



Met Office

Met Office 3-month Outlook

Period: April – June 2020 Issue date: 26.03.20

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 The forecast for April will be superseded by the long-range information on the public weather forecast web page (www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/#?tab=regionalForecast), starting from 1st April 2020.

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

SUMMARY – TEMPERATURE:

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

Overall, the probability that the UK-average temperature for April-May-June 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 between 40 and 45% (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 – has recently been very strong and is set to remain stronger than usual in the remaining weeks before its seasonal breakdown in April. This, along with the lag of about 2 weeks in responses in the lower layers of the atmosphere, favours a positive phase of the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) during the first half of the Outlook period.

Whilst a positive phase of the NAO favours milder-than-normal conditions, its effect on temperatures is less marked during the next 3-months than in winter. Sea surface temperatures to the west of the UK are additionally below average, further moderating the warm signal.

For April and April-May-June as a whole, the Met Office long-range prediction system has good support from predictions from other centres around the world, showing an increased likelihood that the UK will come under the influence of high pressure as well as westerly winds at times. High pressure favours above-average temperatures during late spring and early summer, and with the warming of climate, this results in an increase in the probability of above-average temperatures (see graphs of figure T2).

The relatively high probability of our warmest forecast category does not imply extreme or unseasonal weather throughout the whole 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

