



Met Office

# Met Office 3-month Outlook

Period: March – May 2020 Issue date: 20.02.20

The forecast presented here is for March and the average of the March-April-May period for the United Kingdom as a whole. The forecast for March will be superseded by the long-range information on the public weather forecast web page ([www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/#?tab=regionalForecast](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/#?tab=regionalForecast)), starting from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

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

## SUMMARY – TEMPERATURE:

For March and March-April-May as a whole, above-average temperatures are more likely than below-average temperatures.

Overall, the probability that the UK-average temperature for March-April-May will fall into the coldest of our five categories is less than 5% and the probability that it will fall into the warmest of our five categories is around 55% (the 1981-2010 probability for each of these categories is 20%).

## CONTEXT:

The El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is currently in a neutral phase, with little likelihood of a significant El Niño or La Niña event developing during the Outlook period. Consequently, it is not expected to influence UK weather patterns. The Stratospheric Polar Vortex (SPV) – the circulation of winds in the stratosphere above the Arctic – is currently much stronger than usual and is likely to remain so through much of the outlook period. A strong SPV favours a positive phase of the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) and milder-than-normal conditions. For March and March-April-May as a whole, there is good agreement between the Met Office long-range prediction system and systems from other centres around the world. These show an increased chance of a positive phase of the NAO with more frequent westerly

or south-westerly winds. Along with the warming of climate, this contributes to an increase in the probability of above-average temperatures (see graphs of figure T2). Nevertheless, there remains a chance of colder-than-average conditions, even though it is less than usual. The relatively high probability of our warmest category does not imply extreme or unseasonal weather throughout the 3-month period. Indeed, the Outlook does not identify weather for a particular day or week. The increased likelihood of this category could mean more days with temperatures that are above average to a more modest degree. Above-average temperatures can also arise from a range of types of weather, not just sunny and dry conditions.

