

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 24 657 Queensland students² who received an OP in 1995 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: 1995 OP distribution

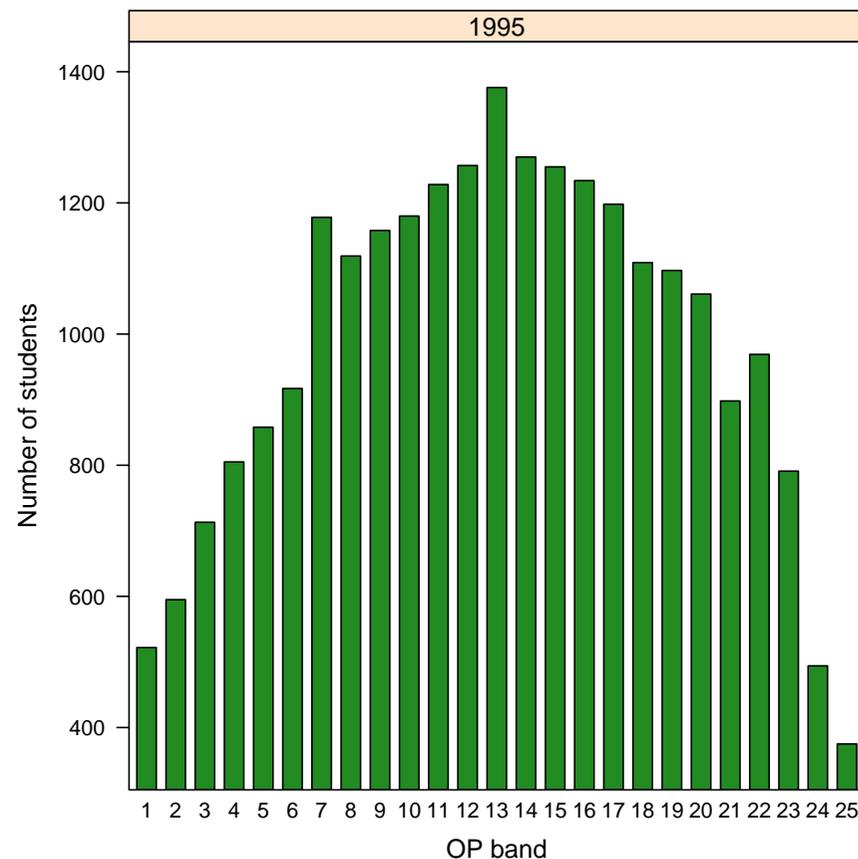


Table 1: 1995 OP distribution

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	522	595	713	805	858	917	1178	1119	1158	1180	1228	1257	1376	1270	1255	1234	1198	1109	1097	1061	898	969	791	494	375
Cumulative	522	1117	1830	2635	3493	4410	5588	6707	7865	9045	10273	11530	12906	14176	15431	16665	17863	18972	20069	21130	22028	22997	23788	24282	24657
Per cent	2.12	2.41	2.89	3.26	3.48	3.72	4.78	4.54	4.70	4.79	4.98	5.10	5.58	5.15	5.09	5.00	4.86	4.50	4.45	4.30	3.64	3.93	3.21	2.00	1.52
Cumulative	2.12	4.53	7.42	10.69	14.17	17.89	22.66	27.20	31.90	36.68	41.66	46.76	52.34	57.49	62.58	67.59	72.45	76.94	81.39	85.70	89.34	93.27	96.48	98.48	100.00

Figure 2: 1995 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.

