# Auditing Quality Culture and Ethical Behaviour

**GUIDING QUESTION** *Count the problems your property found by itself last year and the problems a guest found for it. Which number is larger, and by how much?*

Property: _____ Completed by: _____ Date: _____

*How to use this sheet: work through the four parts with the people who own the process. The left-hand text comes from the book; the empty columns are for what is true in your property.*

## 1. Verification Pact: what the market says, what actually holds, and your property

| What the market says | What actually holds | In our property |
|---|---|---|
| Quality culture is audited through a staff survey. | No. A staff survey is one possible source of evidence, not the prescribed audit method. | |
| Engagement scores are objective evidence of quality culture. | No. Engagement and quality culture overlap only partly; a score cannot by itself establish conformity. | |
| ISO 10010 must be applied and audited against. | No. ISO 10010 is guidance, not a mandatory normative requirement of ISO 9001:2026. | |
| Culture cannot be the subject of an audit finding. | Incorrect. A supported finding can be raised where objective evidence shows that an applicable culture or ethical-behaviour requirement is not being fulfilled. | |
| A values statement and induction record demonstrate compliance. | No. They may contribute evidence, but implementation and awareness must be tested in practice. | |
| Ethical behaviour is a matter for a code of conduct. | No. A code can help express expectations, but ISO 9001 does not prescribe one as the sole means of fulfilling the requirement. | |
| An auditor may assess whether an individual is open to challenge. | An auditor may examine whether the system enables appropriate challenge and escalation, but should not make a personality judgement about an individual. | |

## 2. Objective evidence: what an auditor would examine

| Line | What to examine | Found? (Yes / Partly / No) | Notes and location |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Document** | Whatever the property states as its expectation of what a person should do on finding a problem, and whether that statement reaches people who are not permanent employees. | | |
| **Record** | Internally raised issues and externally raised issues over two years, with the department and length of service of each reporter, drawn as a pseudonymised extract that carries no names. Both numbers exist; the division has never been performed. | | |
| **Read** | The complaint categorisation and any generic code, the rule by which feedback is solicited, and the property's most recent tender response set beside its own internal records. | | |
| **Told** | Ask three people at different levels about the last time something went wrong on their shift, what they did, who they told and what followed. Four factual questions about a real occasion. | | |
| **Seen** | What visibly happened after the most recent internal report. A process change, a conversation with the person who erred, or nothing, and the building learned the answer within a shift. | | |

| Line | What to examine | Found? (Yes / Partly / No) | Notes and location |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Absence** | There will be no record of anything that went wrong and was corrected before a guest noticed. In most certified hotels this category does not exist as a category, which is why it is empty. | | |

## 3. Common mistakes: self-check

| Mistake | Why it matters | Present here? (Yes / Partly / No) |
|---|---|---|
| Auditing culture with a survey. | On its own it asks about dispositions, which tend to be reported optimistically; it is one source to cross-check, not the method. | |
| Auditing culture with documents. | A values statement, a poster and an induction record can all be verified, and verifying them establishes that the property owns documents. | |
| **Assessing people.** | Whether an individual is open, defensive or receptive is outside a quality audit, is frequently wrong, and can end the property's willingness to be audited on this subject. | |
| Reading a low report count as fear. | It is a statement about a channel, and the kindest workplaces in this industry produce some of the emptiest reporting records. | |
| Overlooking the evidence chain. | Who is asked, how things are coded and whether generic categories absorb the data is where ethical behaviour becomes auditable without judging anybody. | |
| Ignoring bias produced by workload. | Nobody chose it, everybody would deny it indignantly and correctly, and the effect on the data is identical to a deliberate selection. | |
| Failing to declare the auditor's own position. | In a small property the auditor is frequently part of the informal channel they are examining, and saying so is what makes the finding usable. | |
| Presenting it as an audit of character. | Present the ratio instead: found against received. It requires no theory and nobody feels accused. | |

## 4. Action plan

| Position from the book / gap found | Action in our property | Owner | Deadline |
|---|---|---|---|
| The audit examines practices and actions. | | | |
| The evidence is the property's own records. | | | |
| Interviews start from occasions. | | | |
| The boundary is written into the plan. | | | |
| The finding describes a condition, never a person. | | | |
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## In brief

Culture and ethical behaviour are reflected in shared values, attitudes, practices and actions, and only the last two are available to an auditor. The audit therefore examines what the organisation does and never what individuals believe, and that boundary is written into the plan before anything begins.

*Source: The Helm and the Lens, Volume 2b: The Lens, subchapter 3.10. This sheet does not reproduce the text of any standard; work with your own copy of ISO 9001:2026 from an authorised source.*