

## 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 27 027 Queensland students<sup>2</sup> who received an OP in 2005 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: 2005 OP distribution

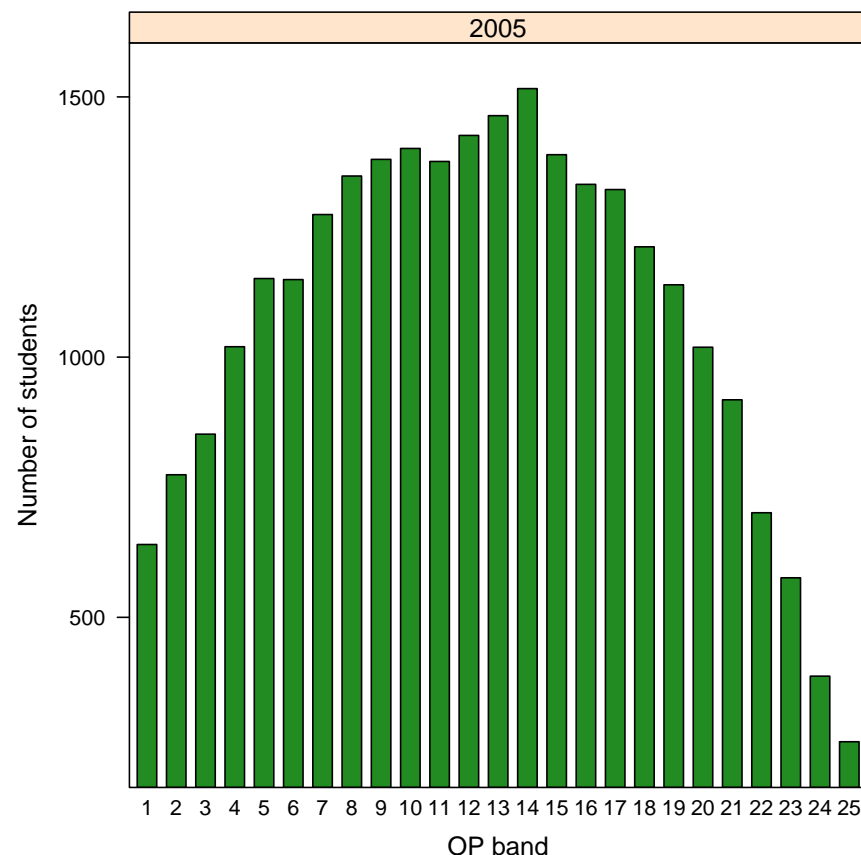


Table 1: 2005 OP distribution

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	640	774	852	1020	1151	1149	1274	1348	1380	1401	1376	1426	1464	1516	1389	1332	1322	1212	1139	1019	918	701	576	387	261
Cumulative	640	1414	2266	3286	4437	5586	6860	8208	9588	10989	12365	13791	15255	16771	18160	19492	20814	22026	23165	24184	25102	25803	26379	26766	27027
Per cent	2.37	2.86	3.15	3.77	4.26	4.25	4.71	4.99	5.11	5.18	5.09	5.28	5.42	5.61	5.14	4.93	4.89	4.48	4.21	3.77	3.40	2.59	2.13	1.43	0.97
Cumulative	2.37	5.23	8.38	12.16	16.42	20.67	25.38	30.37	35.48	40.66	45.75	51.03	56.44	62.05	67.19	72.12	77.01	81.50	85.71	89.48	92.88	95.47	97.60	99.03	100.00

Figure 2: 2005 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.