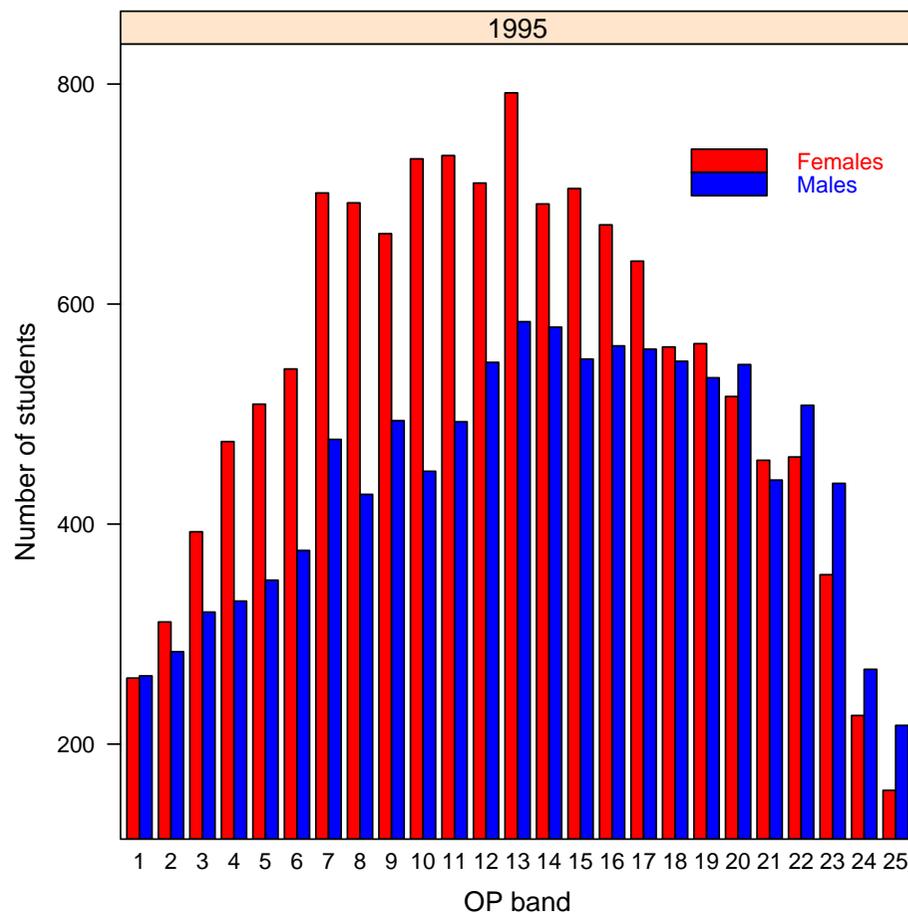
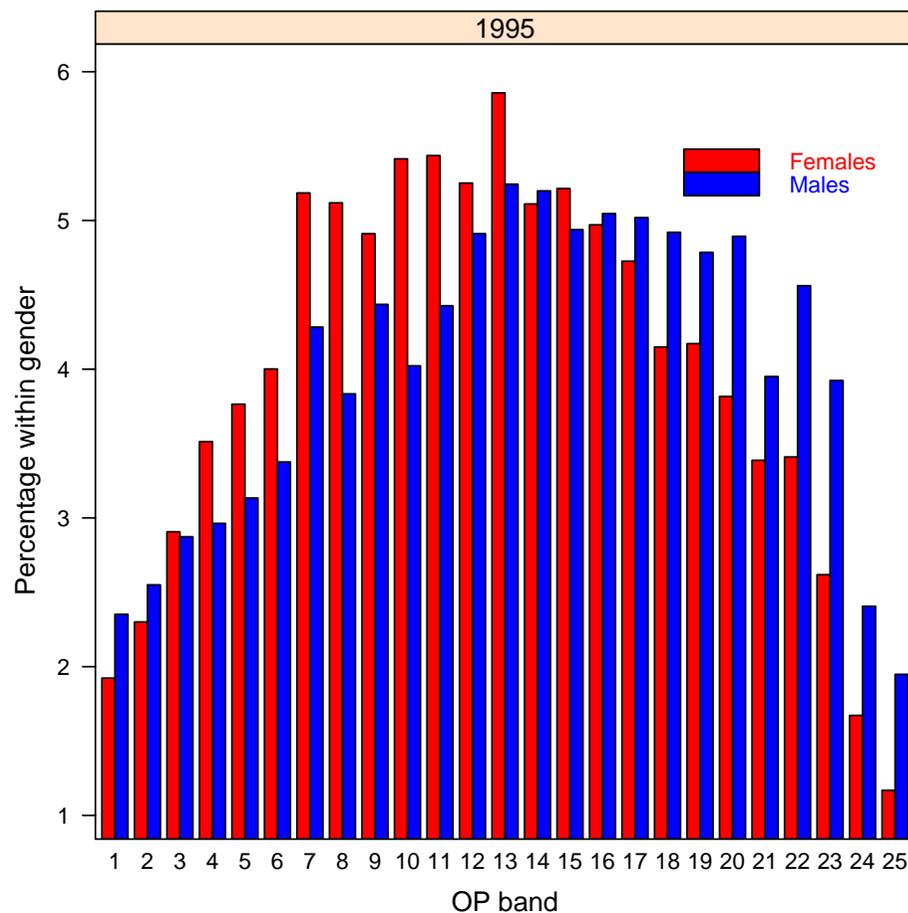


