2002 State Distribution of Overall Positions (OPs) and Field Positions (FPs)

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 27 749 Queensland students[2] who received an OP in 2002 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.

[1] In 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: 2002 OP distribution

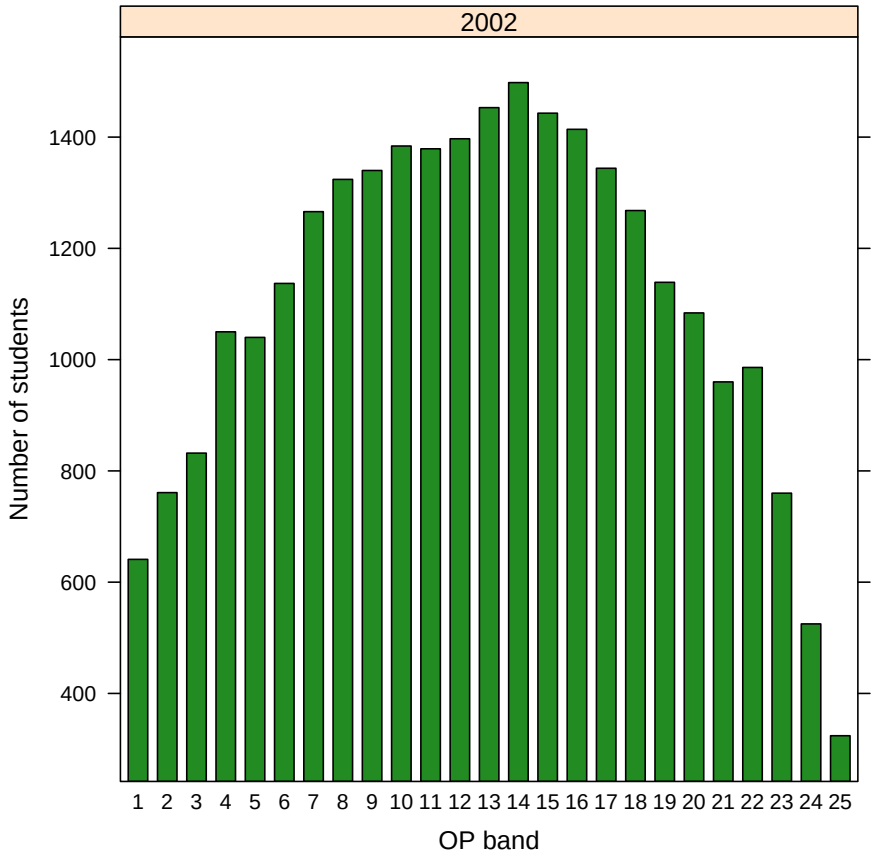

Table 1: 2002 OP distribution

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	641	761	832	1050	1040	1137	1266	1324	1340	1384	1379	1397	1453	1498	1443	1414	1344	1268	1139	1084	960	986	760	525	324
Cumulative	641	1402	2234	3284	4324	5461	6727	8051	9391	10775	12154	13551	15004	16502	17945	19359	20703	21971	23110	24194	25154	26140	26900	27425	27749
Per cent	2.31	2.74	3.00	3.78	3.75	4.10	4.56	4.77	4.83	4.99	4.97	5.03	5.24	5.40	5.20	5.10	4.84	4.57	4.10	3.91	3.46	3.55	2.74	1.89	1.17
Cumulative	2.31	5.05	8.05	11.83	15.58	19.68	24.24	29.01	33.84	38.83	43.80	48.83	54.07	59.47	64.67	69.76	74.61	79.18	83.28	87.19	90.65	94.20	96.94	98.83	100.00

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Comparing OPs across years

The Review of Tertiary Entrance in Queensland 1990[3] recommended "basic year-to-year comparibility"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 recieved 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.

