.82	5.12	5.44	5.02	5.41	5.21	5.28	5.01	4.39	4.61	4.12	3.27	2.47	1.67

FP distributions

Figure 4 shows the FP distributions for 1999. 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

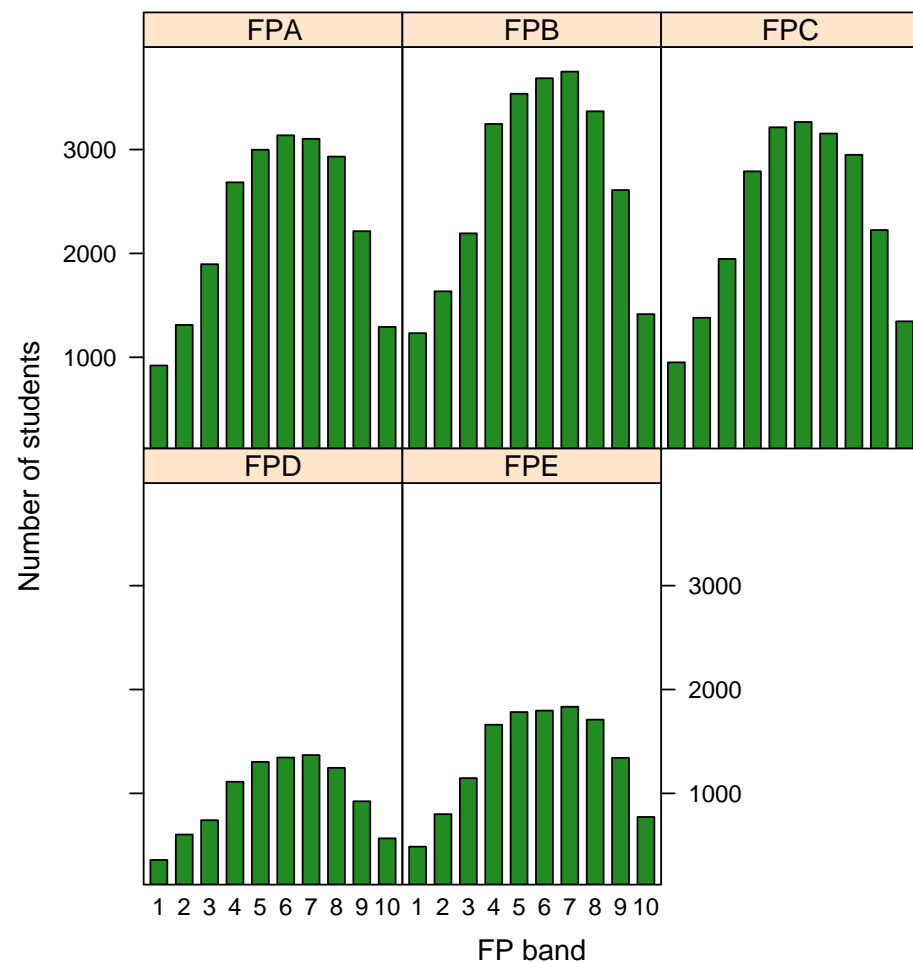
Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
A	921	1311	1896	2684	2998	3137	3103	2932	2214	1292	22488
B	1232	1635	2193	3246	3537	3686	3750	3368	2610	1415	26672
C	951	1380	1947	2790	3214	3265	3154	2949	2225	1346	23221
D	359	604	742	1112	1303	1345	1369	1246	924	567	9571
E	487	800	1147	1661	1783	1797	1834	1710	1342	773	13334

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 1999 and the weights for each field position.

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

Figure 4: 1999 FP distribution



1999 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	0	4
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		2
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	4	4	3	2	1
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	2
27	Economics (1995 Trial-Pilot)	5	4	4	5	3	1
27	Economics (1992)	5	4	5	5	2	1
28	Study of Society	5	5	4	3	1	1
29	Legal Studies	5	4	5	2		2
30	Logic	5	4	4	4	4	
36	Mathematics A	5	1	2	5	5	
37	Mathematics B	5	1	1	5	5	
38	Mathematics C	5	1	1	5	5	
40	Chemistry	5	2	3	5	5	2
41	Physics	5	2	3	5	5	2
42	Biology	5	3	3	5	3	3
43	Earth Science	5	3	3	5	4	3
44	Multi-Strand Science	5	2	3	5	3	2
45	Marine Studies	5	3	3	5	3	4
51	Agricultural Science (1995 Trial-Pilot)	5	4	3	5	3	3
51	Agricultural Science (1992)	5	3	3	5	3	3
60	Accounting	5	3	3	5	4	2
61	Secretarial Studies	5	1	3	2	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	3	2	1	2
68	Physical Education	5	3	3	4	2	5
71	Home Economics	5	4	3	2	1	4
72	Hospitality Studies	5	3	3	3	1	4
74	Engineering Technology	5	3	3	5	4	3
76	Graphics	5	1	2	5	4	4
78	Technology Studies (1995 Trial-Pilot)	5	3	3	5	3	4
78	Technology Studies (1991)	5	3	3	5	3	4
80	Visual Art	5	4	3	1		5
84	Film & Television	5	4	3	2	1	5
85	Dance	5	3	3	1		5
86	Study of Religion	5	4	5	2		2
87	Information Processing & Technology	5	3	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	2	2	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 1999 by gender.

