GREEN TOURISM CERTIFIED

Certification Process Requirements

(GTC-CPR)

Audit and certification process requirements for Certification Bodies and auditors delivering Green Tourism Certified certification

October 2026

Version 2.0

The Green Tourism Certified Certification Process Requirements and their contents are copyright of Green Tourism Certified Ltd. All rights reserved.

The official language of this document is British English. The definitive version is maintained on the Green Tourism website, and discrepancies between copies, versions or translations shall be resolved by reference to the definitive English version.

Green Tourism Certified Ltd expressly prohibits any modification of part or all of the contents.

Contents

1 General Introduction

2 About this Document

3 Normative Documentation

4 Terms and Definitions

5 General Requirements

5.1 Submission of Reports, Data and Requests to GTC
5.2 Use of Confidential Information in Audits
5.3 Access to Information
5.4 Structural Requirements
5.5 Resource Requirements

6 Process Requirements

6.1 Readiness Check
6.2 Application for Full Audit
6.3 Confirmation of Scope and Eligibility
6.4 Scope of Audit
6.5 Contract
6.6 Auditor Selection
6.7 Ineligibility for Certification
6.8 Audit Planning
6.9 Evaluation
6.10 Opening Meeting, Gathering Information and Procedures
6.11 Interviews
6.12 Evidence Verification
6.13 Evaluating the Evidence
6.14 Evaluation – Closing Meeting
6.15 Non-conformities – General
6.16 Non-conformities – Minor
6.17 Non-conformity – Major
6.18 Non-conformity – Critical
6.19 Corrective Action Plans
6.20 Certification Decisions
6.21 Changes to Certificates and to the Business
6.22 Annual Check-in
6.23 Additional Audits and Non-conformities
6.24 Recertification

7 Annex A – Extenuating Circumstances

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

1 General Introduction

Green Tourism Certified gives tourism and hospitality businesses a clear, structured route to meet the Green Tourism Certified standard and have this independently audited. The process includes:

- A fully online process through GreenCheck, the certification portal, with step-by-step actions tailored to the tourism and hospitality industry, starting with a Readiness Check.
- An independent audit by an auditor who has not advised the business, and a certification decision by someone not involved in the audit.
- A recognised standard that certified businesses can refer to, following the Certification Logo and Claims Rules (Annex A of the Green Tourism Certification Terms).

2 About this Document

The GTC Certification Process Requirements (GTC-CPR) are mandatory for all Certification Bodies (CBs) that audit Green Tourism members who wish to hold Green Tourism Certified status. In this document, "GTC" means Green Tourism Certified Ltd, the scheme owner.

The purpose of these requirements is to:

- Define uniform certification requirements so that all certification bodies operate under the same controlled processes.
- Provide the transparency required of an internationally recognised certification scheme, building credibility with governments, regulators, CBs, NGOs and consumers.
- Maintain comprehensive documentation that ensures long-term consistency and continuity in delivering Green Tourism Certified certification.

Green Tourism Certified Ltd is responsible for the maintenance of these requirements.

The requirements that apply to businesses are set out in the Green Tourism Certification Terms. Where this document sets a timescale that affects a business, it matches the Certification Terms.

Readers should ensure they are using the latest version of this and other documents. Updated documents, together with a master list of all available GTC documents, can be found on the Green Tourism website.

Version Control

Version Number	Date of Publication	Description of Change
1.0	01/09/2026	First publication
2.0	October 2026	Aligned with the Green Tourism Certification Terms (timescales, findings, change of owner, logo and claims rules). Multi-site and group certification removed. Terminology updated.

Effective date

The effective date for version 2.0 of the GTC Certification Process Requirements is October 2026. All certification bodies shall apply this version from this date.

