WORKING MATERIAL 4.8 · CHAPTER 4 — THE CERTIFIER'S LENS · SETTING: GOA, INDIA

Certificates, Logos and the Claims That Follow

Source: Francesco Dore, The Helm and the Lens, Volume 7b — GSTC Hotel Standard v4.0, subchapter 4.8 (book page 289)

GUIDING QUESTION

A certificate is a precise statement: this business, at this address, for this scope, against this standard, until this date. A logo travels further than any certificate and carries none of that precision with it. How does a hotel keep what it says about its certification as exact as the certificate itself?

WHO THE RULES BIND

The GSTC Accreditation Manual (AM-I v4.1) cited on this sheet binds certification bodies, not hotels. Where a row refers to it, it describes what the certifier must do and what the hotel can check; it is not a requirement of the GSTC Hotel Standard.

1 · Verification Pact: market claims against the standard

Copied from the book. The last column is for your property: what holds here, and how you know it.

What is claimed	Binding?	What actually holds	In our property
Once certified, the hotel can use the logo wherever it likes	No	The certification body requires use in accordance with the GSTC logo terms and the certification agreement	
Partner businesses on the same site can share the certification	No	The certificate names one business and one scope; services outside it must not be presented as certified	
The GSTC certifies the hotel and controls the logo directly	No	The accredited certification body issues the certificate and the logo with its terms of use	
Joint advertising with uncertified services is forbidden	Only partially true	It is allowed, provided it does not imply that the uncertified services are certified	
Nobody checks how the logo is used	No	The certificate is listed in a public database with its scope, and the logo carries a unique code	
A suspended certificate can stay on the website until renewal	No	The agreement prohibits misleading statements about certification; advertising must follow the certificate's status	

2 · Common mistakes — a self-check

Tick each mistake you recognise in your own property, and note where it shows.

☐ Sending the logo files to partners, concessions or suppliers as a goodwill gesture.

☐ Using the logo on materials of services that fall outside the scope on the certificate.

☐ Describing the hotel as "fully certified" when the scope covers only part of the operation.

☐ Failing to amend advertising after a scope reduction or a suspension.

☐ Filing the logo terms of use with the certificate without giving them to marketing.

☐ Assuming that guests' view of the property as one place makes it one certified business.

☐ Leaving leases and partnership agreements silent on the use of the hotel's marks.

☐ Making sustainability claims without a record of the evidence behind each one.

3 · A Checklist for Using a Certificate Accurately

The book's checklist, with a column for your own answer.

Question	Why it matters	Our answer
Does everyone who designs our materials know the exact scope on the certificate?	Claims outside the scope breach the certification agreement	
Who controls the logo files, and who has received them?	The GSTC-Certified logo carries a unique code that traces back to the certificate	
Are services on our site run by other businesses clearly labelled as such?	Joint advertising must not imply that uncertified services are certified	
Have we read the GSTC logo terms of use issued with the certificate?	The certification body requires the hotel to follow them	
Is every sustainability claim listed with its evidence?	A5.2 requires claims supported by verifiable data or documentation	
Would our materials change the same day if the certificate were suspended or its scope reduced?	The agreement requires advertising to follow the certificate's status and scope	

4 · What would show this is working

Questions drawn from the subchapter's reading of the standard and its practical application. Indicator references point to the GSTC Hotel Standard v4.0; where the evidence lives is this book's practice, not a requirement of the standard.

Question	Where the evidence lives	Seen?
Is every claim about certification or sustainability listed with wording and evidence (A5.1, A5.2)?	Claims register, sampled each quarter	☐
Does every claim stay within the certificate's scope, business name and reference standard?	Certificate and public database entry compared with materials	☐
Are the logo terms of use kept with the certificate, and logo files released only against the scope?	Restricted logo folder; release log	☐
Are jointly advertised but uncertified services visibly separated?	Menus, directories and lease clauses (Manual 8.17.3: binding on the body)	☐
After any scope reduction, was all advertising amended?	Dated record of changes to every channel	☐

> *What this sheet is not: the GSTC Hotel Standard does not prescribe this form. It is a working aid drawn from the book; the standard's criteria, indicators and guidelines govern the real case. Independent material; not affiliated with or endorsed by the GSTC. The standard's own text at www.gstc.org prevails.*