The Certificate, and What It Actually Certifies

GUIDING QUESTION *Take your certificate out of its frame and read every line aloud, slowly, as if you were a client deciding whether to trust your hotel with a thousand delegates' data. Which organisation? Which address? Which activities? Which version of the statement of controls? Which dates? Then read what your website says about it. If the two do not say the same thing, the website is the one that is wrong.*

Property: _____ Completed by: _____ Date: _____

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

1. Verification Pact: what is commonly believed, what actually holds, and your property

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	In our property
«The hotel is certified.»	A defined scope at a defined site, for a defined version of the controls, is certified.	
«The scope is a technical detail.»	It is the first line a client reads. It decides whether their data is covered.	
«The statement of controls can change freely.»	The certificate refers to a version. Significant changes should be known to the certifier.	
«One badge on the group website is enough.»	It implies every hotel is certified. Only the named sites are.	
«The framed certificate proves current certification.»	Validity depends on surveillance and status. The certifier or register confirms it today.	

2. What the standard requires, and what demonstrates it

From Table 4.8.a. The third column of the book (what is method, not requirement) is left out here: write what your property actually holds as evidence.

What is required	What demonstrates it once certified	In our property
Certificate states organisation, sites and scope	A general manager who can say what is in and out of scope	
Reference to version of statement of controls	The hotel knows which version the certificate refers to and what has changed since	
Validity confirmed on request	Public statements that point to the register or the certifier	
Changes notified to certifier	A record of significant changes reported, including revised statements	
Scope determined and documented	Reasons for the scope recorded, with any planned extension	
Communication determined	One owner approving every public statement about certification	

3. The instrument: Table 4.8.b, Reading the certificate

The instrument of this subchapter. Completed on the day the certificate arrives and after each surveillance audit, and shared with everybody who speaks for the hotel.

Line on the certificate	What it says in Casablanca	What the hotel had been saying	Correction
Organisation	The operating subsidiary	The hotel group	Name the certified entity only
Site	The Casablanca hotel	Badge above all four hotels	Badge removed from group header; Casablanca page only

Line on the certificate	What it says in Casablanca	What the hotel had been saying	Correction
Scope	Reservations, front office, guest data in the property system	«Your delegates' data is fully protected»	Scope stated in plain words; events described separately
Statement of controls	Version 2.1	Version 3.0 sent to clients without explanation	Certifier informed; note explaining the changes
Standard and edition	The current edition	Correct	No change
Dates	Three years, subject to surveillance	«Certified» with no date	Certificate number and link to validity check
Certifier and accreditation	Accredited body, recognised accreditation	Correct	No change

The rows above are the book's; the empty rows are for lines your property needs to add.

4. Common mistakes: self-check

Common mistake	Present here? (Yes / Partly / No)	Where we see it
Publishing the certificate before anybody has read its scope.		
Claiming certification for activities outside the scope.		
Placing a certification badge on pages covering hotels that are not certified.		
Revising the statement of controls without telling the certifier.		
Offering a photograph of the certificate as proof of current validity.		
Leaving nobody responsible for what the hotel says about its certificate.		
Extending the scope in a hurry to match a claim instead of correcting the claim.		

5. Action plan

Step from the book / gap found	Action in our property	Owner	Deadline
Read every line of the certificate, with marketing present, on the day it arrives.			
Write in plain words what is in scope and what is not, and share it with sales.			
Make every public statement name only the certified entity and site.			
State the scope in public in words a client understands.			
Track the version of the statement of controls and report significant changes.			
Point to the certifier or register for validity, not to a picture.			
Keep one owner and one list for every claim about certification.			
Decide deliberately whether and when to extend the scope.			

Step from the book / gap found	Action in our property	Owner	Deadline

In brief

A certificate is a precise statement: one organisation, named sites, a described scope, a version of the statement of controls, a standard, dates and a certifier. The hotel reads it line by line on the day it arrives, writes down what it covers and what it does not, makes every public statement match, keeps the certifier informed of significant changes, points to the register for validity, gives one person ownership of every claim, and decides deliberately whether to extend the scope.

Source: The Helm and the Lens, Volume 5b: The Lens, subchapter 4.8. This sheet does not reproduce the text of the standard; work with your own copy of ISO/IEC 27001:2022 from an authorised source.