Table 2: 1995 OP distribution

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	522	595	713	805	858	917	1178	1119	1158	1180	1228	1257	1376	1270	1255	1234	1198	1109	1097	1061	898	969	791	494	375	24657
Females	260	311	393	475	509	541	701	692	664	732	735	710	792	691	705	672	639	561	564	516	458	461	354	226	158	13520
Males	262	284	320	330	349	376	477	427	494	448	493	547	584	579	550	562	559	548	533	545	440	508	437	268	217	11137

Figure 3: 1995 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: 1995 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 %	2.12	2.41	2.89	3.26	3.48	3.72	4.78	4.54	4.70	4.79	4.98	5.10	5.58	5.15	5.09	5.00	4.86	4.50	4.45	4.30	3.64	3.93	3.21	2.00	1.52
Female %	1.92	2.30	2.91	3.51	3.76	4.00	5.18	5.12	4.91	5.41	5.44	5.25	5.86	5.11	5.21	4.97	4.73	4.15	4.17	3.82	3.39	3.41	2.62	1.67	1.17
Male %	2.35	2.55	2.87	2.96	3.13	3.38	4.28	3.83	4.44	4.02	4.43	4.91	5.24	5.20	4.94	5.05	5.02	4.92	4.79	4.89	3.95	4.56	3.92	2.41	1.95

FP distributions

Figure 4 shows the FP distributions for 1995. 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

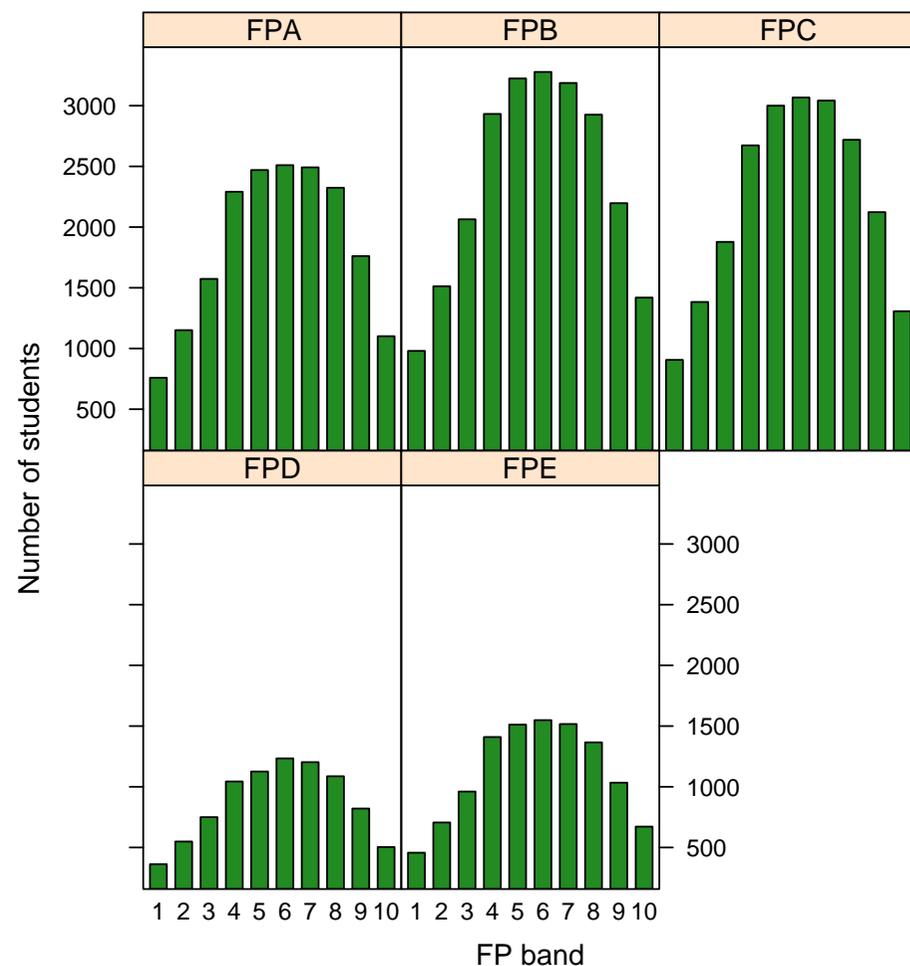
Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
A	759	1151	1573	2291	2470	2510	2492	2324	1761	1101	18432
B	980	1512	2064	2932	3224	3278	3187	2926	2197	1419	23719
C	906	1383	1878	2673	3000	3067	3042	2719	2123	1307	22098
D	362	549	750	1044	1126	1234	1203	1087	821	504	8680
E	457	706	961	1410	1512	1549	1517	1366	1034	672	11184