Figure 2: 2002 OP distribution by gender

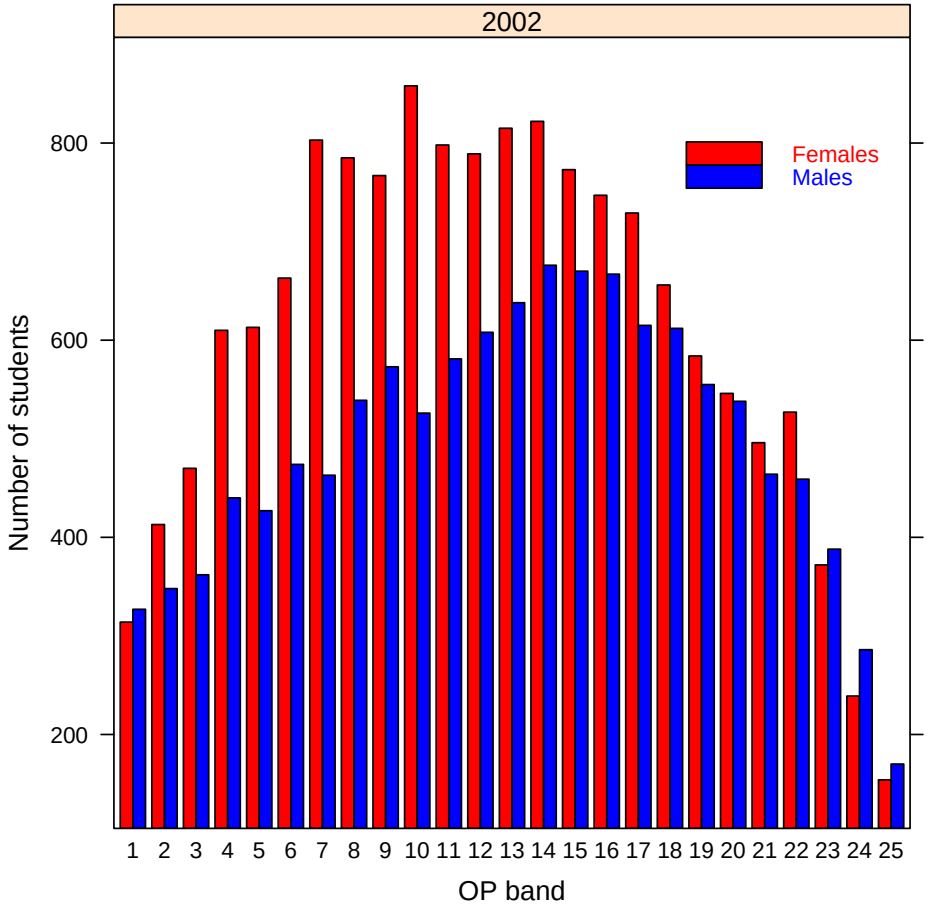

Table 2: 2002 OP distribution

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	641	761	832	1050	1040	1137	1266	1324	1340	1384	1379	1397	1453	1498	1443	1414	1344	1268	1139	1084	960	986	760	525	324	27749
Females	314	413	470	610	613	663	803	785	767	858	798	789	815	822	773	747	729	656	584	546	496	527	372	239	154	15343
Males	327	348	362	440	427	474	463	539	573	526	581	608	638	676	670	667	615	612	555	538	464	459	388	286	170	12406

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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.