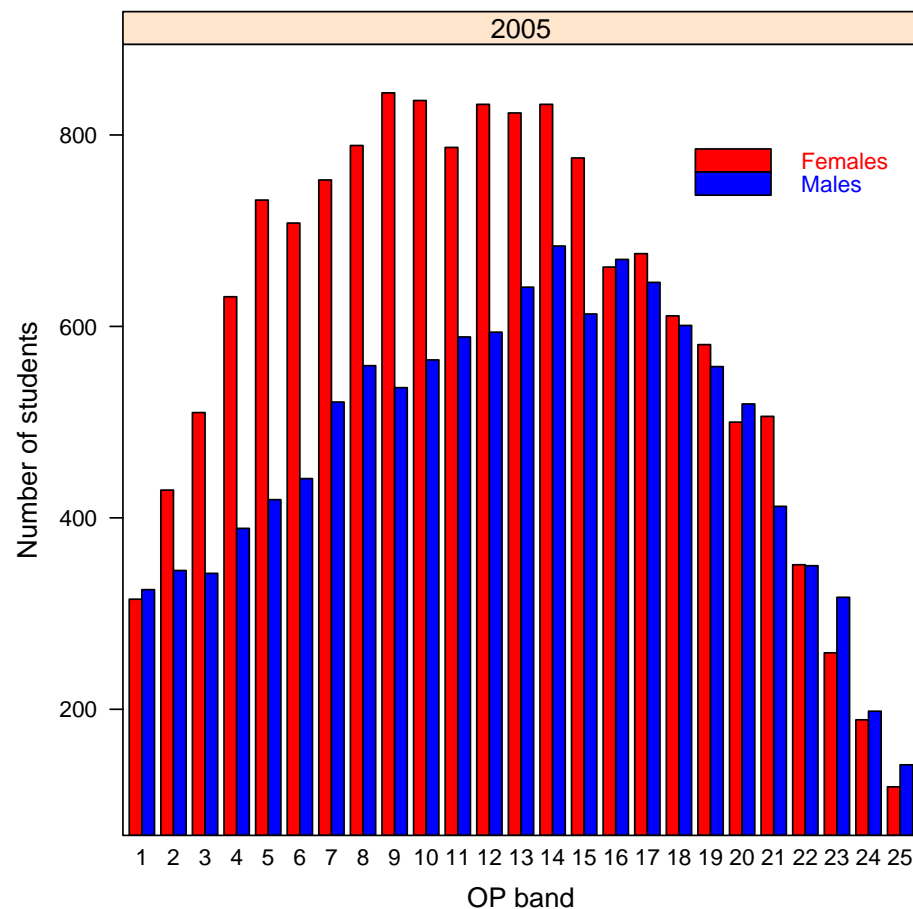


Table 2: 2005 OP distribution

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	640	774	852	1020	1151	1149	1274	1348	1380	1401	1376	1426	1464	1516	1389	1332	1322	1212	1139	1019	918	701	576	387	261	27027
Females	315	429	510	631	732	708	753	789	844	836	787	832	823	832	776	662	676	611	581	500	506	351	259	189	119	15051
Males	325	345	342	389	419	441	521	559	536	565	589	594	641	684	613	670	646	601	558	519	412	350	317	198	142	11976

Figure 3: 2005 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.

