Safeguarding Policy

Burkina Institute of Technology (BIT)

April 2026

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Objectives
3. Scope and application
4. Definitions and forms of safeguarding
5. Implementation framework
    5.1 Responsibilities
    5.2 Preventive measures
6. Reporting and investigation
    6.1 Reporting channels
    6.2 Investigation process
7. Safeguarding protocol for student residential settings
8. Education and awareness
9. Review, audit, and reporting
10. Local support services and referral pathways
11. Legal and institutional mapping for Burkina Faso
12. Conclusion
13. Annex

1. Introduction

Burkina Institute of Technology (BIT) is committed to providing a safe, respectful, inclusive, and protective environment for learning, work, and academic life for all learners, staff members, visitors, partners, and anyone connected to its activities.

BIT recognizes that educational institutions may, if appropriate measures are not in place, expose learners—particularly children, adolescents, young adults, and people in vulnerable situations—to various risks of harm. These risks may take the form of physical, psychological, or sexual violence, exploitation, neglect, harassment, intimidation, discrimination, cyberviolence, or abuse of power.

Aware of this responsibility, Burkina Institute of Technology adopts this safeguarding policy to prevent any risk to the integrity, dignity, and well-being of the people concerned and to ensure an appropriate response to any concern or incident. This policy reflects the institution's commitment to protecting all people involved in its activities—students, employees, partners, volunteers, and other collaborators—from any form of abuse, exploitation, harassment, or neglect.

2. Objectives

The main objectives of this BIT safeguarding policy are to:

1. **Protect all people**, especially students, employees, volunteers, partners, and beneficiaries—from any form of abuse, exploitation, harassment, or neglect in the course of BIT activities.
2. **Create and maintain a safe and respectful environment** in which the rights, dignity, and well-being of every individual are recognised, protected, and valued.
3. **Strengthen institutional accountability** by establishing clear mechanisms for prevention, reporting, and management of safeguarding-related incidents.
4. **Ensure BIT's compliance with national and international standards** relating to the protection of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

BIT recognises that the effective implementation of this policy depends on collaboration and the shared responsibility of all staff, partners, and students.

3. Scope and application

This policy applies to all people involved in the activities of Burkina Institute of Technology (BIT), including staff, faculty, students, interns, volunteers, consultants, partners, suppliers, and any other person acting in the name of or on behalf of BIT.

It covers all operations and contexts in which BIT carries out its activities, whether on campus, in communities, during events, training sessions, projects, or external interventions. This also includes online activities and digital communications carried out under BIT's responsibility.

The policy applies to any interaction with children, young people, and vulnerable adults, whether they are direct or indirect beneficiaries of BIT's programs. It aims to ensure the protection, dignity, and respect of every person involved in the institute's activities.

Every member of the BIT community must adhere to the principles set out in this policy and actively contribute to their implementation in order to ensure a safe environment free from abuse, exploitation, or harassment.

4. Definitions and forms of safeguarding

Safeguarding: Safeguarding refers to all measures taken to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse, exploitation, harassment, or neglect. It aims to promote their well-being, safety, and dignity in all BIT activities.

Abuse: Abuse means any intentional act or omission that causes or risks causing physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual harm to a person. This includes, but is not limited to, physical violence, sexual abuse, threats, coercion, verbal mistreatment, or any behaviour that undermines another person's integrity.

Exploitation: Exploitation occurs when a person uses their position of power or influence to gain a personal, financial, social, or sexual advantage from another person. This includes sexual or economic exploitation, or any other form of exploitation resulting from an abuse of trust, authority, or vulnerability.

Child: Any person under the age of 18, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Vulnerable adult: Any person aged 18 or over who, because of age, disability, illness, social or economic situation, or particular circumstances, may need specific support or protection against abuse or exploitation.

Safeguarding Officer: A person designated within BIT to ensure the implementation, monitoring, and oversight of the safeguarding policy. The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for prevention, case handling and management, as well as training and awareness-raising for all staff and students on protection issues.

Sexual harassment: Any unwanted verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or offensive environment.

5. Implementation framework

5.1. Responsibilities

The Director General of BIT is responsible for the overall oversight of the implementation of this policy. The Director General ensures that safeguarding principles and procedures are fully integrated into BIT's structure, programmes, and activities.