Figure 3: 2002 OP percentage distribution within gender

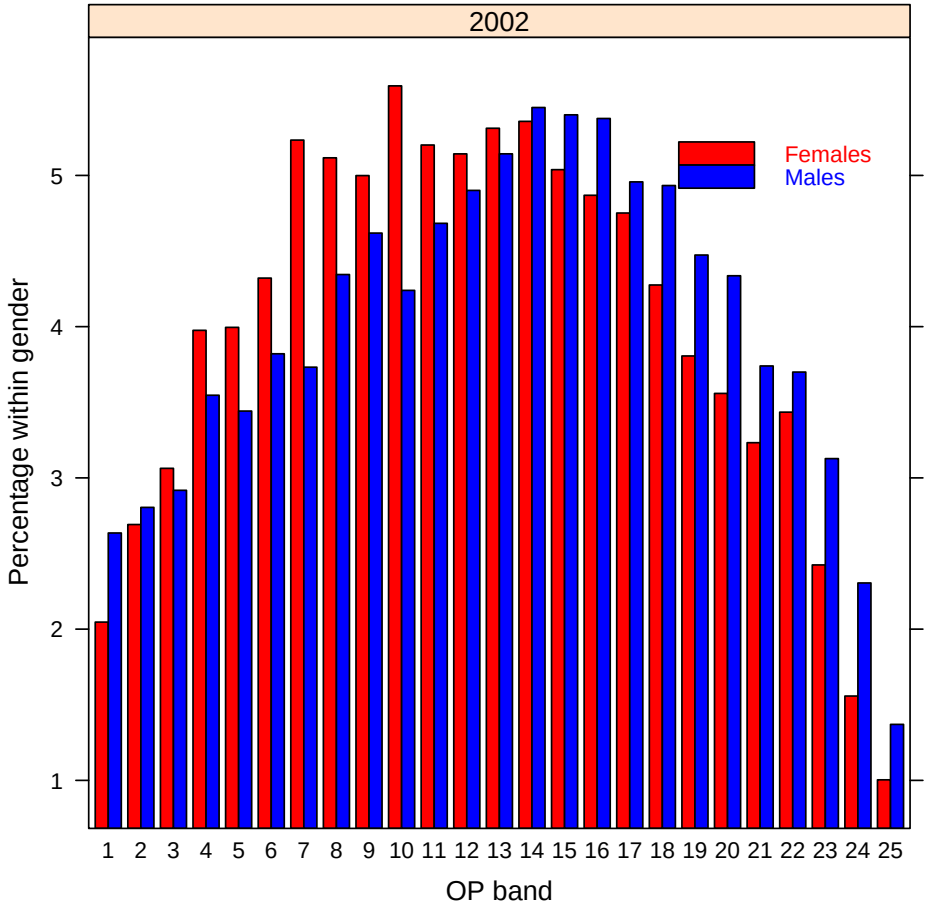

Table 3: 2002 OP percentage distribution within gender

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 %	2.31	2.74	3.00	3.78	3.75	4.10	4.56	4.77	4.83	4.99	4.97	5.03	5.24	5.40	5.20	5.10	4.84	4.57	4.10	3.91	3.46	3.55	2.74	1.89	1.17
Female %	2.05	2.69	3.06	3.98	4.00	4.32	5.23	5.12	5.00	5.59	5.20	5.14	5.31	5.36	5.04	4.87	4.75	4.28	3.81	3.56	3.23	3.43	2.42	1.56	1.00
Male %	2.64	2.81	2.92	3.55	3.44	3.82	3.73	4.34	4.62	4.24	4.68	4.90	5.14	5.45	5.40	5.38	4.96	4.93	4.47	4.34	3.74	3.70	3.13	2.31	1.37

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FP distributions

Figure 4 shows the FP distributions for 2002. 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