Review Period

GTC welcomes comments on the GTC Certification Process Requirements. Comments will be considered as part of the review process. Reviews take place at least every 5 years. Please submit comments to: enquiries@green-tourism.com

3 Normative Documentation

- Green Tourism Certified Standard v8.0
- GTC Certification Body Requirements (GTC-CBR) v2.0

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

- GTC Certification Process Requirements (GTC-CPR) v2.0
- Green Tourism Certification Terms, including Annex A, Certification Logo and Claims Rules

4 Terms and Definitions

Term	Definition
Certification Body (CB)	A body independent of the business and the scheme owner that conducts audits and makes certification decisions on conformity with a standard. For this scheme, the CB is Green Business UK Ltd.
Auditor	A person appointed by the CB, qualified under GTC-CBR Section 6, who evaluates evidence against the requirements of the standard.
Certificate Decision-Making Entity	A person or entity authorised to make a certification decision, or to take a critical decision during an audit.
Certification Terms	The Green Tourism Certification Terms, the agreement between a business and Green Business UK Ltd covering membership, support and certification, including Annex A, Certification Logo and Claims Rules.
GreenCheck	The online portal through which businesses submit evidence and auditors carry out and record audits.
Readiness Check	A short check that shows a business where it is now and what to focus on before it builds its evidence. It is not an audit or a certification decision.
Initial Audit	The first audit of a business seeking certification.
Re-certification	Certification of a business again at the end of a certificate's validity.
Expedited Audit	An audit carried out because of a change to the scope or certification status of a business that needs urgent attention.
Unannounced Audit	An audit carried out at a time and place of which the certified business has not been told in advance.
Non-conformity	A finding recorded where a scope or standard requirement has not been met.
Root Cause Analysis	An analysis of a non-conformity to identify its underlying causes.
Correction / Corrective Action	A tangible correction performed to put right a finding.
Preventive Action	A tangible change to a process or outcome that prevents a non-conformity from happening again.
Working days	Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays in the country concerned.
Days	Where a period is given in days without "working", it means calendar days.

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

5 General Requirements

5.1 Submission of Reports, Data and Requests to GTC

5.1.1 The CB shall ensure that all information and data that form part of the audit and certification process are stored in GreenCheck.

5.2 Use of Confidential Information in Audits

5.2.1 The CB shall encourage auditees and stakeholders not to withhold information, including their concerns about and knowledge of the operation in question.

5.2.2 The CB shall inform any third-party stakeholders that, unless covered by 5.2.3 below, any information that cannot be shared in a public forum shall not be:

a) Referenced in the audit;

b) Used as evidence against the audit outcome;

c) Used as a basis for objecting to a certification.

5.2.3 The CB shall ensure that information kept confidential is restricted to:

a) Financial transactions about certification;

b) The financial affairs of individual companies, or information that may lead to this information being disclosed in public;

c) Information that is subject to national privacy or data protection law in the business's country.

5.3 Access to Information

5.3.1 The CB shall make unpublished key information available when it is referenced in an audit, and shall ensure that the information is available in GreenCheck.

5.4 Structural Requirements

Requirements shall follow ISO/IEC 17065 and the GTC Certification Body Requirements (GTC-CBR).

5.5 Resource Requirements

Requirements shall follow ISO/IEC 17065 and the GTC Certification Body Requirements (GTC-CBR).

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

6 Process Requirements

6.1 Readiness Check

6.1.1 The CB shall ensure the business is informed of:

a) Any communication that may need to take place with third-party agencies, conservation groups, service providers, or relevant commercial and non-commercial organisations, to explain the audit process and the implications (including the costs and benefits) of certification;

b) The type and extent of evidence the business will need to make available for a full audit;

c) Any optional GTC training on the audit process for businesses.

6.1.2 The CB shall treat the existence, process and outcome of any Readiness Check as confidential to the business, the CB and GTC, unless the business asks for it to be shared more widely.

6.1.3 The CB shall inform the business in writing that the outcome of a Readiness Check is not a certification decision and must not be treated or marketed as one.