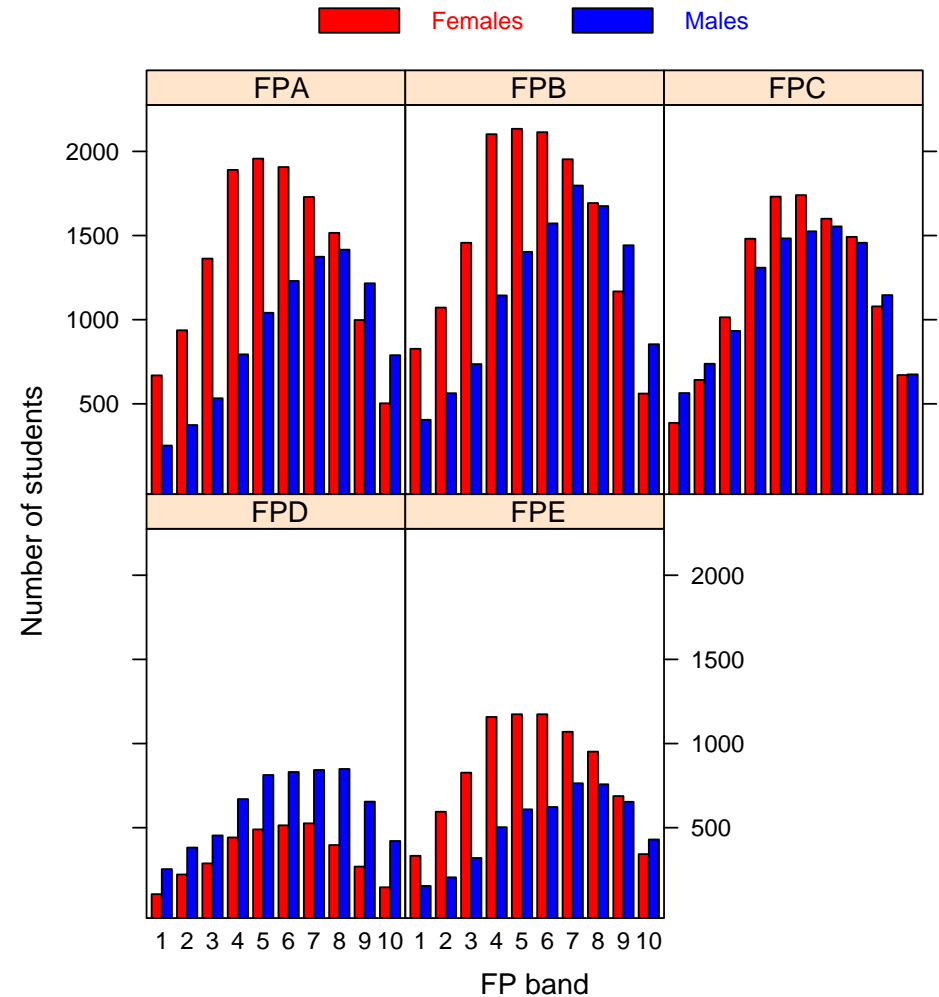
Table 6: Numbers of students eligible for each FP by gender

Gender	Field A	Field B	Field C	Field D	Field E
Female	13469	15081	11837	3399	8314
Male	9019	11591	11384	6172	5020

