

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 The forecast for February will be superseded by the long-range information on the public weather forecast web page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](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/#?tab=regionalForecast)), starting from 6 February 2015.

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

## SUMMARY - PRECIPITATION:

Latest predictions for UK-mean precipitation favour near- to above-average rainfall for February, although there is a large degree of uncertainty. For February-March-April, predictability is low and the forecast does not differ significantly from climatology, with above-average and below-average precipitation equally probable.

The probability that UK precipitation for February-March-April will fall either into the driest or wettest of our five categories is around 20% (the 1981-2010 probability for each of these categories is 20%).

## CONTEXT:

As already mentioned in the temperature section, there is a fairly consistent signal from computer models for the positive phase of the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO), which has prevailed through the winter so far, to continue into February. Usually, this atmospheric circulation pattern is associated with above-average precipitation and this is reflected in figure P2, which shows a shift towards wetter than average conditions.

Similar to January, the weather in February is likely to alternate between spells of northwesterly winds, bringing drier, colder conditions and southwesterly winds, which often bring mild, wet conditions. There is a signal in computer

models that during the more unsettled spells of weather, northern parts of the UK are at highest risk of strong winds and heavy rain.

For February-March-April as a whole, although near- to above-average precipitation is slightly favoured, uncertainty is large; this is highlighted in figure P2, where there is a broad range of outcomes. There is disagreement between models over which atmospheric pattern will dominate, although there is a slight preference in the majority of models, for below-average pressure near the UK, which is generally associated with wetter-than-average conditions.