Figure 4: 2002 FP distribution

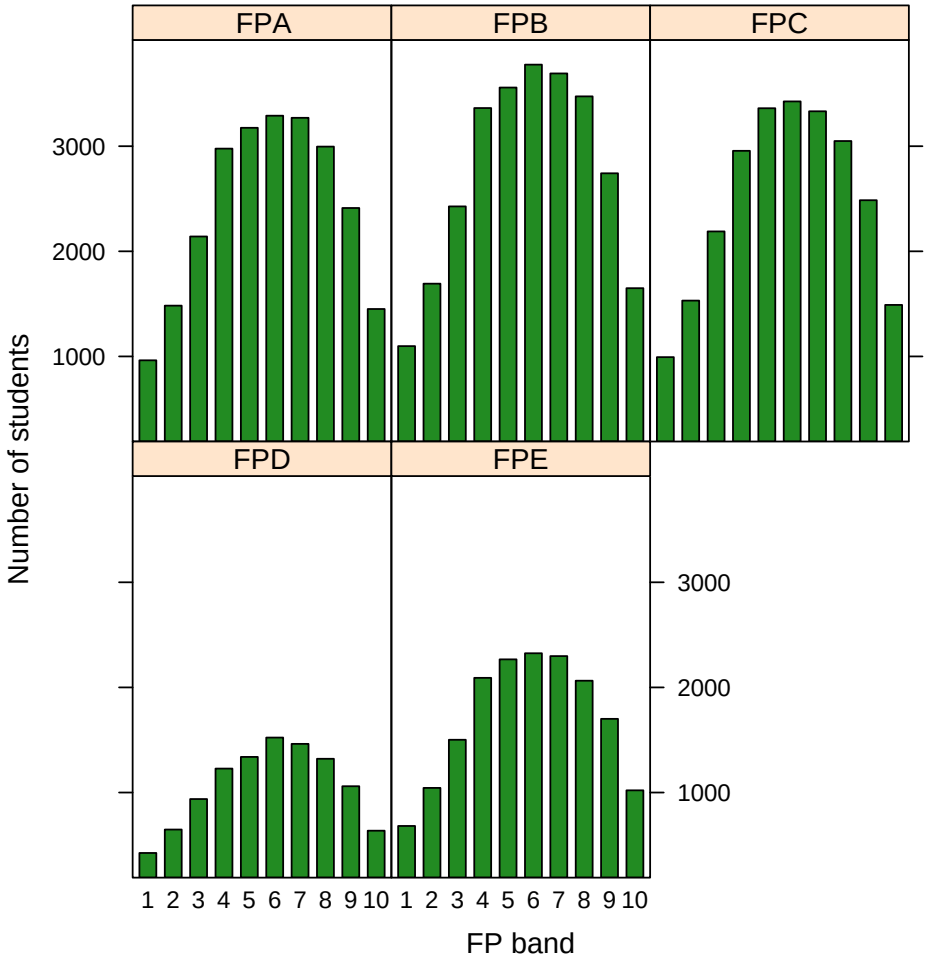

Table 4: FP distributions

Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
A	963	1483	2141	2977	3175	3290	3270	2996	2412	1451	24158
B	1098	1692	2427	3363	3558	3776	3692	3474	2742	1649	27471
C	993	1531	2189	2956	3361	3426	3332	3049	2486	1490	24813
D	425	648	938	1228	1339	1523	1463	1321	1060	637	10582
E	682	1044	1502	2091	2267	2325	2298	2064	1701	1021	16995

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[6]. 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 2002 and the weights for each field position.

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

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Table 5: Subject weights for calculating OPs and FPs

Id	Syllabus	OP	A	B	C	D	E
1	English (1987)	5	5	5	1		4
1	English (1999 Trial-Pilot)	5	5	5	1		4
2	English Extension (Literature)	5	5	5	1		3
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		1
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	5	5	3	1	2
23	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies	5	4	4	2		2
24	Geography (1992)	5	4	4	4	2	2
24	Geography (1999)	5	4	4	4	2	2
25	Political Studies	5	5	5	3		1
27	Economics (1992)	5	5	5	5	2	
27	Economics (1998)	5	5	5	5	3	2
28	Study of Society	5	5	5	3	1	
29	Legal Studies	5	5	5	2		2
30	Logic	5	4	4	5	4	1
36	Mathematics A	5	1	2	5	5	
37	Mathematics B	5	1	1	5	5	
38	Mathematics C	5	1	1	5	5	

Id	Syllabus	OP	A	B	C	D	E
40	Chemistry	5	2	3	5	5	3
41	Physics	5	1	3	5	5	2
42	Biology	5	3	3	5	4	3
43	Earth Science	5	3	3	5	3	3
44	Multi-Strand Science	5	2	3	5	3	4
45	Marine Studies	5	3	3	5	3	4
51	Agricultural Science (1992)	5	3	3	5	3	4
51	Agricultural Science (1999)	5	4	3	4	3	4
60	Accounting	5	3	3	5	4	2
61	Secretarial Studies	5	1	3	3	1	4
62	Business Organisation & Management	5	4	3	5	2	3
63	Business Communication & Technologies	5	3	3	5	2	4
65	Information Technology Systems	5	3	3	5	3	4
67	Health Education	5	4	4	3	1	2
68	Physical Education	5	3	3	3	2	5
71	Home Economics (1992)	5	4	3	3	1	4
71	Home Economics (1998 Trial-Pilot)	5	4	3	3	1	4
72	Hospitality Studies	5	3	3	3	1	4
74	Engineering Technology	5	4	3	5	4	3
76	Graphics	5	2	3	5	4	4
78	Technology Studies (1991)	5	3	3	5	3	4
78	Technology Studies (1999)	5	3	3	5	3	4
80	Visual Art	5	4	3	2		5
85	Dance	5	3	3	1		5
86	Study of Religion	5	4	4	2		2
87	Information Processing & Technology	5	4	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	3	1	5
92	Music Extension (Performance)	5	2	2	2	1	5
99	A Short Course in the Australian Constitution	5	3	3	1		

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FP distributions by gender

Figure 5 shows the FPs and their distributions in the state for 2002 by gender.

