

Audit Report Quality Checklist

A practical final-review checklist for clear, evidence-based and decision-useful audit reports.

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How to use this checklist

This checklist is designed as a practical fieldwork aid for audit report quality. Use it to prepare interviews, structure testing and document areas requiring deeper evidence. A checked box should mean the point was considered and supported - not simply that a question was asked.

SIMPLE STATUS KEY

- ☐ **Done** Evidence supports the point
- ☐ **Review** More evidence or clarification needed
- ☐ **N/A** Not applicable - document why

Overall message

- ☐ **01** Executive summary answers the audit objective.
- ☐ **02** Overall conclusion is consistent with detailed findings.
- ☐ **03** Most important risks appear first.
- ☐ **04** Language is concise, neutral and understandable.
- ☐ **05** Report distinguishes facts from management explanations.

AUDITOR NOTES / EVIDENCE

Findings

- ☐ 06 Each finding contains clear condition, risk and root cause.
- ☐ 07 Criteria or expected practice is credible and relevant.
- ☐ 08 Evidence is sufficient for the stated severity.
- ☐ 09 Impact is quantified where reliable data exists.
- ☐ 10 Duplicate or overlapping findings are consolidated.

Risk prompts

- What could fail even if the documented procedure looks adequate?
- Where can one person initiate, change and approve the same outcome?
- Which exceptions are common enough to have become normal practice?
- What data pattern would indicate control bypass or management override?

TESTING NOTES / EXCEPTIONS

Actions and quality

- ☐ **11** Management action addresses the root cause.
- ☐ **12** Owner and target date are explicit.
- ☐ **13** Risk acceptance is clearly documented where applicable.
- ☐ **14** Names, dates, figures and cross-references are checked.
- ☐ **15** Confidential or sensitive information is handled appropriately.

Evidence to retain

- ☐ **01** Relevant system reports or extracts with source and period visible.
- ☐ **02** Approval/workflow evidence for selected high-risk items.
- ☐ **03** Screenshots or logs supporting key control steps and exceptions.
- ☐ **04** Reconciliations or reperformance showing how the conclusion was reached.
- ☐ **05** Management explanation only where corroborated or clearly identified as explanation.

Use data to challenge the checklist

Where transaction data is available, do not rely only on samples. Run targeted tests that identify unusual behavior, control bypass and concentrations. Adapt the tests below to the process and available fields.

- ☐ **01** Trend exceptions by user, approver, location, vendor/customer or month.
- ☐ **02** Identify transactions just below approval or policy thresholds.
- ☐ **03** Search for duplicates, repeated round values and unusual timing.
- ☐ **04** Compare master-data changes with subsequent transactions or payments.
- ☐ **05** Review override, manual-entry and emergency/urgent indicators.
- ☐ **06** Investigate outliers that combine multiple risk indicators.

RED-FLAG RULE

A red flag is not proof of wrongdoing. Treat it as a reason to obtain more evidence. Combine pattern, business context, approval history and supporting records before reaching a conclusion.

Completion and conclusion

Before you close the checklist

- ☐ **01** All material exceptions have an evidence reference.
- ☐ **02** Open questions have an owner and due date.
- ☐ **03** Control design issues are separated from isolated execution errors.
- ☐ **04** Recurring exceptions have been considered for root cause and systemic impact.
- ☐ **05** The conclusion is proportionate to evidence and business risk.
- ☐ **06** Any issue requiring escalation has been communicated promptly.

FINAL CONCLUSION

Overall assessment / key message:

Owner / follow-up date:
