Official copy check

Quick start and fictional worked example

Compare competing versions and record why one copy should be treated as authoritative.

1. List the copies as you found them. Do not tidy first.
2. Find evidence of approval and ask the responsible person to confirm it.
3. Record the official location and what remains unresolved.

A useful finish: The reason for trusting a copy can be explained without saying it is simply the newest file.

FICTIONAL EXAMPLE / Adapt the process, not the facts.

Document and purpose	Fictional staff travel policy, used to answer reimbursement questions.
Candidate copies	travel-final.docx, travel-final2.docx, and the PDF on the staff portal.
Evidence of authority	The portal PDF links to approval note AP-17. The two working files do not.
Owner confirmation	Policy owner confirms the portal PDF is the current approved version.
Official location and status	Staff portal / Travel / Current policy. Status: confirmed by owner.
What happens to the other copies	Keep the working copies pending retention review; link staff guidance to the portal copy.

Official copy check

Your worksheet / Start here

Type into the boxes or print these two pages. Save a copy and reopen it to check your entries. For longer notes, use the text template or browser tool.

1. Document and purpose

Name the document and the task someone needs it for.

2. Candidate copies

List each location, version and date without changing the files.

3. Evidence of authority

Look for an approval record or a maintained source, not just a recent timestamp.

Official copy check

Your worksheet / Continue and review

Type into the boxes or print these two pages. Save a copy and reopen it to check your entries. For longer notes, use the text template or browser tool.

4. Owner confirmation

Name who can confirm authority and record their answer or what is still pending.

5. Official location and status

Link to the agreed location. Mark unresolved cases as unconfirmed.

6. What happens to the other copies

Record a safe next step; do not assume an older copy can be deleted.

Before you finish: The reason for trusting a copy can be explained without saying it is simply the newest file.

You may adapt this worksheet for personal or internal organizational work. Keep the author and source credit on blank copies shared internally. You retain your entries. Public redistribution or resale of blank templates requires permission.