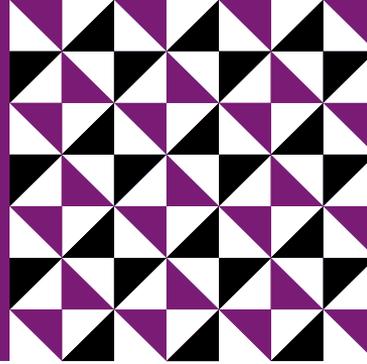
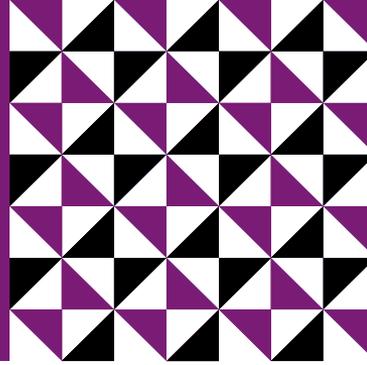


Facilitators' experiences regarding the extended curriculum programme: A case study of the Durban University of Technology

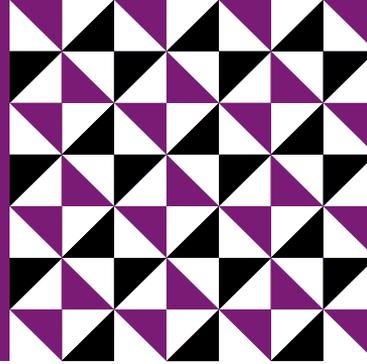
Nokuthula Sibiya & Hazel Mahlanze



- Student **access** and **success** are primary concerns of the South African HEIs.
- With the widening of access to South African HEIs, a change in the demographics of students is noted.
- Young people from various backgrounds are now able to access HEIs.
- The South African post-school system is not well designed to meet the skills development needs of either the youth or the economy (NDP 2011).

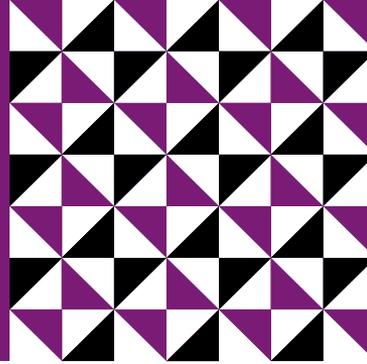


- A need for a programme that supports underprepared students to improve access and success in HEIs.
- The Extended Curriculum Programme (ECP) is an intervention with much significance for the case for the structural curriculum reform (CHE 2013:70).
- The purpose of the ECP is to create the curriculum space needed to enable **talented** but **underprepared students** to achieve sound foundations of success in higher education.



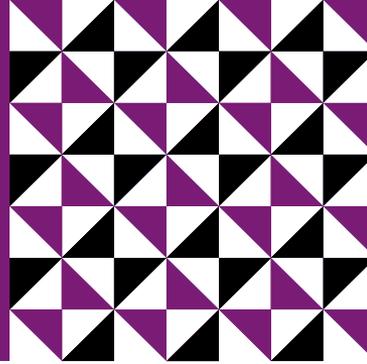
ECP in the UG Nursing
Programme

- In 2013, the Undergraduate Nursing (UGN) Programme within the Department of Nursing at DUT offered for the first time the ECP.
- 10 full time lecturers, three part-time lecturers and nine clinical instructors.
- A group of 80 main stream and 20 ECP students are admitted annually.



Selection and placement of ECP students

- Standardised Assessment Tests for Access and Placement (SATAP) is used for selection and placement of all applicants.
- The focus is on cognitive process and skills that underpin tasks more than on discipline content.
- Tests, which are primarily MCQs are designed to assess competencies in reading and writing modes only.
- Applicants who obtain scores below 50% are placed in the ECP.



Structure of the ECP

- The programme is offered over 5 years in order to enhance student development and to improve the students' chances of successful completion.
- During the first three years, the students register for a few core nursing modules and Essentials of Professional Practice (EPP), ECP modules.
- EPP module consists of academic literacy modules for example; computer literacy, English literacy and information literacy.