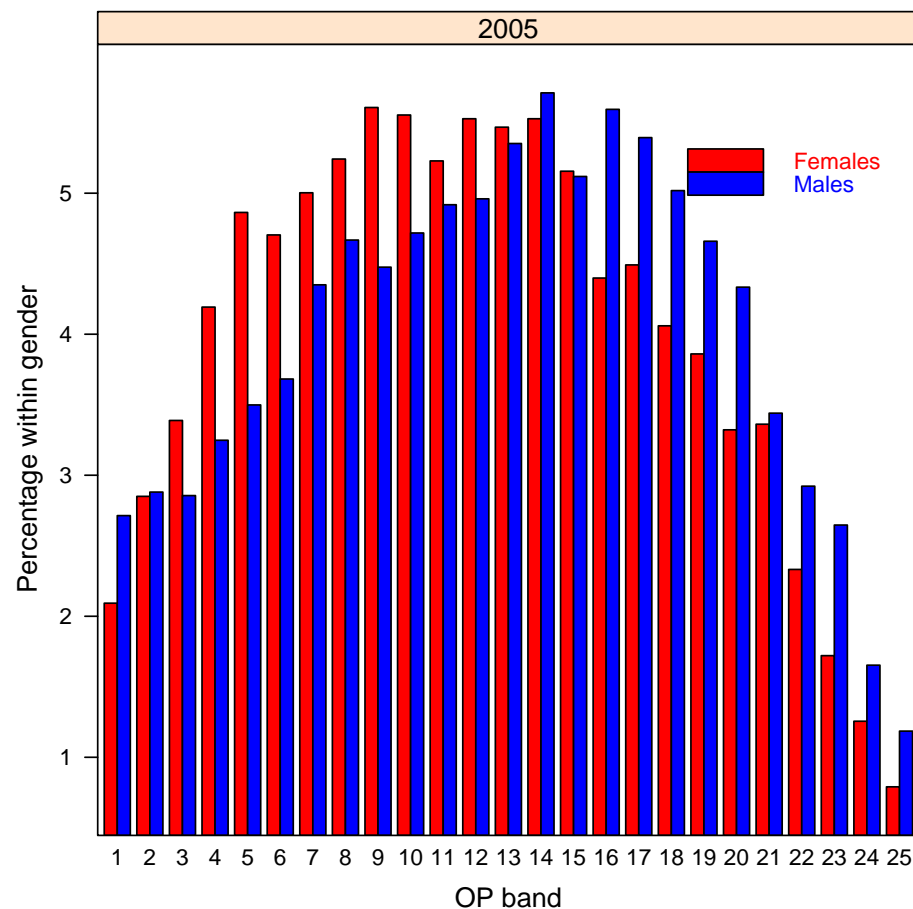


Table 3: 2005 OP percentage distribution within gender

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 %	2.37	2.86	3.15	3.77	4.26	4.25	4.71	4.99	5.11	5.18	5.09	5.28	5.42	5.61	5.14	4.93	4.89	4.48	4.21	3.77	3.40	2.59	2.13	1.43	0.97
Female %	2.09	2.85	3.39	4.19	4.86	4.70	5.00	5.24	5.61	5.55	5.23	5.53	5.47	5.53	5.16	4.40	4.49	4.06	3.86	3.32	3.36	2.33	1.72	1.26	0.79
Male %	2.71	2.88	2.86	3.25	3.50	3.68	4.35	4.67	4.48	4.72	4.92	4.96	5.35	5.71	5.12	5.59	5.39	5.02	4.66	4.33	3.44	2.92	2.65	1.65	1.19

## FP distributions

Figure 4 shows the FP distributions for 2005. 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

