WORKSHEET 4.14

Impartial, Not Unhelpful

Subchapter 4.14 · case in the book: Ghent

What do you expect from the person your hotel pays for two days of auditing: advice, a verdict or a finding? And if you believe a finding is wrong, do you know the route by which you can challenge it, and do you have the evidence in hand?

This worksheet turns the tools of the subchapter into a form you can fill in. The texts come from the book; the empty columns are for your own property. Adapt it before use: an unadapted checklist is exactly what the book warns against.

Practical application: what to do in your property

Step (from the book)	Done?	What we found / owner
An appeal built as a counter-finding: At the end of September she lodged an appeal of four pages. It named the requirement in 6.1.2, enclosed the terrace concept from April with her signature, the banquet event orders of fourteen terrace events since May, each referring to the concept, the fourteen noise logs and the note of a neighbours' meeting in June. It also stated what was missing: the concept had never entered the register, and the criteria by which noise was judged significant were written nowhere.		
One register: The banqueting manager added the terrace to the issues register and documented the significance criteria, so that the system no longer held two truths.		
A filing plan: Every file now has a deputy, and every key is reachable during an audit.		
The consultant declined and reported: Verhaeghe declined the offer and told the body, in two sentences, what had been proposed. The body thanked her and said it would look into it.		

These steps are the book's method, not requirements of ISO 20121. Evidence can take whatever form suits the property; a separate document is needed only where an applicable requirement, or the property's own system, makes it necessary.

Verification Pact: what is believed, tested against the standard

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	Our position
The auditor must tell the hotel how to fix a nonconformity	No. He refrains from suggesting cause or solution (ISO/IEC 17021-1, 9.4.5.3)	
The auditor may give no pointers at all	Only partially true. Opportunities for improvement may be recorded unless the scheme prohibits it (9.4.5.2)	
The auditor decides on the certificate	No. Persons who did not audit decide (9.5.1.1)	

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	Our position
The hotel can choose its auditor	No. It may object to a particular named member (9.2.3.5)	
A consultant who knows the body makes certification faster	No. The body may neither state nor imply this, nor link certification to consultancy (5.2.9)	
A hotel that appeals will be disadvantaged at the next audit	No. Appeals may not lead to discriminatory action (9.7.3)	

Common mistakes: a self-check

Mistake (from the book)	Present here?	Action / owner
Asking the auditor for advice he is not allowed to give.		
Complaining about restraint that makes the certificate credible.		
Objecting in words, without the document that proves the point.		
Trying to persuade the auditor, when others decide.		
Keeping an evaluation in a separate file the system does not use.		
Looking for a preferred auditor through a consultant's connections.		
Confusing a complaint about conduct with an appeal against a decision.		
Not appealing out of fear of the next audit, when appeals may not lead to disadvantage.		

Operative synthesis

- **Does every department know the auditor audits and does not advise?: Requests for solutions put him in an impossible position**
- **Did we receive and read the audit team's names in good time?: An objection is possible only before the audit**
- **Is all evidence findable during the audit, even when its owner is away?: What cannot be found does not count**
- **Do we keep each evaluation in the document we actually work by?: Two documents mean two truths**
- **Do we know the body's complaints and appeals procedures and deadlines?: An appeal outside the deadline is not heard**
- **Do we decline any offer to speed certification through connections?: It threatens the certificate it promises**
- **Act on immediately. Brief every department that the auditor audits and does not advise, give every file a deputy, and read the audit team's names as soon as they arrive.**

- **Plan for. Keep the body's complaints and appeals procedures, with their deadlines, on file, and build any objection as a counter-finding: requirement, finding, evidence with place and date, cause and request.**
- **Monitor going forward. Decline and report any offer to link consultancy and certification, and review after each audit whether the hotel's expectations of the auditor matched his role.**

Action plan for our property

Action	Owner	Due	How we will know it worked

Source: Francesco Dore, The Helm and the Lens, Volume 8b «The Lens», subchapter 4.14. Edizioni Effedore, 2026. Clause references are paraphrased; this sheet does not reproduce the text of ISO 20121, ISO 19011 or ISO/IEC 17021-1. It is not legal advice: the law that applies is that of the place where the property operates.