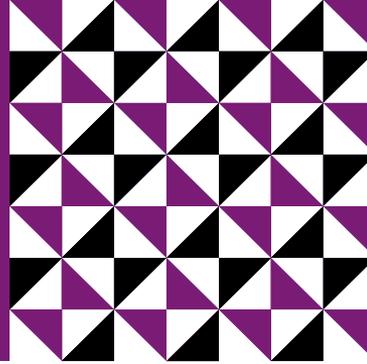
Problem statement

2013 cohort

- Of the 20 registered students, in their first year of registration:
 - two absconded,
 - two de-registered,
 - one failed,
 - one transferred to another institution,
 - two declined placement in the ECP.
- Only 12 students continued with their studies to completion.

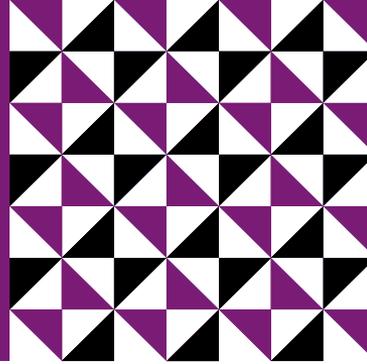
2014 cohort

- Of the 20 registered students in their first year of registration :
 - two absconded,
 - one failed.
- Only 17 students are still registered.



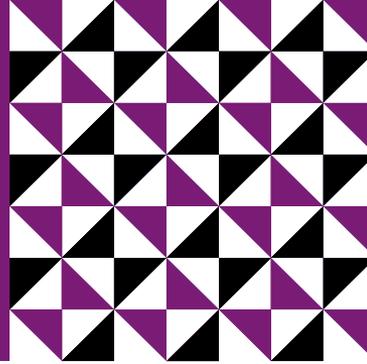
Aim of the study

The impact of the programme has never been evaluated. Therefore, the aim of the study was to explore the experiences of the facilitators regarding ECP in the UG Nursing Programme.



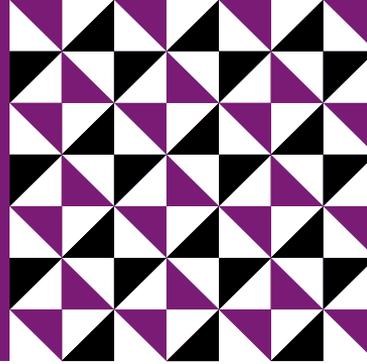
Design and sampling
process

- A case study that was guided by a qualitative, exploratory design was used.
- The sample comprised six purposively selected ECP facilitators.
- Of the six facilitators, three facilitated core nursing modules and three facilitated the EPP modules.
- Participants had more than 5 years' experience in higher education.



Data collection and
analysis

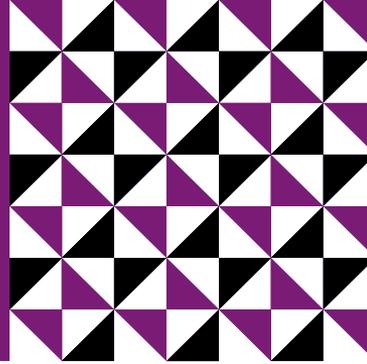
- In-depth interviews were conducted with the ECP facilitators.
- The key research question that was asked during the interviews was: “As the facilitator in the programme, what are your experiences regarding ECP in the UG Nursing Programme?”
- Tesch’s method was used to analyse the data.



Findings of the study

The following four major themes emerged from the study findings:

1. Stigmatisation and lack of confidence.
2. Lack of self-will.
3. Additional workload of facilitators.
4. Gradual improvement of students' performance.

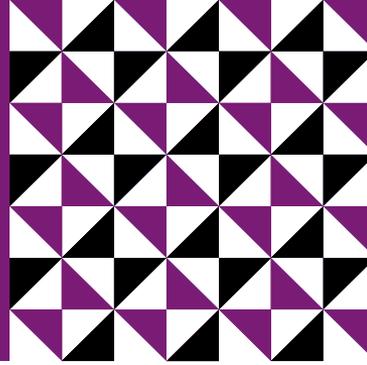


Theme 1: Stigmatisation
and lack of confidence

The majority of the participants reported that students felt stigmatized and lacked confidence due to placement in the ECP. This is noted in the quotations below:

“They felt isolated and discriminated irrespective of explanations given to them” (Participant 6).