6.2 Application for Full Audit

6.2.1 The CB shall ensure that applicants and certificate holders have access to the current version of the Green Tourism Certified standard and the other requirements relevant to their scope of certification.

a) The CB shall keep a record of the certification programme documents, and their versions, made available to applicants and certificate holders.

6.2.2 The CB shall make the following available to the applicant, through the Green Tourism website, the application form and GreenCheck:

a) The Certification Terms, which the applicant agrees to on the application form, including Annex A, the Certification Logo and Claims Rules, on use of the Green Tourism Certified logo and claims;

b) The website address where the applicant can find information relevant to certification;

c) Information on GTC's right to change programme documents, and that certification depends on conforming to new or revised standards or changed certification requirements within the stated timeframes (at least 6 months' notice of changes to the standard);

d) Information that the business's details appear on the public register only once it is certified, and that its application and audit are treated as confidential until then.

6.2.3 The applicant shall submit a completed GreenCheck application to the CB, with full details of engagement with the whole audit process.

6.2.4 The CB shall provide a plan for the evaluation activities (ISO/IEC 17065 7.4.1) to all personnel involved in the audit before work begins. The plan shall:

a) Be tailored to each audit;

b) Name the lead auditor and, if applicable, the audit team;

c) If an audit team is used, nominate the lead auditor and define the specific responsibilities of the team members.

6.2.5 The CB shall ensure that the applicant has sufficient information to reach a common understanding with the CB before evaluation begins (ISO/IEC 17065 7.3.1b).

6.2.6 The CB shall ensure that, before the end of the planning phase, the applicant receives the following in writing:

a) The expected scope of evaluation;

b) A draft work schedule.

6.2.7 The CB shall give the applicant sufficient information about the evaluation process to prepare properly for the audit.

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

a) This shall include a summary list of the objective evidence that may be required by the auditor or audit team.

6.2.8 The CB shall have a documented procedure for dealing with an applicant's concerns about a member of the audit team or the auditor proposed to carry out an evaluation, which includes:

a) Considering the merits of each concern raised;

b) Taking appropriate action, which may include leaving the team unchanged if justified;

c) Keeping records of the reasons for its action.

6.3 Confirmation of Scope and Eligibility

6.3.1 The CB shall withdraw any auditee at any point if it no longer meets the eligibility requirements of 6.3.2.

6.3.2 As part of the certification audit, the CB shall carry out due-diligence checks to determine whether the member is eligible for certification, covering the following:

1. **Human rights and labour standards:** Evidence of modern slavery, forced or child labour, human trafficking, workers' rights violations, discrimination, harassment, or other material breaches of applicable labour legislation and internationally recognised standards.
2. **Legal, regulatory and ethical compliance:** Serious or repeated legal or regulatory breaches, enforcement actions, substantiated findings, or credible allegations indicating systemic non-compliance or material integrity risks.
3. **Financial integrity and sanctions:** Involvement in bribery, corruption, fraud, money laundering, tax evasion or improper tax avoidance, anti-competitive conduct, or breaches of applicable sanctions regimes, including ownership or control by sanctioned persons or entities.
4. **Environmental and responsible sourcing:** Significant environmental harm, unlawful pollution, or sourcing of conflict minerals or other resources linked to armed conflict or serious human rights abuses.
5. **Health, safety and operational resilience:** Compliance with applicable health and safety legislation, appropriate workplace safety management systems, and adequate business continuity and operational resilience arrangements.
6. **Data, technology and intellectual property:** Compliance with applicable data protection and cybersecurity obligations, appropriate governance of technology and artificial intelligence, and respect for intellectual property rights.
7. **Corporate governance and transparency:** Adequate governance, accountability and internal controls, transparent beneficial ownership and controlling interests, and effective identification and management of conflicts of interest.
8. **Supply chain and social responsibility:** Adequate systems to identify and manage supply chain risks, comply with applicable modern slavery obligations, and address material social and community impacts.
9. **Integrity, disclosure and accountability:** Honest commercial, advertising and marketing practices; complete, accurate and timely information for due diligence, audit and certification; effective whistleblowing and grievance mechanisms; and protection against retaliation.
10. **Certification scheme integrity:** Any other credible evidence of conduct, practices or associations that may be inconsistent with certification requirements or undermine the integrity of the certification scheme, including material reputational risks.

