Choosing a Body, and the Arithmetic Behind the Days

GUIDING QUESTION *Ask your certification body for the calculation behind your audit days. The body has to document and justify it, and asking to see it is a reasonable request. Then ask yourself which parts of your hotel it does not buy time to visit.*

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
Audit days are a commercial variable.	No. Audit time is determined under certification and accreditation rules; price is commercial, but required audit time cannot simply be negotiated away.	
The audit time calculation is the body's confidential methodology.	No. The body must be able to justify its determination of audit time under the applicable rules.	
Only reductions to audit time are available.	Incorrect. Both increases and justified reductions can arise from the applicable factors, within the rules.	
A seasonal property may be counted on its low-season payroll.	Not simply. Effective personnel and seasonal operation must be treated according to the applicable audit-time rules and the activity actually within scope.	
Longer days may be substituted for additional audit days.	Not as a device to defeat required audit duration. Daily audit time and total audit time must remain consistent with the applicable rules and effective auditing.	
Accreditation is a general status held by the body.	Incorrect. Accreditation is granted for defined scopes and schemes.	
The client may not ask who will conduct the audit.	The client can ask about the audit team and raise justified concerns; the certification body remains responsible for assigning competent, impartial personnel.	

2. Objective evidence: what an auditor would examine

Line	What to examine	Found? (Yes / Partly / No)	Notes and location
Document	The audit time determination and its justification, as recorded by the body and shared with the property on request, and the property's own process determination and peak personnel figure.		
Record	The audit plans of the previous cycle, showing what was visited and when. Three years of plans establish what the day count actually bought.		
Read	The scope against the audit plans. Anything inside the scope that appears in no plan for three years has been paid for and not examined.		
Told	Ask the body what proportion of the audit time will be spent outside normal working hours and on externally provided processes. The answer is a plan and can be agreed in advance.		
Seen	The auditor's curriculum vitae for the person who will actually attend, which a client may ask for and which is the competence being purchased.		
Absence	There will be no record of the property having ever received the audit time calculation, and no record of any part of the scope having been identified as		

Line	What to examine	Found? (Yes / Partly / No)	Notes and location
	unreachable within the time allocated.		

3. Common mistakes: self-check

Mistake	Why it matters	Present here? (Yes / Partly / No)
Comparing totals.	Three numbers on three quotations are three numbers; three calculations are a comparison.	
Accepting confidentiality.	The body has to document the determination and its justification, a client can ask to see them, and a refusal tells the client something about the body.	
Believing only reductions exist.	Increase factors sit in the same document under the same requirement of documentation, and sales conversations rarely mention them.	
Starting from headcount without counting processes.	A hotel is process-dense and headcount-light, and the starting variable does not describe it.	
Giving the low-season payroll.	For a seasonal operation the count is governed by the audit-time rules rather than chosen by the property, and a low figure is not a saving.	
Asking for more days without saying what for.	It reads as a request to be audited more, which persuades nobody and helps nothing.	
Deciding on price without the four-line list.	Declining to buy time on the night shift is a decision; not knowing that the night shift is what the price buys is not.	
Forgetting who the certificate is for.	It is bought for the people who must believe it, and what they are relying on is the depth of an examination they will never see.	

4. Action plan

Position from the book / gap found	Action in our property	Owner	Deadline
The calculation is requested from every body invited to quote.			
The property counts its own processes before it reads anybody’s quotation.			
Increase factors are treated as available.			
The case names what the extra time is for.			
The lowest quotation is examined for what it does not include.			

In brief

Audit time is determined by a documented method starting from the effective number of personnel and adjusted by factors that run in both directions, and the determination and its justification are documented by the body and can be requested by the client. A property that asks for the calculation can compare arithmetics rather than totals, and a property that has counted its own processes can see why the starting point understates a hotel: thirty-one processes against two hundred and eighteen people is a shape the table was not built for.

Source: The Helm and the Lens, Volume 2b: The Lens, subchapter 4.2. This sheet does not reproduce the text of any standard; work with your own copy of ISO 9001:2026 from an authorised source.