“They reported that they are stigmatized by other students and judged as not clever.” (Participant 2).

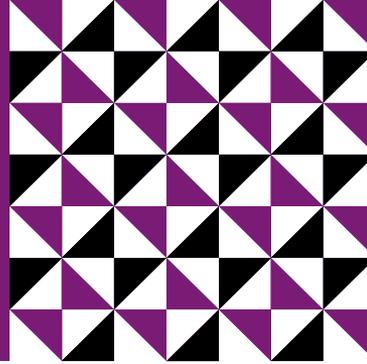


Theme 2: Lack of self-will

The facilitators were of the opinion that the majority of the ECP students lacked self-will and critical thinking skills as shown in the excerpts below:

"...they need constant pushing. They do not want to work independently." (Participant 5).

"The majority of the students displayed slow reception of instructions. One has to repeat the instruction more than once before they get it." (Participant 4).

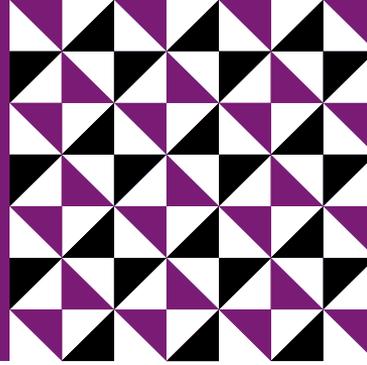


Theme 3: Additional
workload of facilitators

Due to students' negative attitude towards ECP and limited critical thinking skills, the participants raised some concerns that the students placed additional workload on them as noted in the quotes below:

"They demand to be spoon-fed and it becomes too much for the lecturers." (Participant 2).

"Their negative attitude towards the programme puts unnecessary strain to the facilitators since they have to put double the effort in changing their mindset." (Participant 6).



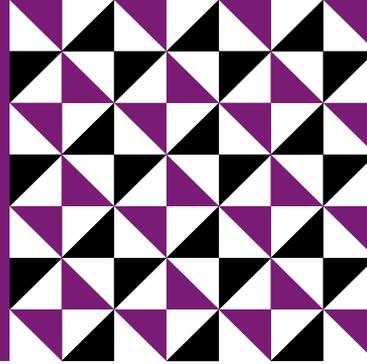
Theme 4: Gradual
improvement of students'
performance

All the facilitators reported that they had confidence that the ECP would assist the students to improve learning. This is noted in the excerpts below:

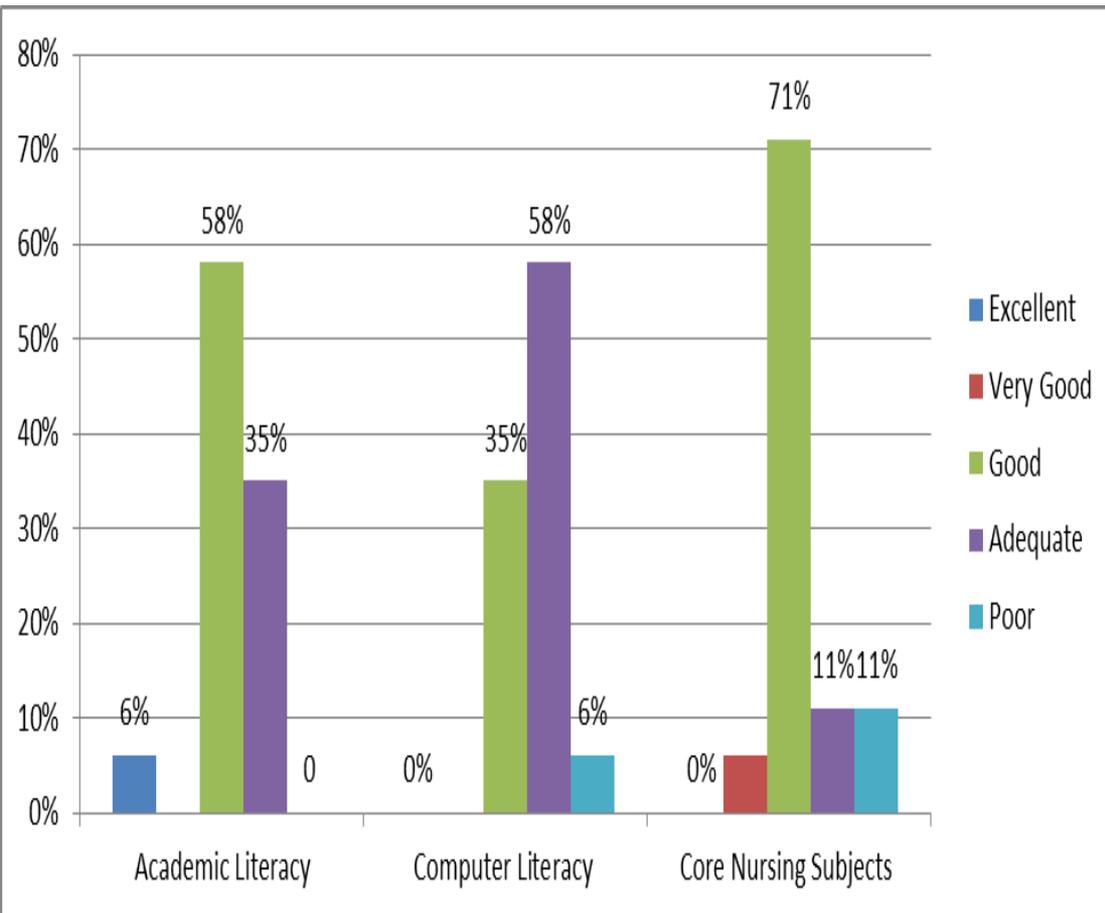
"This year, there is improvement in their assertiveness and readiness to learn unlike the past." (Participant 4).

"In their third year of study, I see transformation and an attitude favorable for learning." (Participant 3).

"The appointed tutors will hopefully help with motivation and support." (Participant 1).



2nd year students'
performance
(2014)