Fig T1

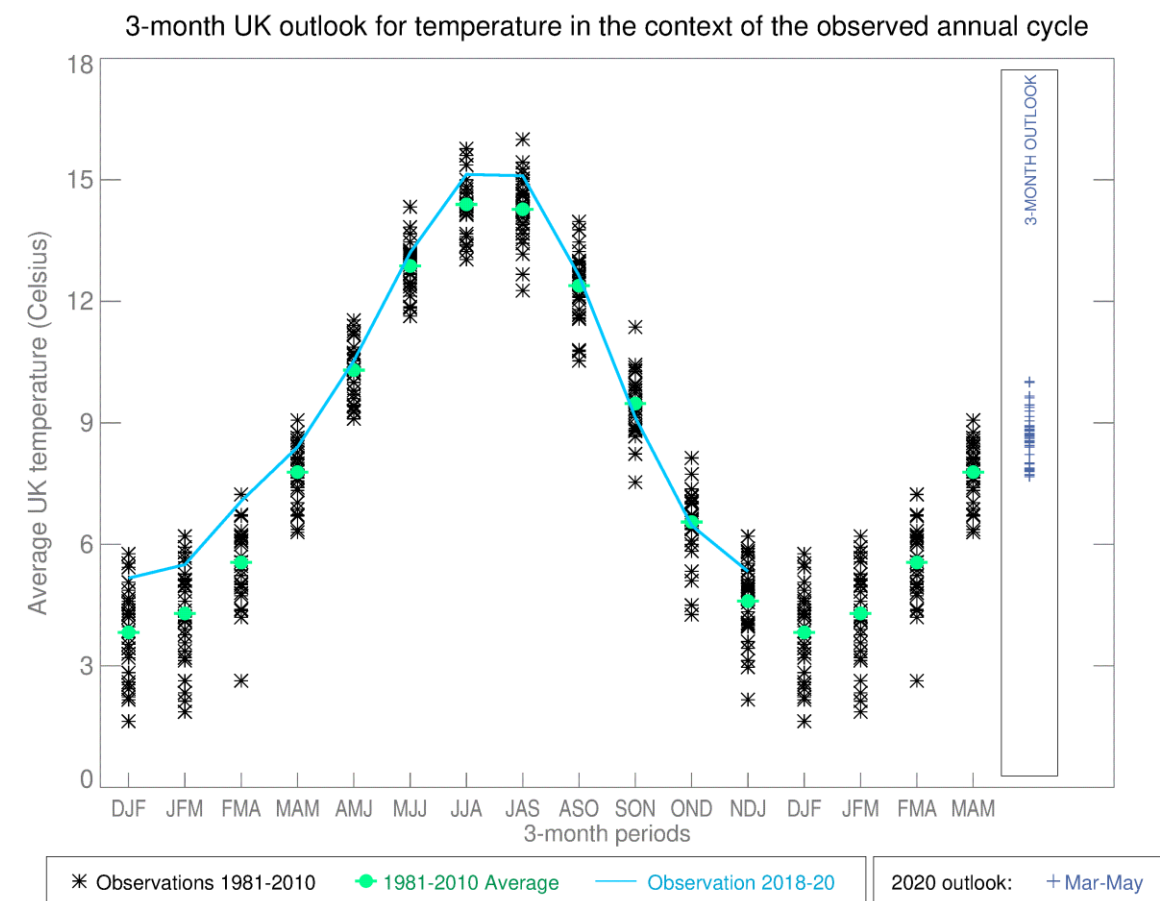


Fig T2

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