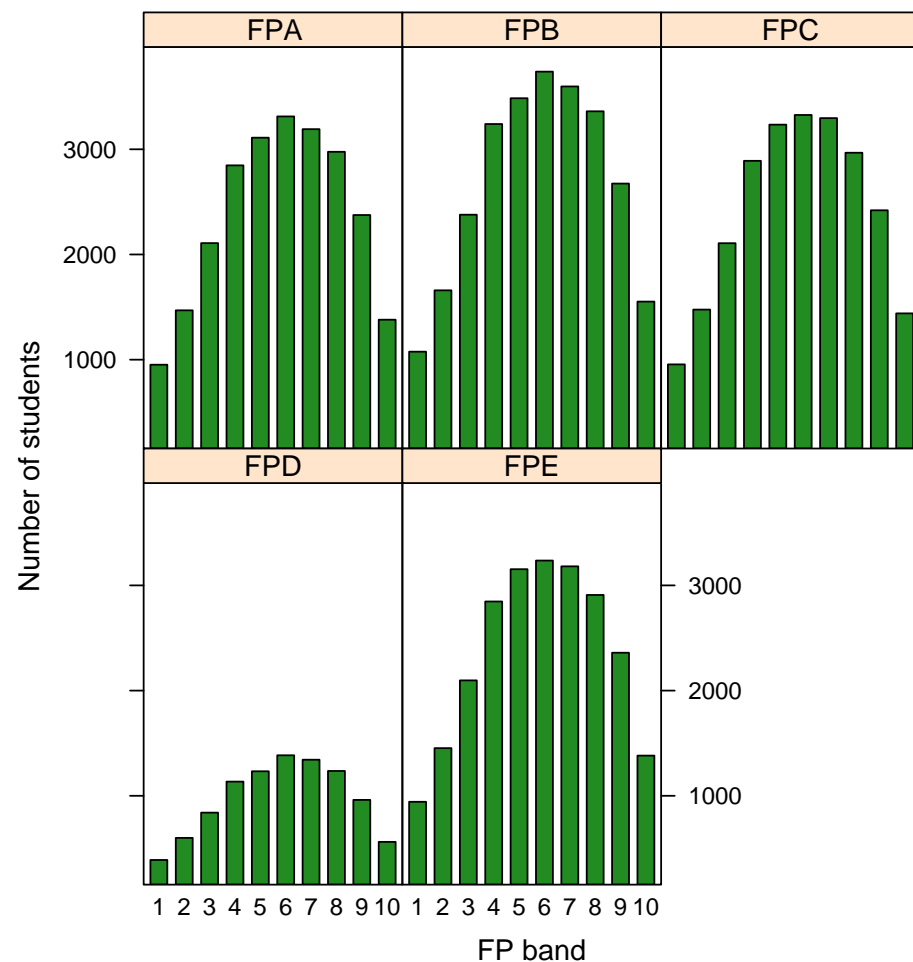
Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
A	952	1469	2108	2847	3110	3312	3191	2976	2375	1380	23720
B	1076	1659	2378	3240	3485	3738	3597	3361	2674	1552	26760
C	955	1476	2107	2890	3234	3326	3296	2967	2420	1440	24111
D	390	600	840	1135	1233	1385	1343	1236	961	562	9685
E	943	1453	2097	2847	3154	3236	3181	2909	2360	1382	23562

## 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 2005 and the weights for each field position.

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

Figure 4: 2005 FP distribution



# 2005 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 (2001 Trial-Pilot)	5	3	3	5	5	3
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	41	Physics (2001 Trial-Pilot)	5	3	3	5	5	3
5	French	5	2	5	1	0	4	41	Physics (1995)	5	1	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 (1999)	5	3	3	5	3	4
12	Vietnamese	5	2	5	1	0	4	51	Agricultural Science (2004)	5	3	3	5	3	4
13	Korean (1997 Pre-Trial)	5	2	5	1	0	4	60	Accounting	5	3	3	5	4	2
13	Korean (2002)	5	2	5	1	0	4	62	Business Organisation & Management	5	4	4	5	2	3
14	Modern Greek	5	2	5	1	0	4	63	Business Communication & Technologies (1998)	5	3	3	5	2	4
15	French Extension (1995 Pre-Trial)	5	3	5	1	0	4	63	Business Communication & Technologies (2002)	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 (2002)	5	3	5	1	0	4	65	Information Technology Systems (1999 Trial)	5	3	3	5	3	4
16	German Extension (1995 Pre-Trial)	5	3	5	1	0	4	67	Health Education	5	5	4	3	1	3
17	Latin	5	3	5	1	0	2	68	Physical Education	5	3	3	3	2	5
18	Spanish	5	2	5	1	0	4	71	Home Economics (2001)	5	4	3	4	2	4
19	Polish	5	2	5	1	0	4	71	Home Economics (1992)	5	3	3	3	1	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

## FP distributions by gender

Figure 5 shows the FPs and their distributions in the state for 2005 by gender.