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 1995 and the weights for each field position.

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

Figure 4: 1995 FP distribution



1995 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	5	5	5	1		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
14	Modern Greek	5	2	5	1		4
17	Latin	5	2	5	1		2
18	Spanish	5	2	5	1		4
20	Ancient History	5	5	5	2		
21	Modern History	5	5	5	2		
24	Geography	5	4	5	4	2	2
25	Political Studies	5	5	5	3	1	1
27	Economics	5	4	5	5	2	
28	Study of Society	5	4	5	3	1	2
29	Legal Studies	5	4	5	3	1	3
30	Logic	5	4	4	3	4	
31	Mathematics I	5		1	5	5	
32	Mathematics II	5		1	5	5	
35	Mathematics in Society	5	1	3	5	4	
36	Mathematics A	5	1	2	5	5	
37	Mathematics B	5	1	2	5	5	
38	Mathematics C	5	1	2	5	5	
40	Chemistry	5	2	3	5	5	3
41	Physics	5	1	2	5	5	1

Id	Syllabus	OP	A	B	C	D	E
42	Biology	5	3	3	5	3	3
43	Earth Science	5	3	3	5	3	3
44	Multi-Strand Science	5	3	3	5	3	3
45	Marine Studies	5	3	3	4	2	4
51	Agricultural Science	5	4	3	5	2	3
60	Accounting	5	3	3	5	4	2
61	Secretarial Studies	5	2	3	3	1	4
62	Business Organisation & Management	5	4	3	4	2	3
67	Health Education	5	4	3	3	1	3
68	Physical Education	5	3	3	3	1	5
71	Home Economics	5	4	3	3	1	4
74	Engineering Technology	5	3	3	5	4	3
76	Graphics	5	1	2	5	3	4
78	Technology Studies	5	3	3	5	3	4
80	Visual Art	5	3	3	1		5
81	Music	5	2	2	2	1	5
82	Speech & Drama	5	3	3	1		5
83	Theatre	5	3	3	1		5
84	Film & Television	5	3	3	1		5
85	Dance	5	3	3	1		5
86	Study of Religion	5	4	5	1		1
87	Information Processing & Technology	5	3	3	4	4	3
88	Drama	5	3	3	1		5
89	Film & Television	5	4	3	2		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

1995 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 1995 by gender.