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	4.1	5.8	8.4	11.9	13.3	14.0	13.8	13.0	9.9	5.8
	Female	5.0	7.0	10.1	14.0	14.5	14.2	12.8	11.3	7.4	3.7
	Male	2.8	4.2	5.9	8.8	11.5	13.6	15.2	15.7	13.5	8.8
B	All students	4.6	6.1	8.2	12.2	13.3	13.8	14.1	12.6	9.8	5.3
	Female	5.5	7.1	9.7	13.9	14.2	14.0	13.0	11.2	7.7	3.7
	Male	3.5	4.9	6.4	9.9	12.1	13.6	15.5	14.5	12.4	7.4
C	All students	4.1	5.9	8.4	12.0	13.8	14.1	13.6	12.7	9.6	5.8
	Female	3.3	5.4	8.6	12.5	14.6	14.7	13.5	12.6	9.1	5.7
	Male	5.0	6.5	8.2	11.5	13.0	13.4	13.7	12.8	10.1	5.9
D	All students	3.8	6.3	7.8	11.6	13.6	14.1	14.3	13.0	9.7	5.9
	Female	3.1	6.5	8.5	13.0	14.4	15.1	15.5	11.7	7.9	4.3
	Male	4.1	6.2	7.4	10.9	13.2	13.5	13.7	13.8	10.6	6.8
E	All students	3.7	6.0	8.6	12.5	13.4	13.5	13.8	12.8	10.1	5.8
	Female	4.0	7.2	10.0	13.9	14.1	14.1	12.9	11.5	8.3	4.1
	Male	3.1	4.1	6.4	10.0	12.1	12.4	15.2	15.1	13.0	8.6

Figure 5: 1999 FP distribution by gender



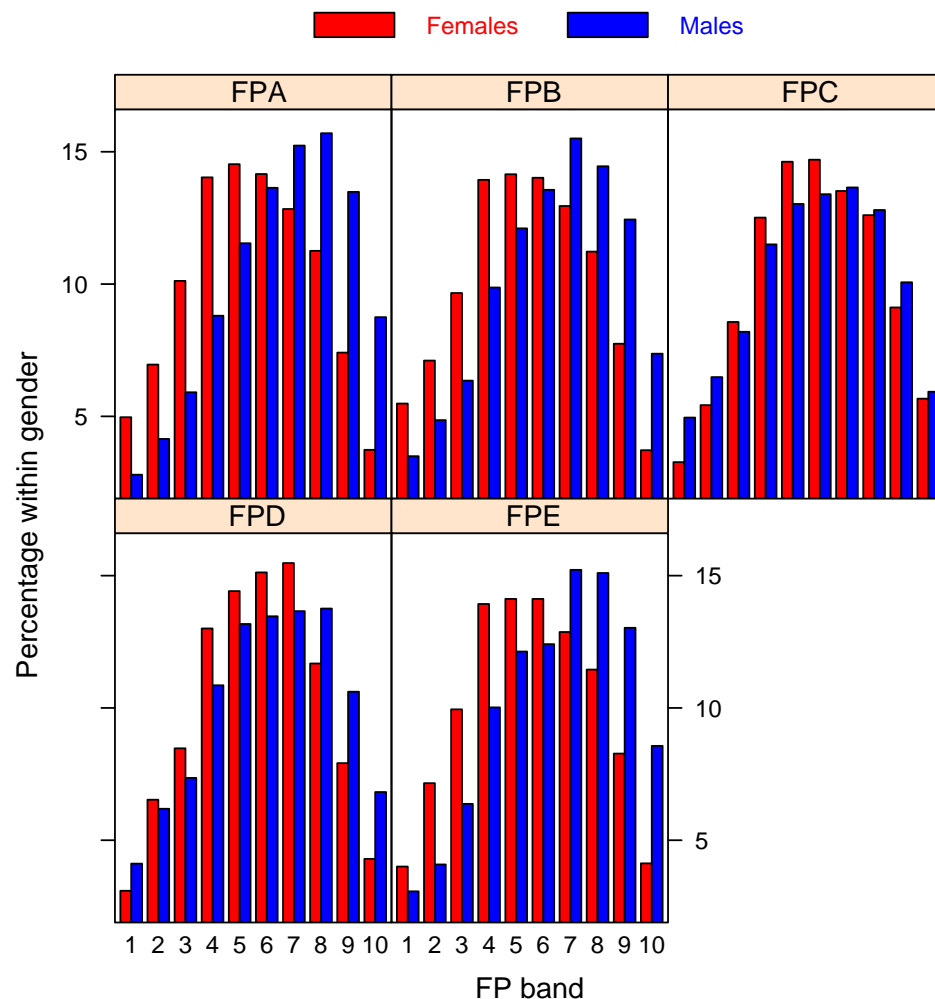
FPs percentage distribution within gender

Figure 6 shows FPs and their distributions in the state for 1999 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 1999.

Table 8: Numbers of students per FP combination

Sets of FPs	Students	Total	Per cent	
ABCDE	2976	5 FPs	2976	10.93
ABCD	3611			
ABCE	6577			
BCDE	281	4 FPs	10469	38.44
ABC	5623			
ABE	2627			
ACD	3			
BCD	2265			
BCE	491			
CDE	30	3 FPs	11039	40.53
AB	1064			
AC	1			
AE	4			
BC	842			
BE	253			
CD	405			
CE	92	2 FPs	2661	9.77
A	2			
B	62			
C	24			
E	3	1 FP	91	0.33

Figure 6: 1999 FP distribution within gender



Contact Us

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