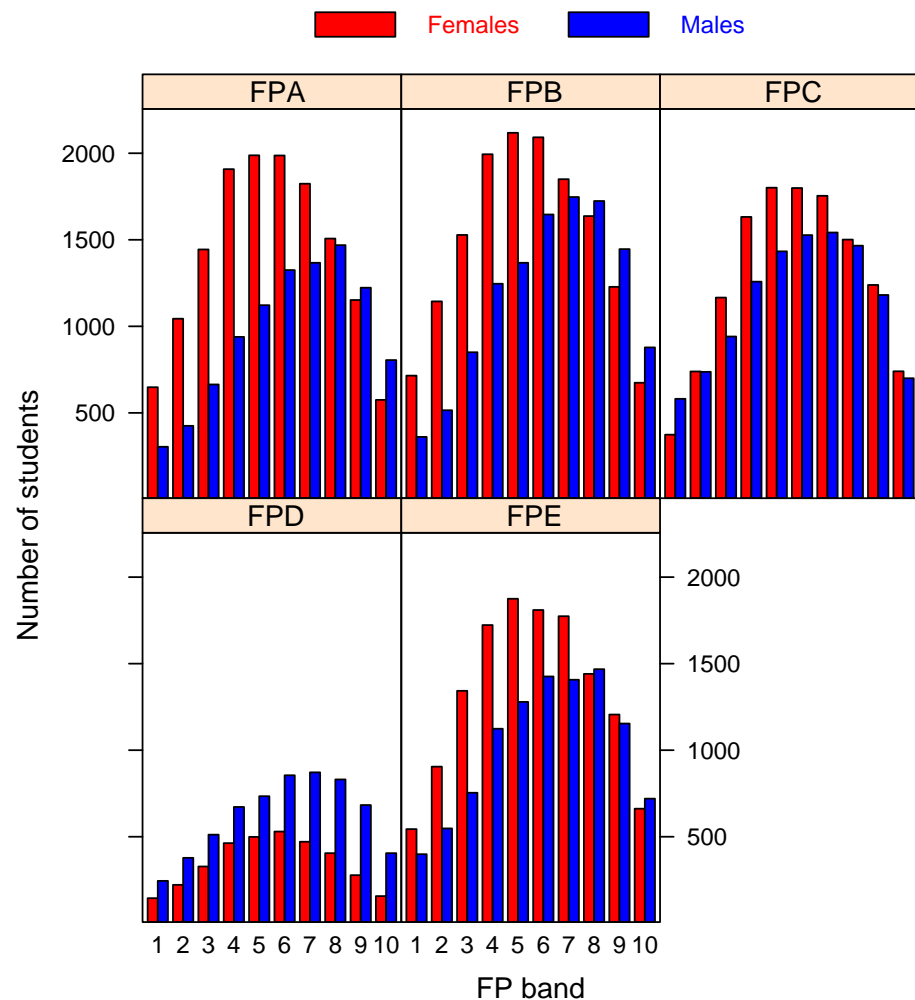
Table 6: Numbers of students eligible for each FP by gender

Gender	Field A	Field B	Field C	Field D	Field E
Female	14077	14980	12745	3498	13283
Male	9643	11780	11366	6187	10279

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	12.0	13.1	14.0	13.5	12.6	10.0	5.8
	Female	4.6	7.4	10.3	13.6	14.1	14.1	13.0	10.7	8.2	4.1
	Male	3.2	4.4	6.9	9.7	11.6	13.7	14.2	15.2	12.7	8.4
B	All students	4.0	6.2	8.9	12.1	13.0	14.0	13.4	12.6	10.0	5.8
	Female	4.8	7.6	10.2	13.3	14.1	14.0	12.4	10.9	8.2	4.5
	Male	3.1	4.4	7.2	10.6	11.6	14.0	14.8	14.6	12.3	7.5
C	All students	4.0	6.1	8.7	12.0	13.4	13.8	13.7	12.3	10.0	6.0
	Female	2.9	5.8	9.2	12.8	14.1	14.1	13.8	11.8	9.7	5.8
	Male	5.1	6.5	8.3	11.1	12.6	13.4	13.6	12.9	10.4	6.2
D	All students	4.0	6.2	8.7	11.7	12.7	14.3	13.9	12.8	9.9	5.8
	Female	4.2	6.4	9.4	13.2	14.3	15.2	13.5	11.6	8.0	4.5
	Male	4.0	6.1	8.3	10.9	11.9	13.8	14.1	13.4	11.0	6.6
E	All students	4.0	6.2	8.9	12.1	13.4	13.7	13.5	12.4	10.0	5.9
	Female	4.1	6.8	10.1	13.0	14.1	13.6	13.4	10.9	9.1	5.0
	Male	3.9	5.3	7.3	10.9	12.4	13.9	13.7	14.3	11.2	7.0