6.3.3 The CB shall confirm whether an applicant fits one of the business scopes in 6.4.3, and accept or decline the application, within 2 working days of receiving it (Certification Terms, section 10). The applicant must also have signed the Code of Conduct.

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

6.4 Scope of Audit

6.4.1 After receiving an application for full audit and a completed GreenCheck portfolio, the CB shall use all available information about the auditee to start the audit process.

6.4.2 The CB shall confirm the scope of the audit before starting the audit.

6.4.3 All audits include a review of documentary evidence in GreenCheck. Where required, a second stage will be an on-site inspection by the auditor, as set out in the table below and in 6.8.2.

Scope	No. of Criteria*	Audit Type	Frequency
Serviced Accommodation	44	Remote	3 years
Serviced Accommodation Micro**	32	Remote	3 years
MICE	43	Remote	3 years
Self Catering	32	Remote	3 years
Holiday Parks	44	Remote	3 years
Holiday Parks Micro**	29	Remote	3 years
Experiences	42	Remote	3 years
Experiences Micro**	32	Remote	3 years

* Businesses are audited against between 29 and 44 criteria, depending on scope. The figure shown is the maximum number of criteria that apply to a business in each scope. Some criteria may not apply, for example if the business has no swimming pool or does not provide food and drink.

Micro businesses have fewer than 10 employee

6.4.4 Neither the CB nor the applicant shall change the scope once the audit has been announced or during the audit.

6.4.5 The CB shall start the audit within 15 working days of the business submitting its evidence in GreenCheck (Certification Terms, section 10).

6.5 Contract

6.5.1 The agreement between the CB and the business is the Certification Terms, agreed by the business on the application form, and shall meet GTC-CBR 5.8.3 to 5.8.10.

6.5.2 The CB shall have the business's signed agreement to the Certification Terms before formally announcing the start of the audit on the GreenCheck portal.

6.5.3 The CB shall announce that the business is seeking certification within 3 working days of receiving its signed agreement.

6.6 Auditor Selection

6.6.1 The CB shall form an audit team (the "team") for a full audit, made up of at least a lead auditor. The lead auditor must meet the qualification and competence requirements in GTC-CBR Section 6.

6.6.2 The CB shall involve other team members based on the skills needed to complete the audit to the required standard.

6.6.3 The CB shall notify the auditee of:

a) The full name of the lead auditor;

b) The full names of other team members (if any);

c) The role of each team member.

6.6.4 The CB shall receive written confirmation from the applicant that it accepts the team.

6.6.5 If events outside the CB's control mean that a team member must change during the audit, the CB shall inform the auditee and GTC at the earliest opportunity.

6.6.6 No member of the team may have given advice or support to the business being audited.

6.7 Ineligibility for Certification

6.7.1 The CB shall check whether an applicant:

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

a) Had a certificate withdrawn within the last 12 months.
   i) The CB shall not issue a certificate until at least 12 months after the date the certificate was withdrawn (Certification Terms, section 15; GTC-CBR Section 5.11).
b) Had a certificate suspended within the last 6 months.
   i) For systemic or intentional causes, the CB shall not issue a new certificate for at least 6 months from the date of suspension.
   ii) Where a certificate holder ended its certification during a suspension, the CB shall not issue a new certificate until at least 6 months from the date of suspension.
c) Does not fit one of the business scopes in 6.4.3.