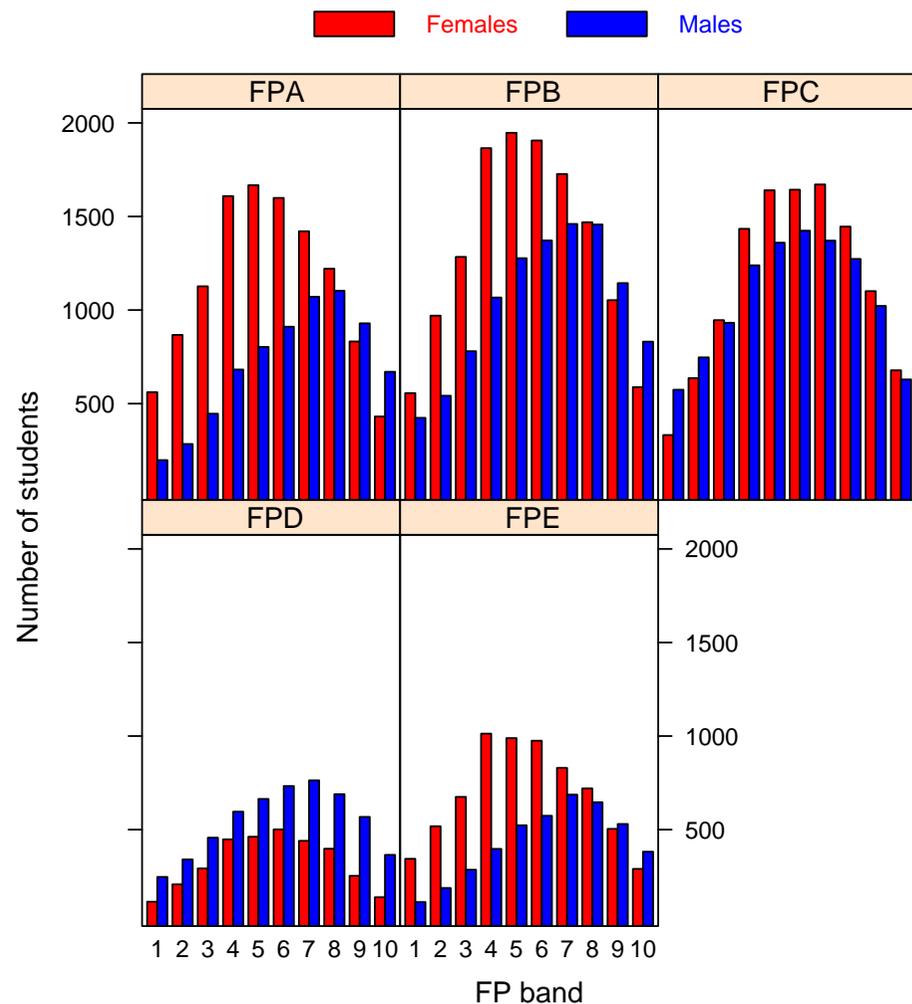
Table 6: Numbers of students eligible for each FP by gender

Gender	Field A	Field B	Field C	Field D	Field E
Female	11335	13365	11527	3257	6858
Male	7097	10354	10571	5423	4326

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	6.2	8.5	12.4	13.4	13.6	13.5	12.6	9.6	6.0
	Female	5.0	7.7	9.9	14.2	14.7	14.1	12.5	10.8	7.3	3.8
	Male	2.8	4.0	6.3	9.6	11.3	12.8	15.1	15.5	13.1	9.4
B	All students	4.1	6.4	8.7	12.4	13.6	13.8	13.4	12.3	9.3	6.0
	Female	4.2	7.3	9.6	14.0	14.6	14.3	12.9	11.0	7.9	4.4
	Male	4.1	5.2	7.5	10.3	12.3	13.3	14.1	14.1	11.1	8.0
C	All students	4.1	6.3	8.5	12.1	13.6	13.9	13.8	12.3	9.6	5.9
	Female	2.9	5.5	8.2	12.4	14.2	14.3	14.5	12.5	9.6	5.9
	Male	5.4	7.1	8.8	11.7	12.9	13.5	13.0	12.0	9.7	6.0
D	All students	4.2	6.3	8.6	12.0	13.0	14.2	13.9	12.5	9.5	5.8
	Female	3.5	6.4	9.0	13.8	14.2	15.4	13.5	12.2	7.8	4.3
	Male	4.6	6.3	8.4	11.0	12.2	13.5	14.1	12.7	10.5	6.7
E	All students	4.1	6.3	8.6	12.6	13.5	13.9	13.6	12.2	9.3	6.0
	Female	5.0	7.6	9.8	14.8	14.4	14.2	12.1	10.5	7.4	4.2
	Male	2.6	4.4	6.6	9.2	12.1	13.3	15.9	14.9	12.3	8.8