Safeguarding focal points are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the policy. They oversee reporting procedures, coordinate institutional responses in the event of an incident, and ensure that all necessary measures are taken to protect the BIT community.

Academic and administrative managers are responsible for ensuring that the safeguarding policy is applied within their respective units. They must promote a culture of respect, vigilance, and reporting, and work closely with the Safeguarding Officers to prevent any failure to comply.

Student representatives help raise awareness of the safeguarding policy among their peers. They play a key role in communication between students and the administration, particularly by reporting any incident or inappropriate behaviour to the Safeguarding Officer.

BIT staff and faculty share collective responsibility for the protection of beneficiaries. Everyone must act ethically, report any concern, and refrain from any behaviour that could place others at risk.

BIT partners commit to respecting the institute's safeguarding requirements and to cooperating in the event of an incident.

Human Resources conducts background checks before engagement for personnel.

5.2. Preventive measures

BIT is committed to putting prevention mechanisms in place to reduce the risks of abuse, exploitation, or harassment. These measures include implementing a safe recruitment process based on identity verification, professional references, verification of qualifications, and background checks proportionate to the role before recruitment for staff, faculty, volunteers, interns with supervisory responsibilities, and any service provider or partner with direct or regular contact with students, as well as safeguarding training and the dissemination of the Code of Conduct to all staff members and partners.

Checks are coordinated by Human Resources, jointly reviewed with the Safeguarding Officer, and retained confidentially. A concerning result means any credible information or pattern relating to violence, sexual misconduct, child abuse, exploitation, trafficking, harassment, fraud involving vulnerable persons, or intentional concealment during the recruitment process. Such results trigger a documented risk review that may lead to refusal to recruit, reassignment, enhanced supervision, termination of contract, or referral to the authorities where required by law.

All BIT employees and representatives must sign and comply with the institution's Code of Conduct, which clearly sets out acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in professional and academic settings.

BIT also ensures that safeguarding is integrated into the design, implementation, and evaluation of all its programmes and activities. Regular checks are carried out to ensure compliance with this policy.

This policy is communicated to students and families through admission and orientation materials, internal regulations, campus noticeboards, the BIT website, and annual awareness sessions delivered in accessible language.

Finally, BIT promotes a safe and inclusive learning and working environment based on zero tolerance for any form of abuse, exploitation, or neglect.

6. Reporting and investigation

6.1. Reporting channels

Anyone who knows of or suspects a case of abuse, exploitation, harassment, or neglect involving a member of BIT, or occurring in the context of BIT activities, must report it immediately.

Reports may be made directly to the Safeguarding Officer by email at safeguarding@bit.bf, by calling +226 78 59 95 18 or +226 78 59 91 52, or to the Director General when the seriousness of the situation requires it.

All reports will be handled confidentially and promptly in order to protect victims, witnesses, and the persons involved.

No retaliation will be tolerated against anyone who, in good faith, reports a concern or incident.

BIT guarantees that all reports will be reviewed impartially and that appropriate action will be taken in accordance with internal policy and national legislation.

6.2. Investigation process

Upon receiving a report, BIT acknowledges receipt within 48 hours and carries out an initial assessment to determine the seriousness and nature of the case, after which clear timelines for concluding the investigation are provided.

Cases involving a possible criminal offence, child abuse, sexual violence, trafficking, or an immediate risk are referred without undue delay to the competent national services and authorities.

The investigation is conducted and documented with respect for confidentiality, neutrality, and the rights of all parties concerned.

Throughout the process, BIT provides accompaniment and support to victims and witnesses, including psychological, medical, or legal assistance as needed.

Depending on the findings of the investigation, BIT may apply disciplinary measures ranging from temporary suspension to termination of contract and, where necessary, judicial proceedings.

7. Safeguarding protocol for student residential settings

- One-to-one accommodation arrangements with a student are prohibited unless there is formal authorisation justified by a protection emergency.
- Visitor access to student residences must be controlled, recorded where applicable, and prohibited in sleeping areas without authorisation.

- Staff access to student rooms must be limited to legitimate welfare, maintenance, emergency, or disciplinary reasons and, where possible, documented while respecting privacy.
- Residential staff must know the reporting channels, emergency contacts, and referral procedures.