Figure 5: 2005 FP distribution by gender



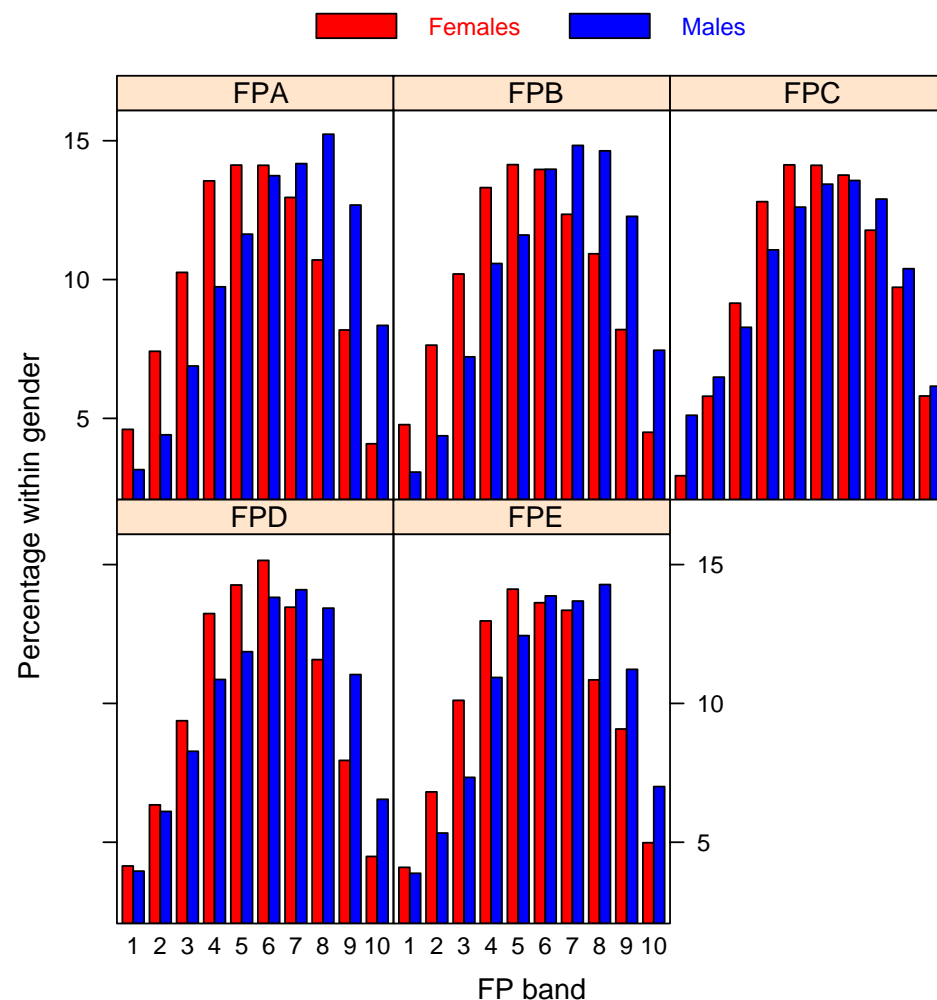
## FPs percentage distribution within gender

Figure 6 shows FPs and their distributions in the state for 2005 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 2005.

Table 8: Numbers of students per FP combination

Sets of FPs	Students	Total	Per cent	
ABCDE	6404	5 FPs	6404	23.69
ABCD	670			
ABCE	11811			
ACDE	5			
BCDE	2145	4 FPs	14631	54.13
ABC	1944			
ABE	2485			
ACD	2			
ACE	4			
BCD	228			
BCE	617			
CDE	35	3 FPs	5315	19.67
AB	390			
AE	5			
BC	31			
BE	34			
CD	196			
CE	16	2 FPs	672	2.49
B	1			
C	3			
E	1	1 FP	5	0.02

Figure 6: 2005 FP distribution within gender



## Contact Us

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