



Met Office 3-month Outlook

Period: February – April 2019 Issue date: 24.01.19

The forecast presented here is for February and the average of the February-March-April period for the United Kingdom as a whole. The forecast for February will be superseded by the long-range information on the public weather forecast web page (www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/#?tab=regionalForecast), starting from 1st February 2019.

This forecast is based on information from observations, several numerical prediction systems and expert judgement.

SUMMARY – TEMPERATURE:

For February and February-March-April as a whole, below-average temperatures are more likely than above-average temperatures. The likelihood of impacts from cold weather is greater than normal, particularly earlier in the 3-month period.

Overall, the probability that the UK-average temperature for February-March-April will fall into the coldest of our five categories is 25%, and the probability that it will fall into the warmest of our five categories is around 15% (the 1981-2010 probability for each of these categories is 20%).

CONTEXT:

Sea surface temperatures in the Tropical Pacific have fallen close to El Niño thresholds in recent weeks, and long-range forecasts indicate significant re-intensification is unlikely. Any influence on UK weather patterns through this period is therefore likely to be small. As was predicted in the last 3-month Outlook, a Sudden Stratospheric Warming (SSW) event occurred in early January. SSWs are a disruption of the normal wind patterns in the stratosphere and can lead to a reduction in the frequency of mild westerly winds at the surface. The recent change to colder conditions is consistent with this. The influence of an SSW can persist for many weeks after its occurrence, so an increased

likelihood of below-average temperatures will persist through February and into March. For both February and February-March-April overall, the Met Office long-range prediction system, alongside systems from other prediction centres, shows an increase in the likelihood of the negative phase of the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO), consistent with the SSW event described above. Consequently, the probability of below-normal temperatures is increased compared to normal (see figure T2). The chances of disruptive cold weather, such as snow, are also higher than usual, particularly earlier in the 3-month period.

Fig T1

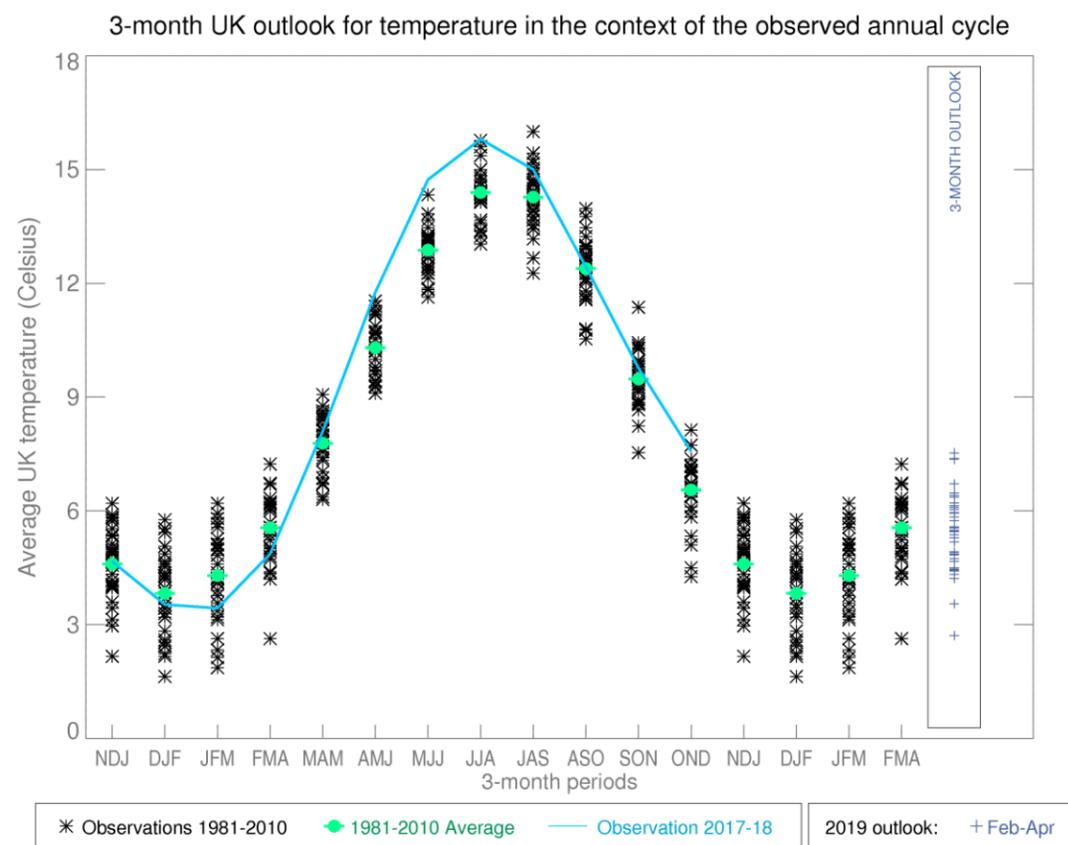


Fig T2

1-month and 3-month UK outlook for temperature in the context of observed climatology