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

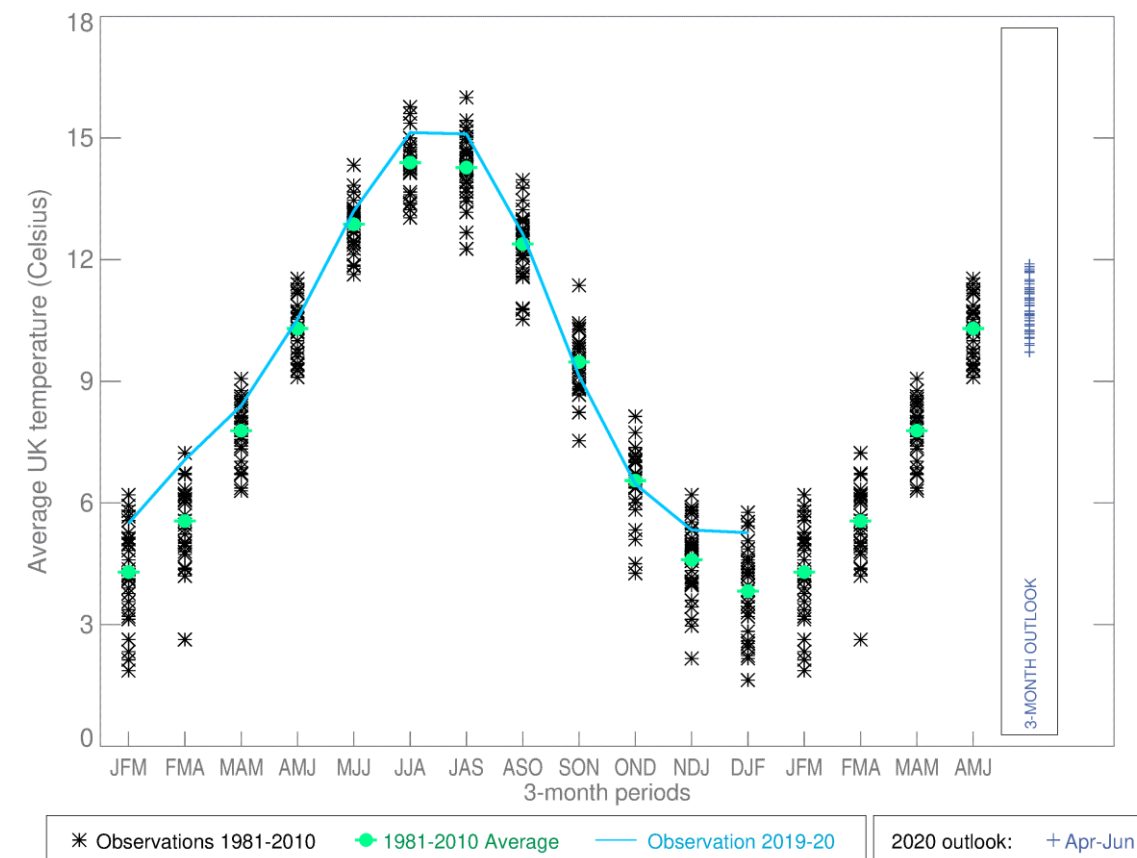


Fig T2

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

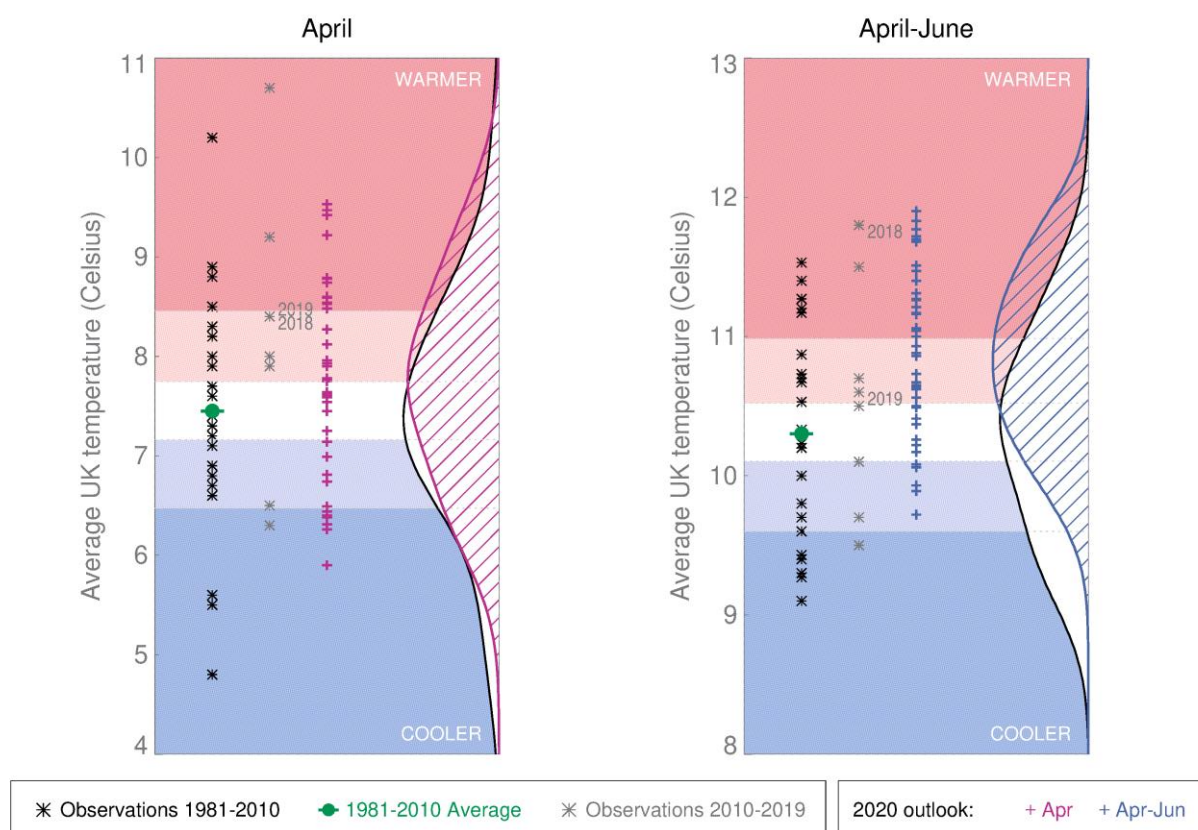
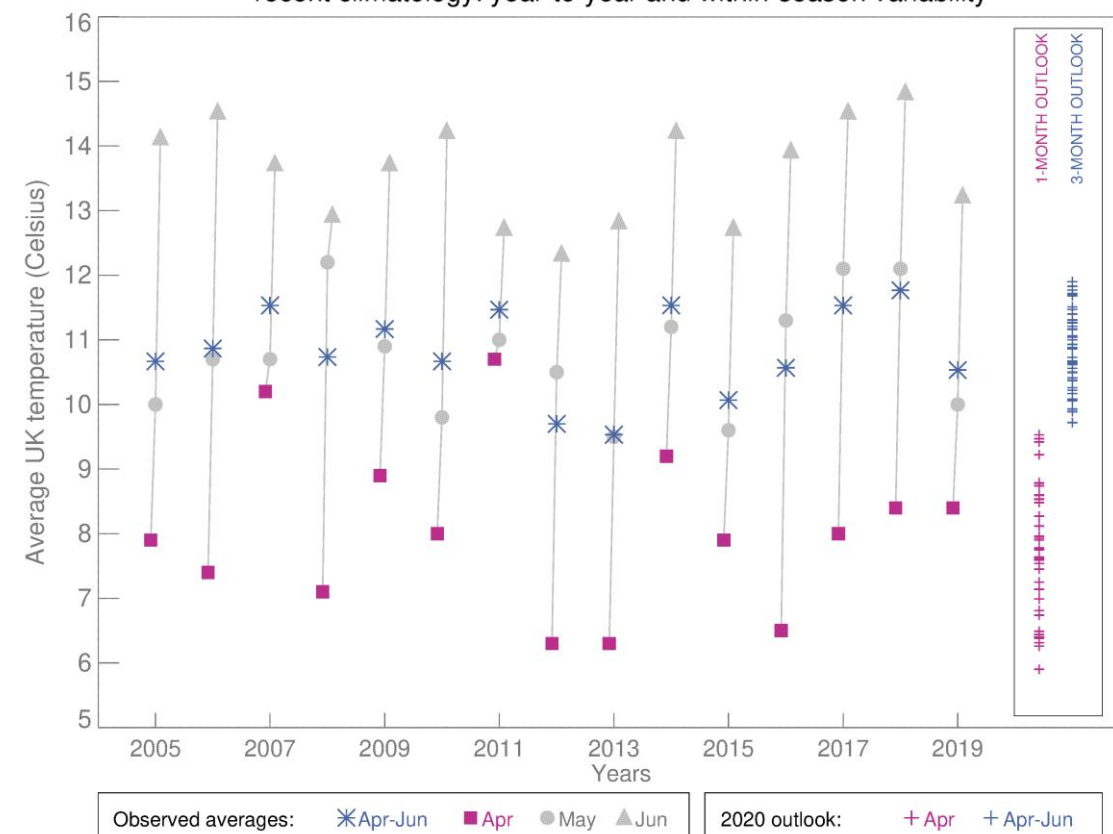


Fig T3

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-7-day) forecasts and warnings available to the contingency planning community from the Met Office.