Fig P2

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

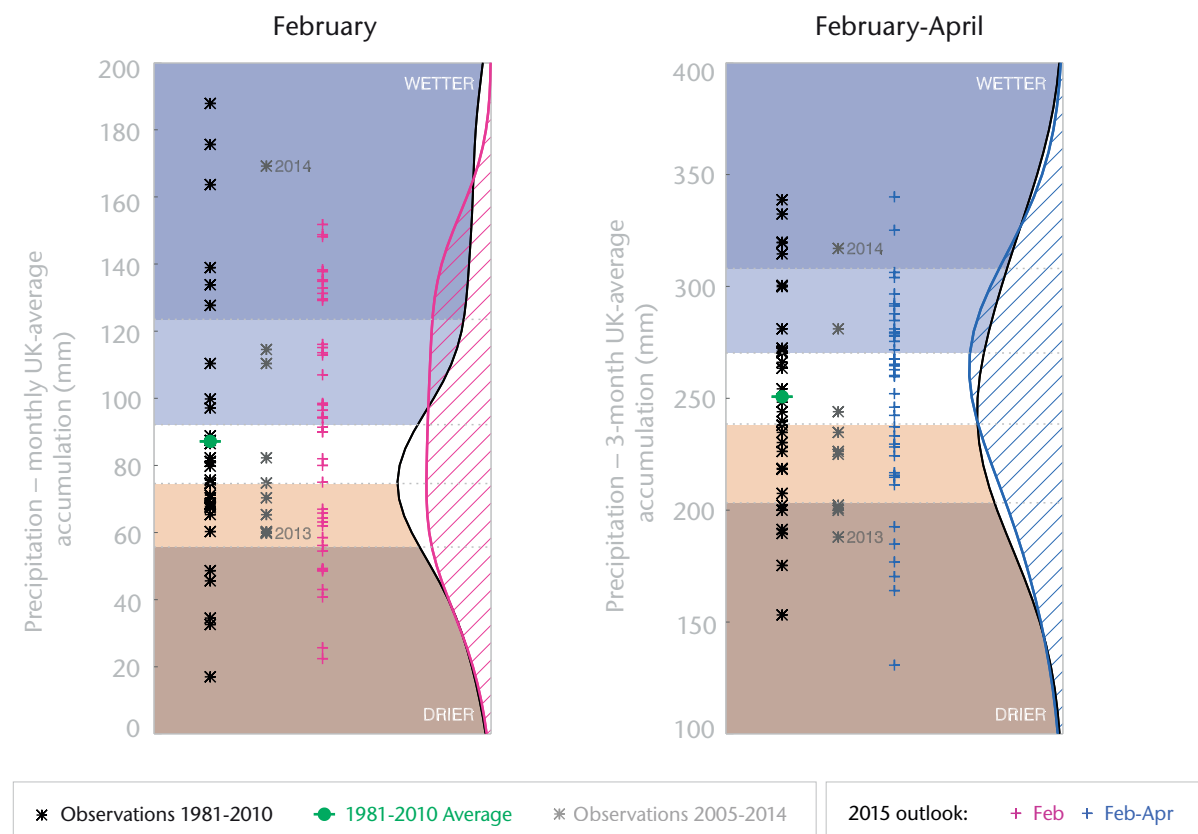


Fig P1

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