6.8 Audit Planning

6.8.1 The CB shall plan on-site or remote audit activities and durations, considering:

a) The proposed scope of the audit;
b) The management system used by the business;
c) The Green Tourism Certified standard the auditee will be audited against;
d) The need to verify the evidence presented by the auditee;
e) The need to verify the effectiveness of the auditee's management system for the proposed scope;
f) Any other certifications held;
g) Opportunities to synchronise and combine audits where possible and appropriate.

6.8.2 The CB should conduct audits remotely, based on the scope set out in 6.4.3, unless the CB determines there is significant risk in the activities or evidence that requires an on-site visit.

6.8.3 The CB shall make, and record in GreenCheck, the decision and rationale (based on 6.8.1 and 6.8.2) for the audit type (on-site or remote) and audit duration.

6.8.4 A remote audit shall evaluate the auditee against the same criteria and requirements as an on-site audit.

6.9 Evaluation

6.9.1 The auditor shall use the GreenCheck portal to record and evaluate the auditee during the audit.

6.9.2 Auditors shall evaluate the auditee against the same requirements for initial and re-certification audits.

6.10 Opening Meeting, Gathering Information and Procedures

6.10.1 All audits shall begin with an opening meeting (as set out in ISO/IEC 17065), at which auditors shall confirm with the auditee at least the following:

a) Eligibility for certification (see 6.7, Ineligibility for Certification);
b) Introduction of participants and roles;
c) The purpose of the audit;
d) The audit plan, including how the audit activities will be carried out;
e) Access requirements and the type of information under review;
f) Confidentiality of the information shared during the audit;
g) The scope of certification.

6.10.2 For each relevant requirement, the team shall review the evidence the auditee has submitted to confirm that its management systems and procedures, as recorded and implemented, meet the requirements of the relevant version of the Green Tourism Certified standard.

6.10.3 The team shall review the content and implementation of procedures relevant to the standard.

6.10.4 During the audit, the team shall review records used as evidence against any requirement of the standard.

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

6.11 Interviews

6.11.1 The team shall interview responsible personnel to verify their competence in understanding and applying the relevant standard.

6.11.2 The number of interviews shall reflect the size of the organisation, the complexity of its operations, and the range of staff who could affect the integrity of the certification.

6.11.3 Interviews shall be used to determine whether personnel understand the relevant processes and procedures that ensure conformity with the standard.

6.11.4 Interview questions shall not be leading.

6.11.5 Interviews may be used to supplement evidence in support of any requirement.

6.11.6 Interviews or quotations may be paraphrased or summarised, but must be directly attributed to an interviewee.

6.11.7 All interviewees must be anonymised in the main report. Their name and role within the company shall be recorded in the relevant section of GreenCheck.

6.12 Evidence Verification

6.12.1 The team shall verify the evidence submitted by the auditee in the GreenCheck portal or on site, to the extent needed to meet the certification requirements.

6.12.2 The auditee is responsible for ensuring that photographs and video submitted as evidence are of appropriate quality, format, size and/or duration and, if uploaded to GreenCheck, for the copyright and use of the material as evidence.

6.12.3 The team shall determine the number of evidence samples to use for record verification, and ensure the sample is:

a) Chosen by the auditor; and

b) Large enough to:

i) Take account of the range of different processes and responsible parties involved;

ii) Give confidence that the system is effective for all activities in the potential scope.

6.12.4 For any records requested, the team shall set and record a time limit for receipt during the audit, and raise a non-conformity if this is not met.

6.13 Evaluating the Evidence

6.13.1 After the team has compiled and analysed all relevant information, it shall evaluate the auditee against each requirement of the standard.

6.13.2 The team shall:

a) Discuss the evidence as a team;

b) Weigh up the balance of evidence;

c) Use their judgement to agree on the outcome of each requirement.

6.13.3 The CB shall not certify the auditee if:

a) The auditee does not meet the requirements of the standard;

b) The team finds that the auditee has used the Green Tourism Certified logo, or claimed certification, before being certified;

c) The team fails to agree unanimously on a certification recommendation;

d) The auditee has outstanding non-conformities that need to be addressed as set out in Section 6.15.

6.14 Evaluation – Closing Meeting

6.14.1 The team shall hold a closing meeting with the auditee at the end of each audit to confirm that the auditee understands:

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

a) That until the certificate status and information, including the scope of certification, is shown on the public register on the Green Tourism website, the auditee is not certified and cannot make any claim about certification;

b) Any actions the auditee must complete, and their timeframes, before certification is awarded;

c) Any findings or non-conformities identified during the audit and their likely category (subject to approval by the CB decision-making entity), that the auditee will receive them in writing within 10 working days, that it has 4 weeks from then to put them right, and how their completion will be verified;

d) That the auditee must inform the CB of any significant future changes that affect certification, as set out in the Certification Terms;

e) That the scope of certification is correct;

f) That changes must be reported within 30 days, as set out in the Certification Terms, section 9.

6.15 Non-conformities – General

6.15.1 The auditor shall recommend to the CB that an auditee or certified business is suspended where they find reason to do so in line with GTC-CBR Section 5.11.

6.15.2 The CB shall send the auditee its written findings within 10 working days of the audit closing (Certification Terms, section 10).

6.15.3 The CB shall raise non-conformities against the relevant requirements of the Green Tourism Certified standard.

6.15.4 The auditor shall classify non-conformities as follows:

a) Minor non-conformity: where the auditee does not meet a standard requirement defined as minor. Usually for issues that do not put the integrity of the certification at risk.

b) Major non-conformity: where the integrity of the standard is potentially at risk, or where the organisation has not met a specific requirement of the standard defined as major.

c) Critical non-conformity: where the auditee fails to meet a scope or a requirement defined as critical.

6.15.5 The CB may close out or re-grade a non-conformity found during the audit.

6.15.6 If the CB decision-making entity disagrees with the auditor's classification of a non-conformity, the CB shall record the reasons for the change in GreenCheck.

6.16 Non-conformities – Minor

6.16.1 If the CB detects more than 10 minor non-conformities in the same module or requirement, these will be upgraded to a major non-conformity and dealt with under Section 6.17.

6.16.2 Minor non-conformities shall be closed within 4 weeks of the auditee receiving the written findings (Certification Terms, section 8). Minor non-conformities not closed within this time shall be dealt with under Section 6.19.6.

6.17 Non-conformity – Major

6.17.1 The CB shall require major non-conformities to be closed within the following timeframes:

a) Major non-conformities raised during an initial audit shall be closed before the CB can grant certification.

   i) If the major non-conformity is not closed within 4 weeks of the auditee receiving the written findings, certification cannot be granted and a full re-audit is required.

b) Major non-conformities raised during a re-certification audit (or at any other time after initial certification, for example during unannounced audits or from upgraded minor non-conformities) shall be closed within 4 weeks of the certified business receiving the written findings.

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

i) If the major non-conformity is not closed within 4 weeks, the certificate will be subject to the suspension and withdrawal procedures (GTC-CBR Section 5.11).

6.17.2 If the CB detects more than 6 major non-conformities in the same module or requirement, these will be upgraded to a critical non-conformity and dealt with under Section 6.18.

6.18 Non-conformity – Critical

6.18.1 A critical non-conformity shall result in immediate suspension of certification, or of the certification process (if in an initial audit).

a) The CB shall require written assurance from the business that the critical non-conformity has been closed before the CB can begin another audit.

b) The business must undergo a new full audit following a critical non-conformity. If the business was already certified, the critical non-conformity is put right and the new audit results in successful certification, the certification date will remain in line with the original certificate cycle.

6.19 Corrective Action Plans

6.19.1 The CB shall inform the auditee that an effective corrective action plan is required to close minor and major non-conformities. The plan must contain:

a) The root cause of the non-conformity;

b) The corrective action intended to close the non-conformity to a satisfactory standard;

c) A timeframe to implement the corrective action, within the 4 weeks allowed.