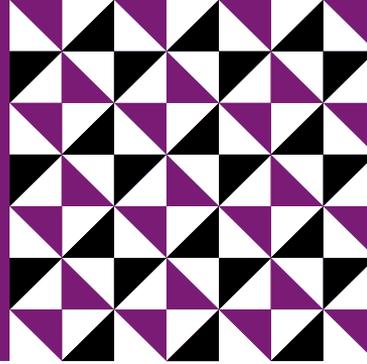


SUBJECTS

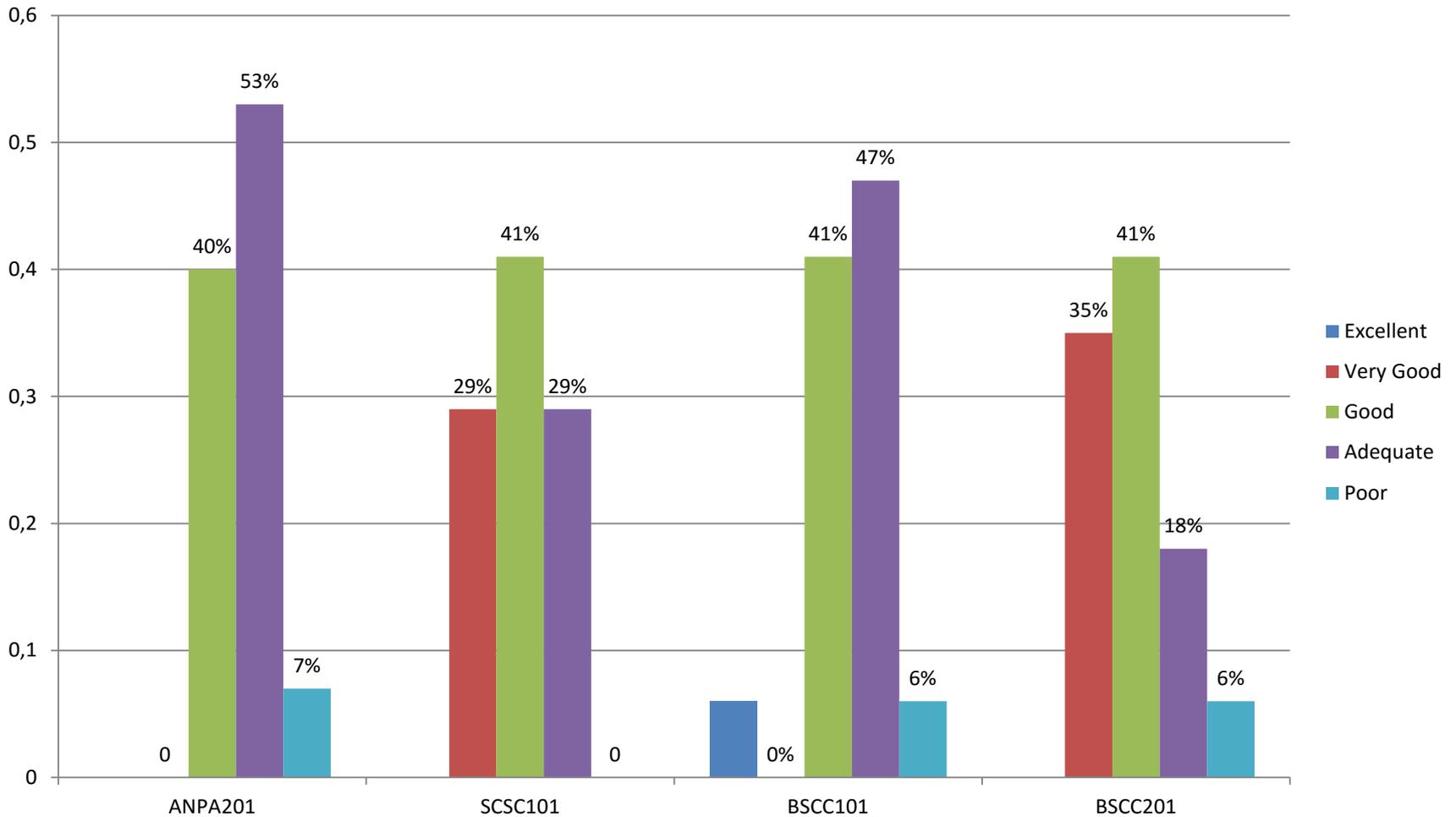
Academic Literacy:
58% of students between 60-69% (Good)
35% between 50-59% (Adequate)

