

The forecast presented here is for April and the average of the April-May-June period for the United Kingdom as a whole. The forecast for April will be superseded by the long-range information on the public weather forecast web page (www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/#?tab=regionalForecast), starting from 3 April 2015.

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

SUMMARY - TEMPERATURE:

For April above-average temperatures are more probable than below-average. For April-May-June temperatures near- to above-average are most likely.

Overall, the probability that the UK-mean temperature for April-May-June will fall into the coldest of our five categories is 10% and the probability that it will fall into the warmest category is between 20% and 25% (the 1981-2010 probability for each of these categories is 20%).

CONTEXT:

Much of the tropical Pacific Ocean remains warmer than average and close to El Niño thresholds. In particular the ocean temperatures near the dateline are much higher than normal, affecting weather patterns across the tropical Pacific. The majority of climate models now suggest that sea surface temperatures will exceed El Niño thresholds in late spring or early summer. Even if El Niño conditions do develop fully, the influence on climate across northern Europe, at this time of year, is unlikely to be significant.

In the North Atlantic, sea surface temperatures remain below average across the eastern side of the basin; this cold anomaly has the potential to influence conditions across the UK if winds blow frequently from the west.

The positive phase of the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) has dominated throughout the year so far. This is usually associated with

wet, mild conditions in the winter months, but this year the overall pattern has been shifted slightly north allowing more settled conditions at times, especially in the south, and interludes of colder weather. Computer models are in fairly good agreement for the positive phase of the NAO to continue into April. At this time of year, this pattern still tends to be associated with near- to above-average temperatures. However, as already noted, the colder-than-average sea surface temperatures in the eastern North Atlantic may act to suppress temperatures across the UK somewhat and increase uncertainty in the temperature forecasts for April.

For April-May-June as a whole no clear signals emerge for temperature; this is reflected in the right-hand graph of figure T2, which is similar to climatology but does show a reduction in the probability of below-average temperatures.