6.19.2 The CB shall review the corrective action plan and the evidence put forward to close the non-conformity.

6.19.3 The CB shall decide whether to accept or reject the corrective action plan, and record the reasons in GreenCheck.

6.19.4 The CB may, at its discretion, ask GTC to extend the timeframe to allow the business to:

a) Provide an updated corrective action plan following a justified rejection; or

b) Implement the corrections identified in its corrective action plan.

Any extension is at the discretion of the GTC review board.

6.19.5 The CB shall review the implementation of the corrective action plan and record its reasons for accepting the correction and the plan in GreenCheck before considering a certification decision.

6.19.6 If the business cannot meet the close-out requirements for:

a) minor non-conformities (6.16.2) or major non-conformities (6.17.1b); or

b) corrective action plan amendments or implementation agreed at GTC's discretion,

the CB must escalate the non-conformities to the next level and follow the requirements through to suspension and withdrawal from the audit (if an initial audit) or from certification (if already certified).

6.20 Certification Decisions

6.20.1 The CB may recommend an auditee for certification:

a) If no non-conformities are observed; or

b) When all non-conformities, minor or major, are closed within the required timeframes.

6.20.2 The CB updates the GreenCheck portal with:

a) The business's confirmed and updated scope;

b) Details of the scope undertaken by the auditee.

6.20.3 The CB decision-making entity shall:

a) Review and confirm any non-conformities found during the audit;

b) Review the scope of certification recommended by the auditor or audit team;

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

c) Decide on certification for all scopes within 10 working days of the evidence being complete (Certification Terms, section 10). If further evidence has been requested to show that non-conformities are closed, the 10 working days run from receipt of that evidence.

6.20.4 For all auditees, the CB shall, within 5 working days of a positive certification decision (Certification Terms, section 10):

a) Send the final decision to the auditee through the GreenCheck portal;

b) Record in GreenCheck:

i) The certification decision and its rationale;

ii) The certificate for the corresponding audit;

c) Make the digital certificate available to download in GreenCheck and the logo in the Members Area, for certification or re-certification audits;

Where the decision is negative, the CB shall tell the auditee in writing within the same period, with the reasons and its right to appeal (GTC-CBR Section 5.18).

6.21 Changes to Certificates and to the Business

6.21.1 The CB shall inform the certified business that it must notify the CB within 30 days of any of the following (Certification Terms, section 9):

a) A change of owner or operator;

b) A change to how or what it operates, including its scope;

c) A major refurbishment;

d) A serious environmental or safety incident;

e) Any legal or regulatory action related to the standard.

Changes to contact details should be notified promptly.

6.21.2 On receiving a request to extend or reduce a scope, the CB shall:

a) Review the available information;

b) Consider whether the certified business's management system is suitable for the proposed change of scope;

c) Consider whether eligibility for the applicable standard is maintained;

d) Consider whether an audit is needed to verify the evidence;

e) Confirm and explain why any audit needs to be on site or remote;

f) Notify the certified business of the decision within 10 working days.

6.21.3 The CB shall notify the certified business within 10 working days whether the requirements of 6.21.2 are met and whether the scope extension is granted.

a) If a scope extension is granted, a new certificate with the new details is issued within 5 working days of the notification, subject to any payment terms for certificate changes.

6.21.4 The CB shall update GreenCheck within 5 working days of receiving any of the following:

a) Change to scope;

b) New contact person;

c) New address.

6.21.5 Change of owner or operator. Certification ends on the date the business changes hands and does not pass to the new owner or operator (Certification Terms, section 14). The CB shall:

a) Record the certificate as ended in GreenCheck and inform GTC, so that the public register is updated;

b) Instruct the previous certificate holder to remove the logo from everything within 30 days (Certification Terms, Annex A8);

c) Offer the new owner or operator, once they have joined, a priority audit within 90 days;

d) Instruct the new owner or operator not to use the logo until they are certified.