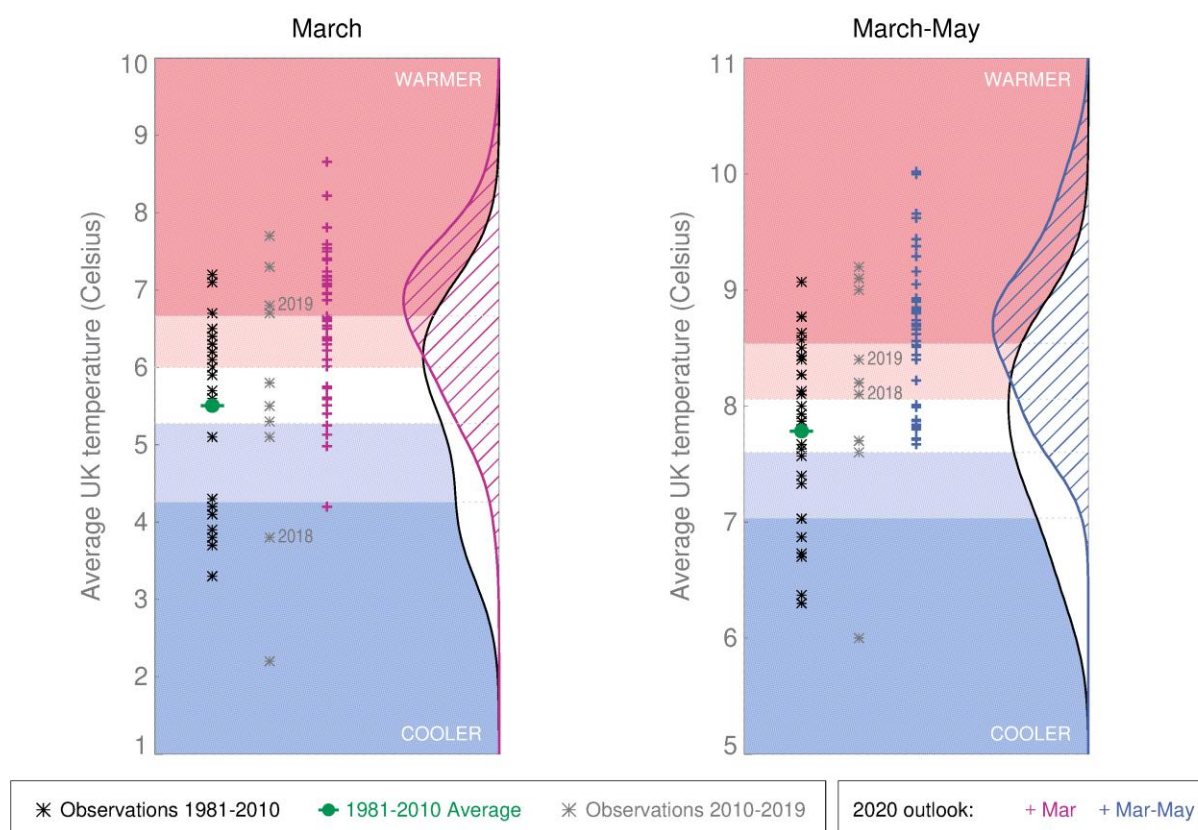
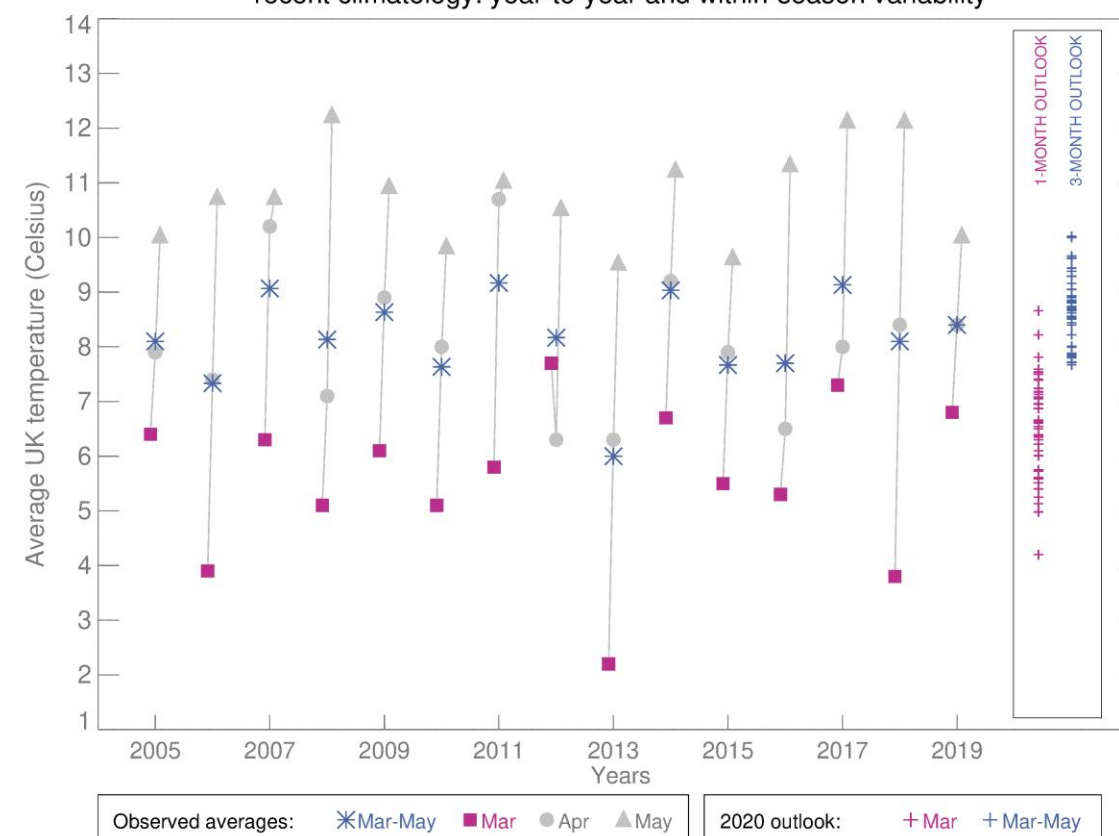


Fig T3

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.