8. Education and awareness

Burkina Institute of Technology (BIT) recognises that effective prevention of abuse and exploitation depends on continuous training and collective awareness. For this reason, BIT is committed to strengthening the skills, knowledge, and understanding of all staff, students, and partners with regard to safeguarding.

All new employees, teachers, students, volunteers, and partners must complete a safeguarding induction session within 30 days of joining. This training is intended to help them understand the principles of the policy, expected behaviours, and reporting procedures.

BIT regularly organises training and awareness workshops to ensure that safeguarding principles remain well understood, respected, and applied across all areas of the institution.

Students receive information on reporting channels at the start of the academic year.

Reminder campaigns must be organised at least once a year and after any major update to the policy.

Internal and external awareness campaigns are carried out to promote a culture of zero tolerance toward abuse, exploitation, and harassment. These actions include the dissemination of educational materials, the display of reporting procedures, and the provision of support resources.

BIT also works in collaboration with its institutional partners, NGOs, and universities to share good practices, harmonise safeguarding standards, and strengthen coordination at the national level.

Finally, BIT ensures that every member of the university community remains informed, trained, and committed to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all.

9. Review, audit, and reporting

BIT will commission or integrate an independent external safeguarding audit at least every two years, together with an implementation action plan monitored by management.

The Safeguarding Officer submits an annual written safeguarding report to management covering training, incidents by category, response times, referrals, lessons learned, and corrective actions.

10. Local support services and referral pathways

BIT maintains an up-to-date operational referral directory.

Service	Details
Police emergency	Police 1010; 17 and 16
Fire brigade	18
Ministry of Family and Solidarity	01 BP 515 Ouagadougou 01, +226 25 48 36 75

11. Legal and institutional mapping for Burkina Faso

This policy must be read in coherence with the following national frameworks and their operational implications:

Area	Relevant framework / operational implication
Children's rights and best interests	Law No. 015-2014/AN on child protection recognises the child's right to be heard and requires that the child's best interests be the primary consideration in decisions affecting them.
Education sector	The education framework law applies to public and private educational institutions and guarantees access without discrimination.
Workplace protections	Labour Code No. 028-2008/AN applies to workers and employers in Burkina Faso and prohibits discrimination in employment.

Trafficking and exploitation	Law No. 029-2008/AN combats trafficking in persons and related practices.
Criminal law	The Penal Code sets the criminal framework applicable to violence, sexual offences, and other abuse that must be referred to the justice system.

12.Conclusion

Burkina Institute of Technology (BIT) reaffirms its full commitment to creating and maintaining a safe, respectful, and protective environment for study, work, and collaboration for everyone involved in its activities.

Safeguarding is not only an administrative requirement; it is a fundamental value of BIT. It reflects the institution's moral and ethical responsibility toward its students, staff, partners, and the communities it serves.

BIT commits to applying the principles and procedures of this policy rigorously, reviewing them regularly (at least every two years), and adapting them in line with legal, institutional, and social developments.

All members of the BIT community share responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy, promoting a culture of respect and protection, and reporting any situation that is contrary to the institution's values.

By acting collectively, BIT aspires to become a model of good governance, integrity, and human security, ensuring that every individual can learn, work, and thrive in an environment free from any form of abuse or discrimination.

The Director General

The Stern Stewart Institute
bit
Dean

Bastevi TINDANO

13. Annex: Safeguarding Focal Points

To ensure a safe and protective environment, the individuals listed below are designated as safeguarding focal points. They serve as the main contacts for any concern, reports, or requests for information.

Full Name	Position	Safeguarding Role	Contact
SOUDRE Flora	IT Manager	Lead Safeguarding Focal Point	flora.soudre@bit.bf 00226 67433281
Dr OUEDRAOGO Hamed	Pedagogical responsible	Deputy Safeguarding Focal Point	hamed.ouedraogo@bit.bf 00226 70646389
YAMEOGO Francine	Student in CS27	Student Safeguarding Contact	yameogofrancine6@gmail.com +226 54 13 55 63
TRAORE Ramatou	Student in CS27	Student Safeguarding Contact	ramatraore209@gmail.com +226 62 63 12 43

- Any safeguarding concern must be reported without delay to one of the focal points listed above.
- All information shared will be handled confidentially, in accordance with established procedures.