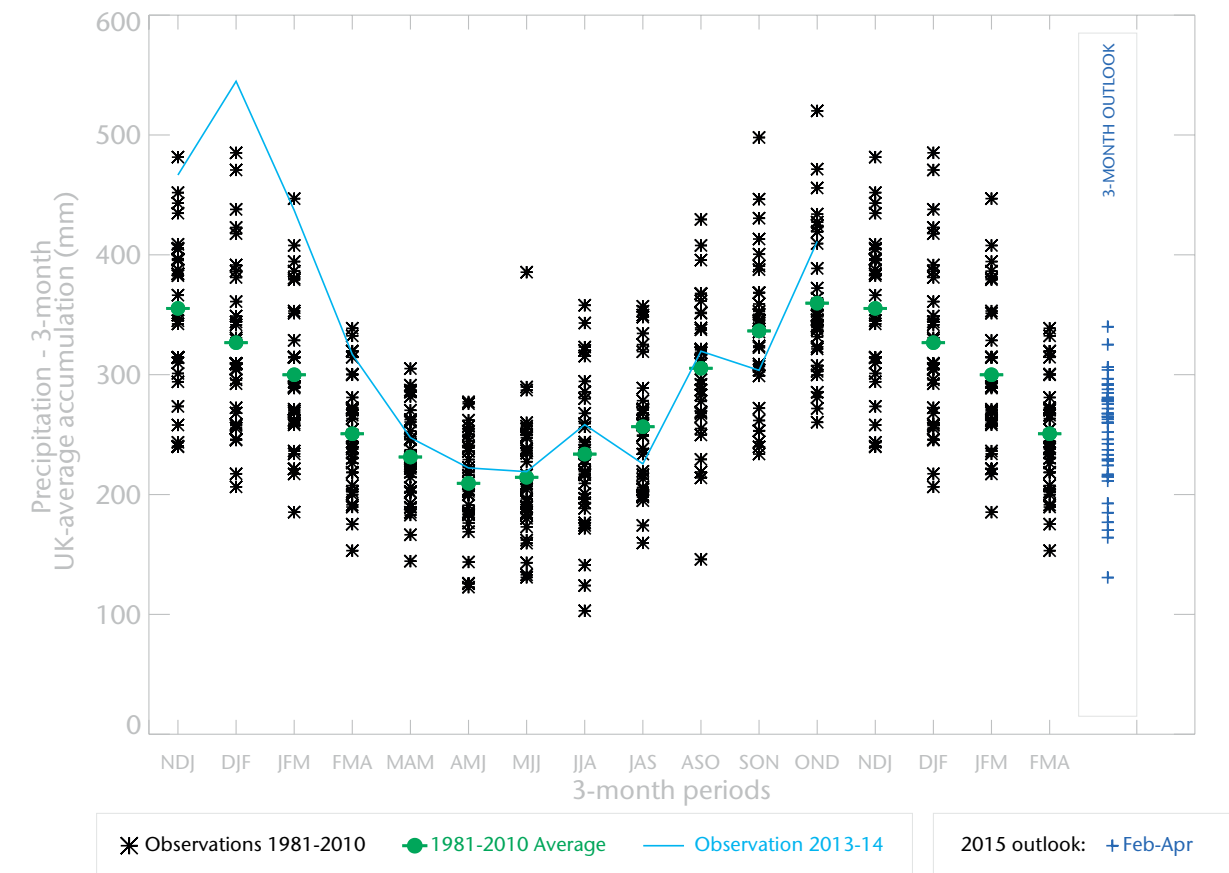
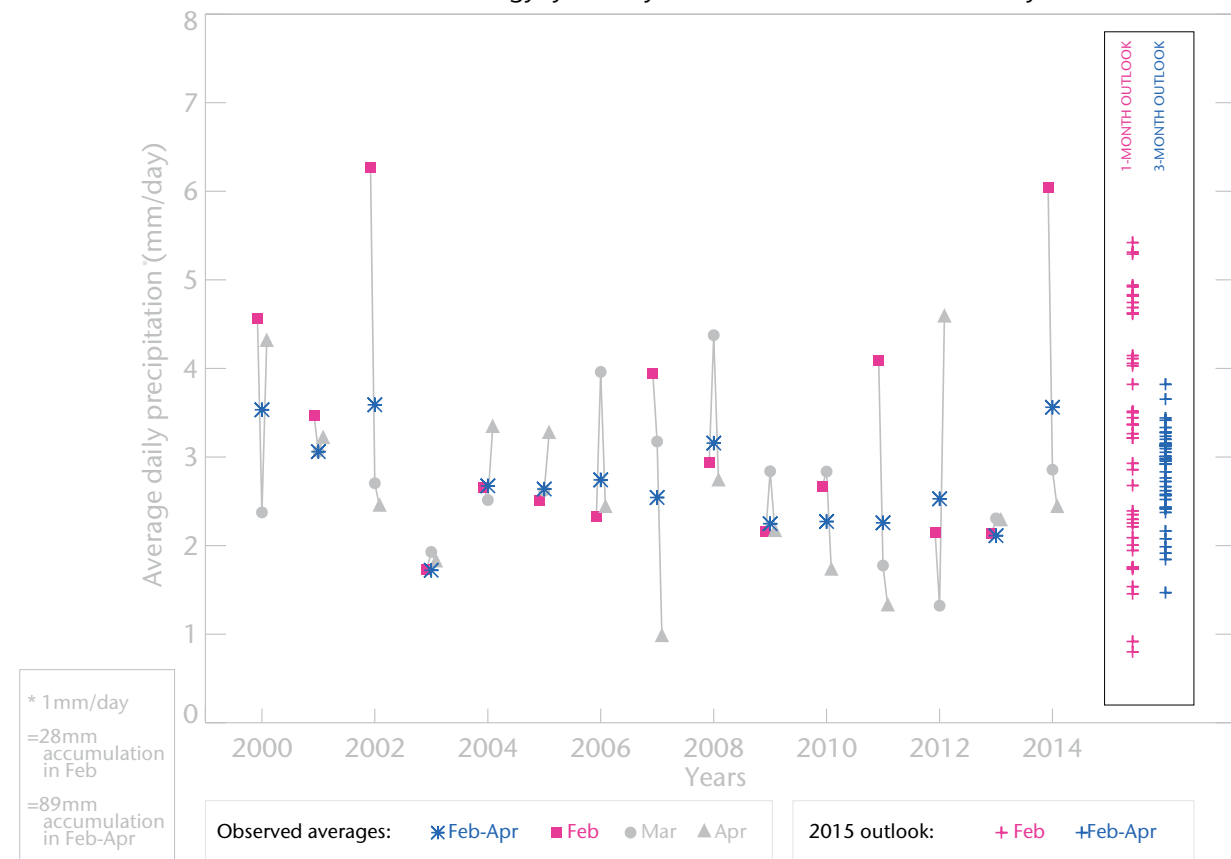


Fig P3

1-month and 3-month UK outlook for precipitation 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.