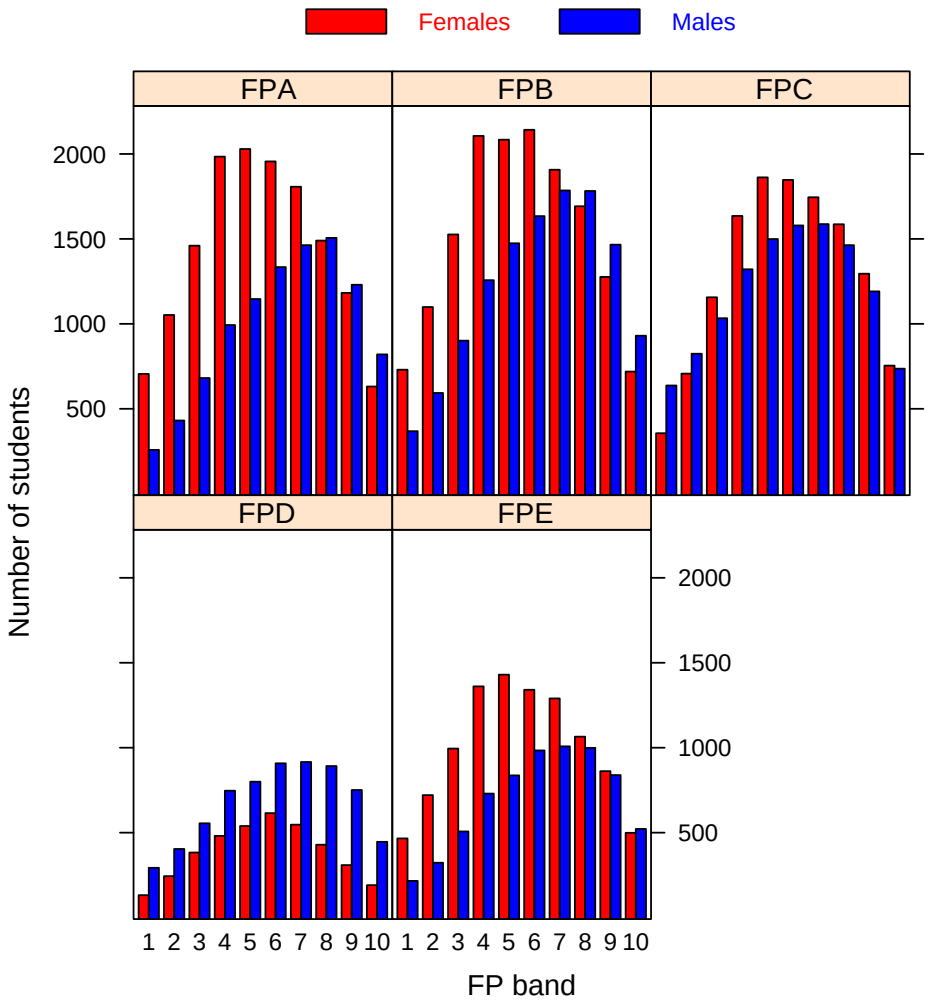
Table 6: Numbers of students eligible for each FP by gender

Gender	Field A	Field B	Field C	Field D	Field E
Female	14296	15281	12943	3870	10030
Male	9862	12190	11870	6712	6965

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	8.9	12.3	13.1	13.6	13.5	12.4	10.0	6.0
	Female	4.9	7.4	10.2	13.9	14.2	13.7	12.6	10.4	8.3	4.4
	Male	2.6	4.4	6.9	10.1	11.6	13.5	14.8	15.3	12.5	8.3
B	All students	4.0	6.2	8.8	12.2	13.0	13.8	13.4	12.7	10.0	6.0
	Female	4.8	7.2	10.0	13.8	13.6	14.0	12.5	11.1	8.4	4.7
	Male	3.0	4.9	7.4	10.3	12.1	13.4	14.6	14.6	12.0	7.6
C	All students	4.0	6.2	8.8	11.9	13.6	13.8	13.4	12.3	10.0	6.0
	Female	2.8	5.5	8.9	12.6	14.4	14.3	13.5	12.3	10.0	5.8
	Male	5.4	6.9	8.7	11.1	12.6	13.3	13.4	12.3	10.0	6.2
D	All students	4.0	6.1	8.9	11.6	12.7	14.4	13.8	12.5	10.0	6.0
	Female	3.4	6.3	9.9	12.4	13.9	15.9	14.1	11.1	8.0	4.9
	Male	4.4	6.0	8.3	11.1	11.9	13.5	13.7	13.3	11.2	6.6
E	All students	4.0	6.1	8.8	12.3	13.3	13.7	13.5	12.1	10.0	6.0
	Female	4.7	7.2	9.9	13.6	14.3	13.4	12.9	10.6	8.6	5.0
	Male	3.1	4.6	7.3	10.5	12.0	14.1	14.5	14.3	12.1	7.5

Figure 5: 2002 FP distribution by gender



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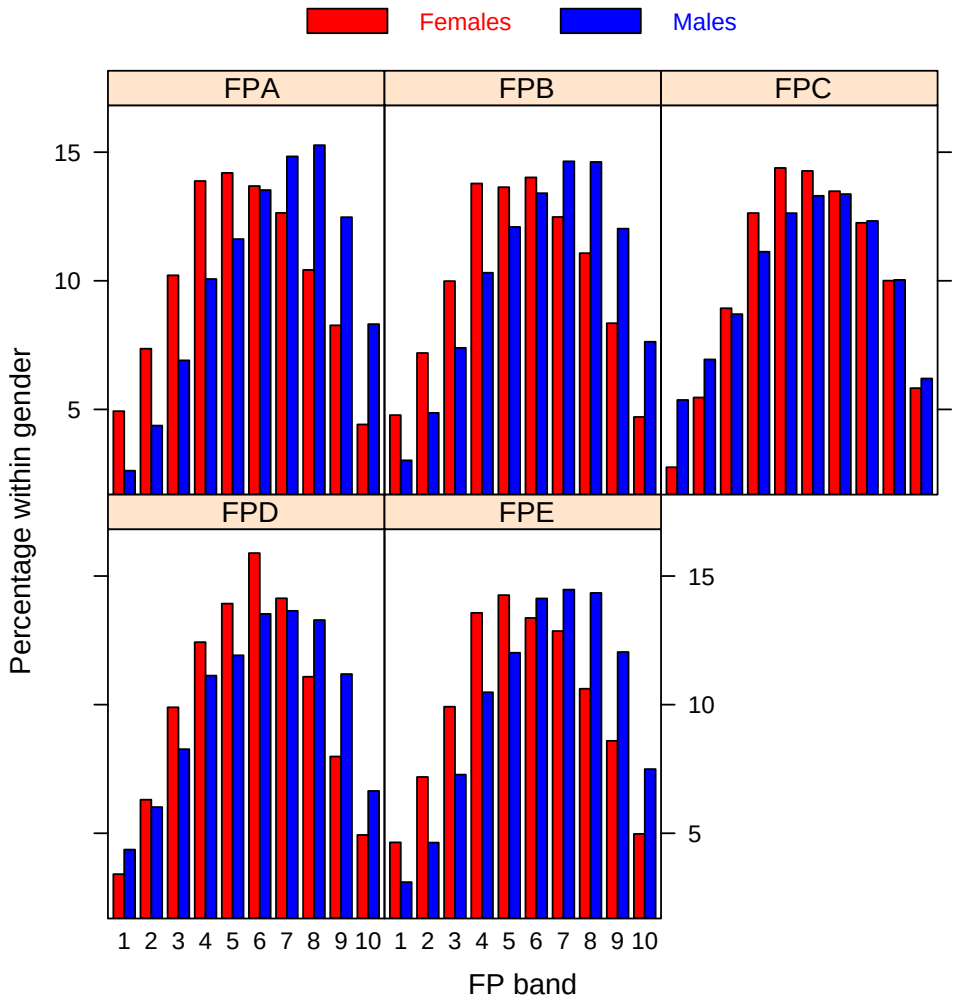
FPs percentage distribution within gender

Figure 6 shows FPs and their distributions in the state for 2002 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 2002.

Table 8: Numbers of students per FP combination

Sets of FPs	Students		Total	Per cent
ABCDE	5008	5 FPs	5008	18.05
ABCD	2679			
ABCE	8716			
ACDE	1			
BCDE	596	4 FPs	11992	43.22
ABC	4842			
ABE	2117			
ACD	5			
ACE	4			
BCD	2045			
BCE	505			
CDE	9	3 FPs	9527	34.33
AB	782			
AC	2			
AE	2			
BC	146			
BE	27			
CD	239			
CE	10	2 FPs	1208	4.35
B	8			
C	6	1 FP	14	0.05

Figure 6: 2002 FP distribution within gender



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