Fig T1

3-month UK outlook for temperature in the context of the observed annual cycle

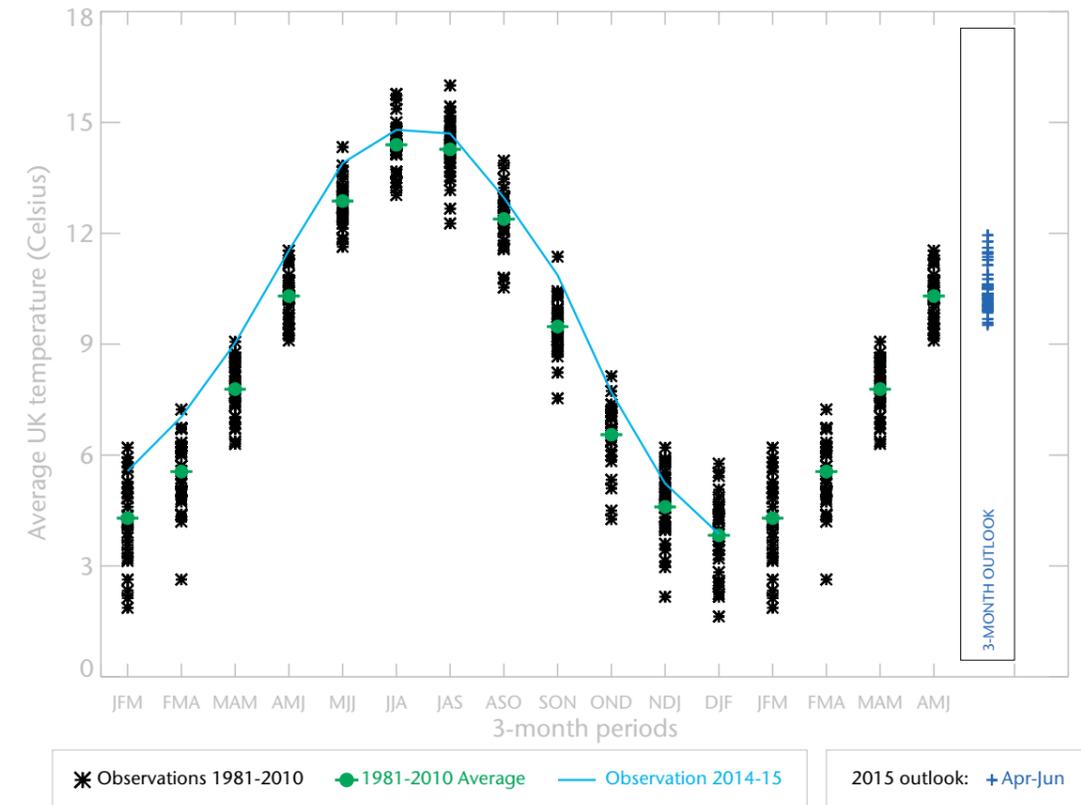


Fig T2

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

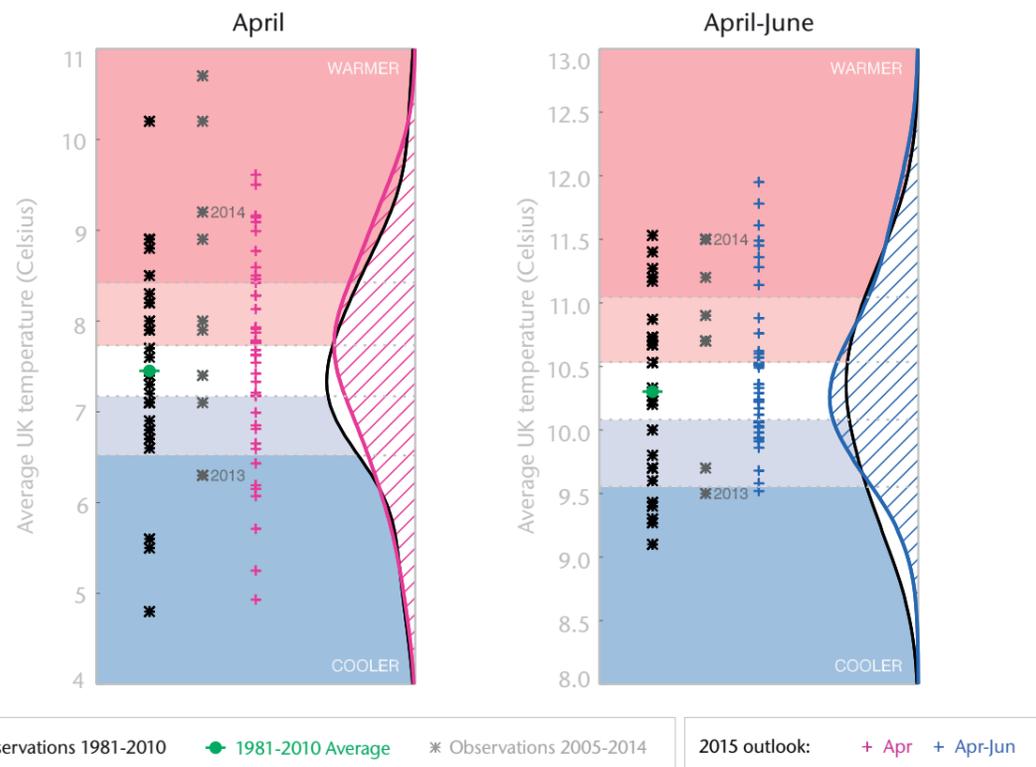
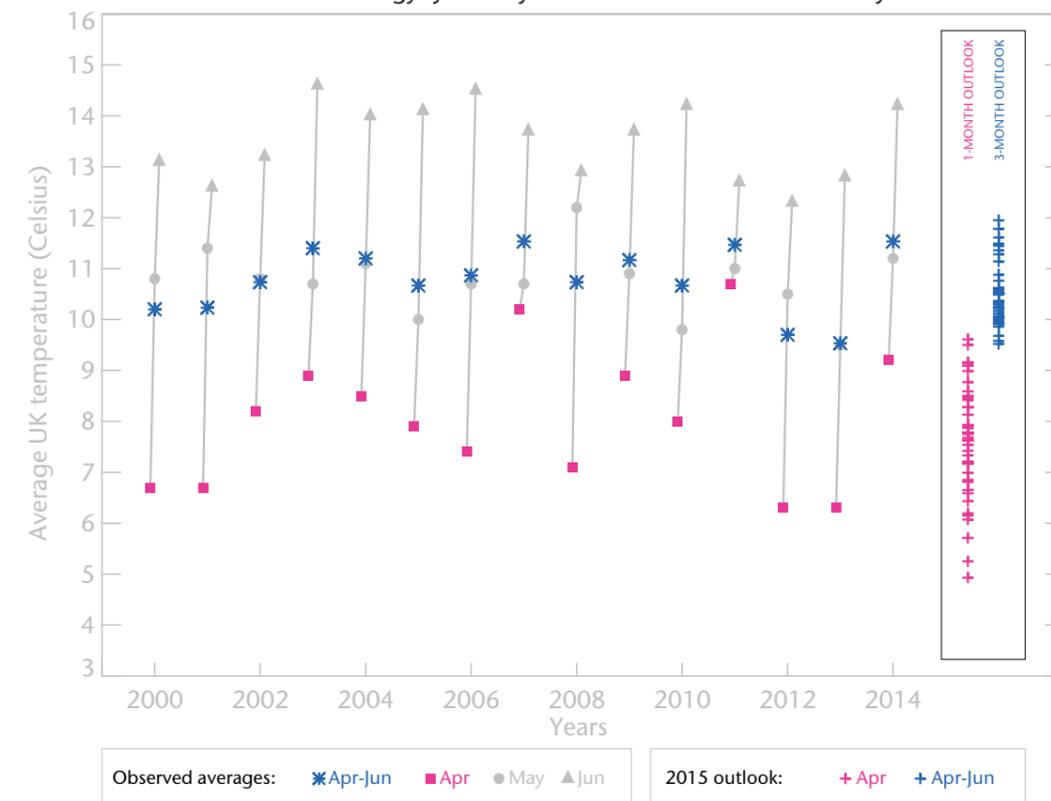


Fig T3

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-5-day) forecasts and warnings available to the contingency planning community from the Met Office.