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

6.22 Annual Check-in

6.22.1 Between full audits, each certified business completes an annual check-in.

6.23 Additional Audits and Non-conformities

6.23.1 The CB shall carry out unannounced audits of at least 1% of all certified businesses each year, with a minimum of 1.

6.23.2 The CB shall inform all certified businesses in its portfolio that they may be selected for an unannounced audit.

6.23.3 Priority shall be given to certified businesses identified as high risk, by their scope criteria or through receipt of a complaint.

6.23.4 At least once a year, the CB shall calculate the number of unannounced audits for the following year: 1% of certified businesses, rounded to the nearest whole number, with a minimum of 1.

6.23.5 The CB may tell the business of a 6-month window in which the audit can take place, but shall not give notice of the actual date.

6.23.6 The CB shall record the unannounced audit in GreenCheck and follow the normal audit process.

6.23.7 A business that has had an unannounced audit can use it in place of any regular audit falling due up to 12 months after the unannounced audit date. An unannounced audit should not be confused with an expedited audit (6.23.8).

6.23.8 The CB shall have a documented process to determine when it should:

a) Conduct expedited audits, recording them in GreenCheck; and/or

b) Request and examine evidence related to the certified business's operations.

6.23.9 The CB procedure in 6.23.8 shall consider information received, including:

a) Complaints;

b) Notification of changes in personnel, scope and/or management system;

c) Information from GTC.

6.23.10 GTC can require a CB to conduct an expedited audit when information has been received indicating a potential risk to certification but responsibility is not clear. In this case:

a) GTC may give the CB a written request to conduct the audit, including relevant information or evidence;

b) GTC and the CB shall agree the full cost of the audit in writing before the audit;

c) GTC will reimburse the CB for the full cost of the audit;

d) GTC can send a request for action to a CB when evidence has been received indicating a non-conformity by an auditor associated with the CB.

6.23.11 Where evidence is received under 6.23.10, the CB shall risk-assess the evidence and respond to GTC within 5 working days, setting out the action to be taken.

6.23.12 Where the CB receives information outside an audit that it judges to be credible evidence of a certified business's non-conformity with the standard, the CB shall raise a non-conformity against the relevant clause, classify and address it, and record it in GreenCheck. The CB must:

a) Inform the business of the status of its certification or application;

b) State clearly any actions to be taken, who is responsible for them, and the deadlines;

c) Monitor progress on the non-conformity;

d) Follow the closure procedures for the level of non-conformity identified.

6.24 Recertification

6.24.1 All certificates remain valid, subject to continued conformity, for a maximum of 3 years.

6.24.2 The CB may extend a certificate by up to 60 days to allow for:

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

a) Audit scheduling;

b) Extenuating circumstances listed in Annex A.

6.24.3 Decisions of the scheme owner review board (see 6.19.4) may extend the certification period by up to 90 days, at its discretion, provided that:

a) The extension is granted against a specific requirement of the certification process or standard;

b) The reason for the extension is justified and clearly stated, with the exact number of days;

c) The extension is given in writing and formally endorsed by a member of the scheme owner review board.

6.24.4 When a certificate's expiry has been extended, certificate validity shall be as follows:

a) The new certificate shall be issued in line with the re-certification date;

b) The new certificate's expiry date shall be three years from the previous expiry date, before any extension.

6.24.5 The CB shall carry out a complete re-certification audit at the end of each certificate's period of validity.

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

7 Annex A – Extenuating Circumstances

List of extenuating circumstances:

- Loss of key personnel within 30 days of the certificate anniversary (where the CB has been informed within 30 days)
- Systems upgrade or cyber security incident
- Management of a conflict of interest
- Business changes, such as mergers or acquisitions
- Natural disasters (for example, flood or fire)
- Criminal or regulatory investigations

© Green Tourism Certified Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.