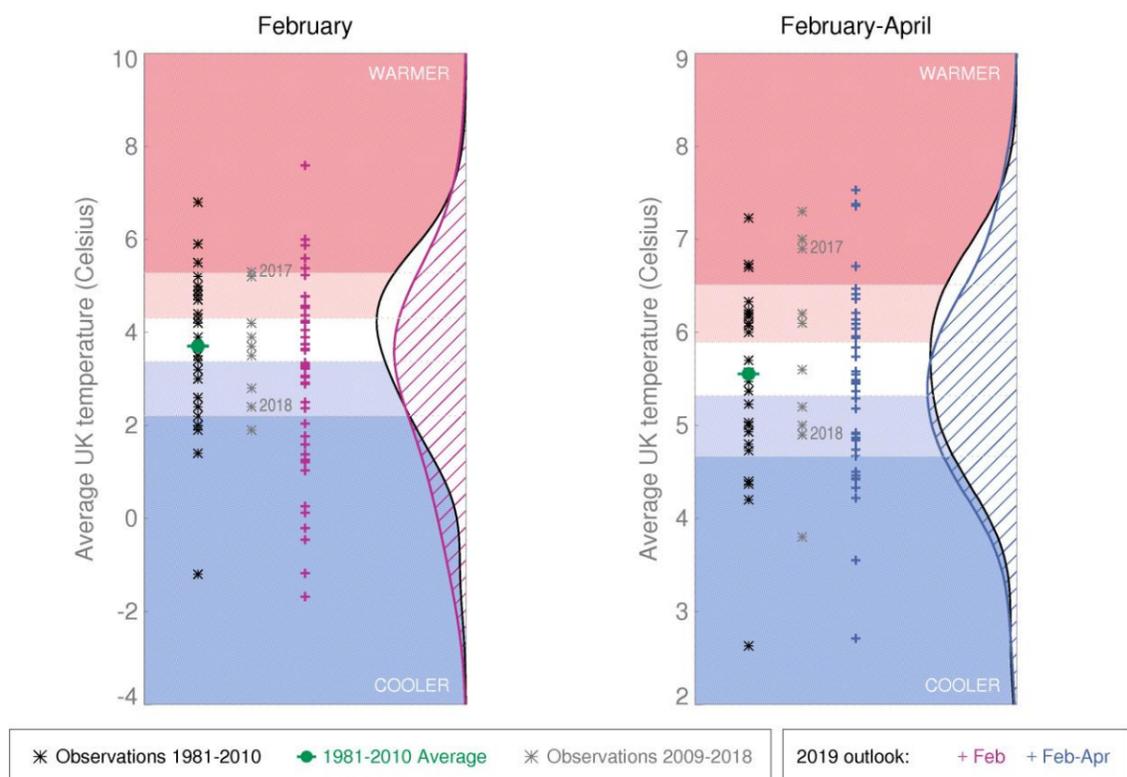
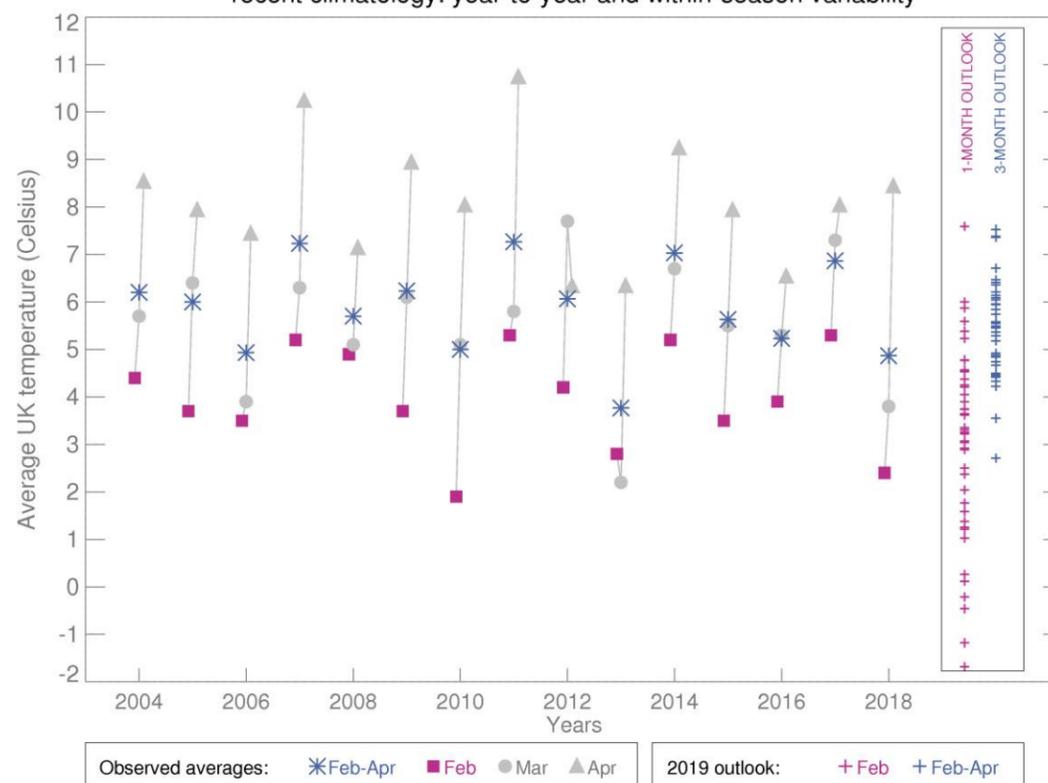


Fig T3

1-month and 3-month UK outlook for temperature in the context of recent climatology: year-to-year and within-season variability



This Outlook provides an indication of possible temperature and rainfall conditions over the next 3 months. It is part of a suite of forecasts designed for contingency planners. The Outlook should not be used in isolation but should be used with shorter-range and more detailed (30-day, 15-day and 1-to-7-day) forecasts and warnings available to the contingency planning community from the Met Office.