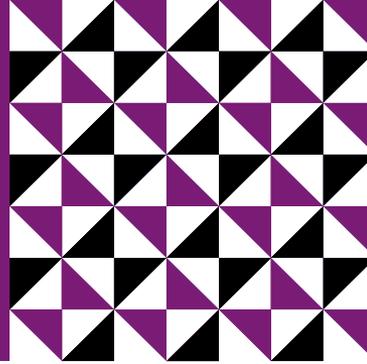
CORE NURSING SUBJECTS

71% between 60-69 (Good)
5% performed between 70-79% (Very Good)
11% below 50%

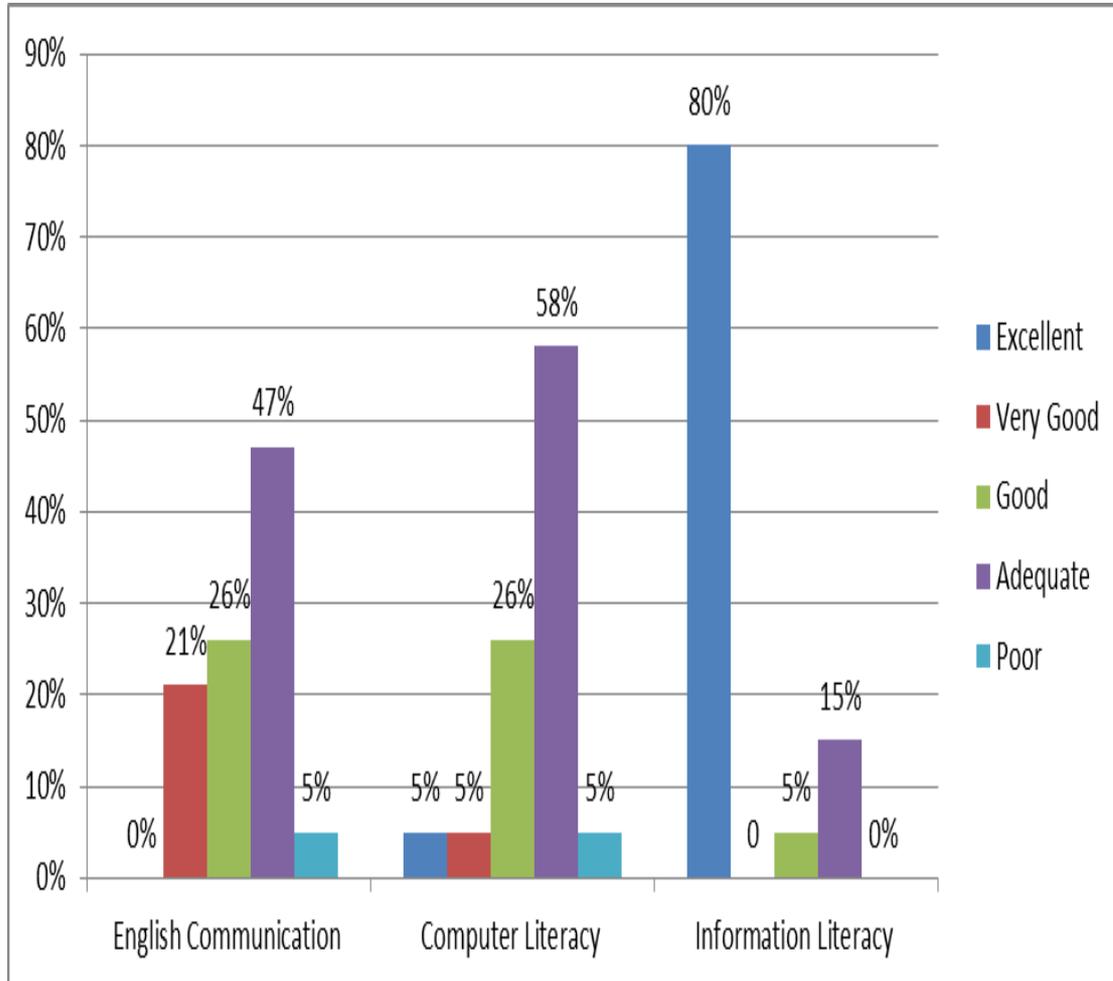


Core Nursing Modules
2nd year ECP
(2014)

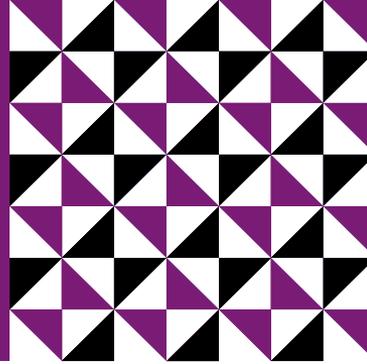




1st year students'
performance
(2014)



EPP MODULES:
English communication,
 (47%) between 50-59.
Computer Literacy, (58%)
 between 50-59.
Information Literacy (80%
 between 80-100).



Conclusion

- It was concluded that the ECP should continue to increase access and success in HEIs, however, there is a need for additional resources to support ECP students.
- In order to provide academic support to the ECP students, in 2013, a dedicated Academic Development Practitioner was appointed in the Undergraduate Nursing Programme.
- In May 2018, the programme graduated 12 of the 20 (60%) of the first cohort of the ECP students.

THANK YOU

