

SUPPORTING REPORT

Social Impact – Equality

Support for People with Disabilities (EQ7)

Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral – ESPOL

Introduction

This report has been prepared within the framework of the QS Sustainability Rankings to support Indicator EQ7 – Support for People with Disabilities, based on information corresponding to the year 2025.

Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL) implements a structured, systematic, and institutionalized university wellbeing model aimed at ensuring equitable access, retention, and academic success for students with disabilities and specific educational needs.

This model is led by the Polytechnic Wellbeing Office and integrates services, programs, and support mechanisms under a comprehensive approach that encompasses academic, social, economic, and health dimensions, with a strong emphasis on measurable outcomes, continuous improvement, and institutional sustainability.

1. Institutional Support Office

ESPOL has a formal institutional unit responsible for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), managed by the Polytechnic Wellbeing Office.

This unit leads, coordinates, and implements institutional inclusion strategies, ensuring the provision of specialized services for students with disabilities in coordination with academic and administrative units.

Within this framework, the **Diversity Support Network (RAD)** is implemented as a structured institutional model for comprehensive care.

Evidence:

- <https://www.instagram.com/stories/highlights/18216718252084565/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/p/DWH7whTDQRU/>

2. Support Programs for People with Disabilities

2.1 Diversity Support Network (RAD)

ESPOL implements RAD as an institutionalized model of comprehensive care for students with disabilities and specific educational needs.

This model integrates structured processes including:

- Student identification and registration
- Psychopedagogical assessment
- Implementation of reasonable adjustments
- Curriculum adaptations
- Continuous academic monitoring

These actions translate technical assessments into effective interventions that ensure accessibility, participation, and student retention.

Evidence:

- <https://www.bienestar.espol.edu.ec/es/diversidad-e-inclusion>
- <https://www.instagram.com/stories/highlights/18216718252084565/>

2.2 Complementary Institutional Actions

a) *“Wellbeing in the Classroom” Program*

An institutional strategy aimed at strengthening teaching competencies for inclusive learning environments through the application of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

Evidence:

- <https://www.cise.espol.edu.ec/es/creando-bienestar-en-el-aula>
- <https://virtual.espol.edu.ec/courses/course-v1:CISE+BAULA+2025/about>
- <https://www.espol.edu.ec/es/noticias/espol-apuesta-por-la-salud-mental-de-sus-estudiantes-y-profesores>
- <https://www.instagram.com/p/DJ17u0itqe7/>

b) *Inclusion and Early Detection Workshops*

Training spaces for faculty that strengthen early identification of specific educational needs and activation of institutional support pathways.

Evidence:

- <https://www.facebook.com/bienestar.espol/posts/1312722470656595/>

c) Specialized Faculty Training

Training focused on the interpretation of psychopedagogical reports and the implementation of inclusive strategies in the classroom.

Results:

- 20 trained faculty members

Evidence:

- https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Sy8nrNO5o2jd-CiICkdR6tXrUZ-Mfp2_/view

d) Institutional Awareness and Inclusive Culture

ESPOL promotes initiatives to strengthen an institutional culture based on inclusion and respect for diversity, including:

- 4ALL Challenge (International Day of Persons with Disabilities)
- RAD Focus Groups
- Course: “Pedagogical Approach to Special Educational Needs”

Evidence:

- <https://www.instagram.com/p/DR19BaZj0gP/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/p/DSFfH5Jjzc4/>
- <https://www.cise.espol.edu.ec/es/curso-en-l%C3%ADnea-abordaje-pedag%C3%B3gico-de-las-necesidades-educativas-especiales>

3. Institutional Results

3.1 RAD Results 2025

- 46 students with disabilities supported
- 184 faculty members informed on curriculum adaptations
- 20 personalized faculty support interventions



3.2 Institutional Wellbeing Ecosystem

- 1,486 psychological consultations
- 91.52% directed to students
- 58 promotion and prevention events
- 8,836 participants in institutional activities

3.3 Social Intervention and Student Retention

The institutional model incorporates a robust social intervention component aimed at preventing dropout and strengthening student retention.

In 2025, a total of **15,790 social interventions** were recorded, including:

- Socioeconomic vulnerability assessments
- Financial aid and scholarship management
- Support in academic and personal risk situations
- Psychosocial intervention and guidance

Additionally, university transition programs were implemented, benefiting thousands of new students by strengthening key academic skills.

These results demonstrate a preventive, scalable, and evidence-based institutional model.

4. On-Campus Accommodation

ESPOL provides Polytechnic Residences as a key institutional mechanism to ensure student retention, particularly for students with disabilities.

This service is systematically implemented, integrating accessibility, equity, and wellbeing criteria through:

- Room allocation based on specific needs
- Preferential ground-floor placement
- Physical space adaptations
- Continuous institutional support

4.1 Physical and Digital Accessibility

ESPOL ensures accessibility through a comprehensive approach:



- **Physical accessibility:** Compliance with Ecuadorian Technical Standard NTE INEN 2 245:2000
- **Digital accessibility:** Use of virtual platforms that facilitate access to academic content and institutional services

5. Institutional Policy and Support Mechanisms

ESPOL's inclusion model is supported by an institutional framework that integrates regulations, policies, and support mechanisms aimed at ensuring equal opportunities.

The university implements **affirmative action policies** to reduce structural inequalities and promote effective inclusion of vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities.

Additionally, ESPOL has a **Scholarship and Financial Aid Regulation**, which establishes transparent and equitable criteria for financial support allocation.

5.1 Financial Support

- 1,685 scholarships awarded in 2025
- 72 scholarships for students with disabilities
- 34 beneficiaries of the "Padrinos" Program
- 67 beneficiaries of the "Dona Futuro" Program

These mechanisms demonstrate a structured and inclusive funding system.

5.2 Comprehensive Health Services

ESPOL guarantees access to comprehensive health services, including:

- Psychological care
- Medical care
- Obstetric care

5.3 Residences

- 144 available spaces
- 3 students with disabilities accommodated

This program contributes to ensuring equitable conditions for student retention.

Evidence:

- <https://www.bienestar.espol.edu.ec/es/diversidad-e-inclusion>
- <https://www.dspace.espol.edu.ec/handle/123456789/25819>

6. Conclusion

ESPOL demonstrates an institutional model for supporting people with disabilities characterized by:

- Formal structure and defined governance
- Systematic and institutionalized implementation
- Evidence-based approach with measurable outcomes
- Comprehensive integration within the university wellbeing system

Compliance with Indicator EQ7 is supported by the existence of specialized services, their effective implementation, inclusive financing mechanisms, and demonstrated institutional impact, aligned with international standards for inclusive education.

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