Figure 5: 1995 FP distribution by gender



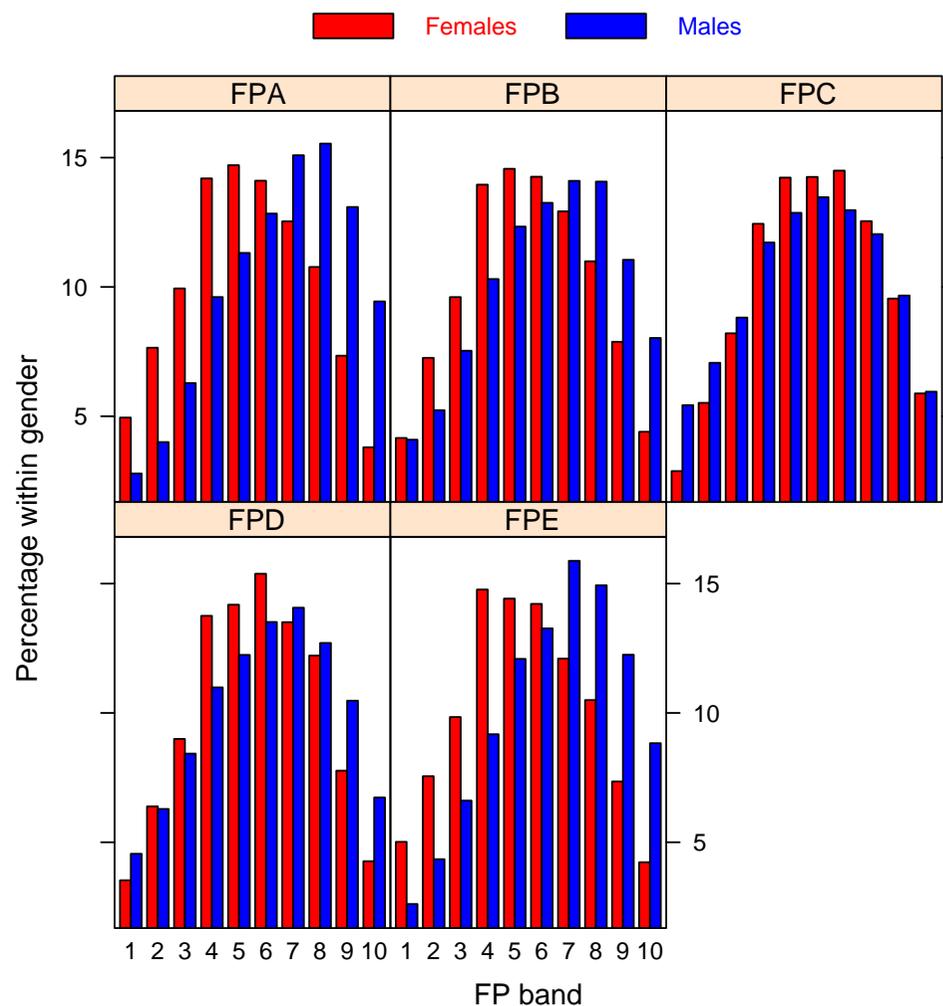
FPs percentage distribution within gender

Figure 6 shows FPs and their distributions in the state for 1995 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 1995.

Table 8: Numbers of students per FP combination

Sets of FPs	Students	Total	Per cent	
ABCDE	1750	5 FPs	1750	7.1
ABCD	2468			
ABCE	6080			
BCDE	692	4 FPs	9240	37.47
ABC	5842			
ABE	1489			
BCD	2991			
BCE	823			
CDE	15	3 FPs	11160	45.26
AB	803			
BC	525			
BE	242			
CD	764			
CE	83	2 FPs	2417	9.8
B	14			
C	65			
E	10	1 FP	89	0.36

Figure 6: 1995 FP distribution within gender



Contact Us

For further information about this document contact: Analysis and Evaluation Unit, Queensland Studies Authority; Phone: (07) 3864 0256, Email: analysis_evaluation@qsa.qld.edu.au.