



QUALITY AUDIT TOOL

Complete User Manual

Planning • Checklist Building • Electronic Audit Execution • Findings • Reporting

End-to-end audit workflow

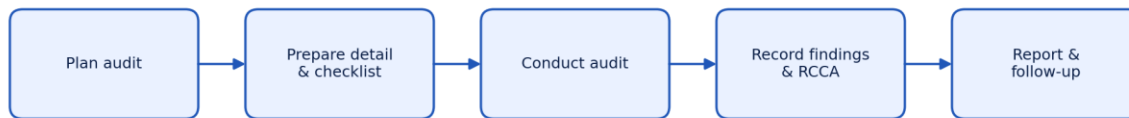


Figure 1 - The Audit Tool supports the complete audit lifecycle.

Special Processes Institute
sp-i.org
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Document purpose

This manual explains the operation of the SPI Quality Audit Tool & Checklist Builder from initial planning through audit execution, nonconformity management and final reporting. It is written for auditors, supplier quality professionals, quality managers, process owners and anyone responsible for maintaining an audit programme.

IMPORTANT: The tool is a browser-based working aid. Users remain responsible for defining appropriate audit criteria, verifying current specification revisions and applying their organisation's audit, classification, retention and approval rules.

What the tool does

- Creates and maintains a multi-audit programme with calendar and multi-month views.
- Supports individual internal, external, supplier and certification/approval audits.
- Builds reusable audit checklists manually, from online checklist files, or from the SPI audit-question library.
- Allows electronic audit execution using Yes / No / N/A results and objective-evidence notes.
- Transfers failed checklist items into the nonconformity workflow.
- Tracks finding classification, closure dates, status, RCCA and closure evidence.
- Produces audit reports, checklist printouts, audit-plan printouts and PDF outputs.
- Saves individual audits, reusable checklists and the entire audit programme as separate JSON records.
- Bulk-imports existing audit schedules from CSV or Excel.

Recommended operating model

How a planned audit becomes an executed audit

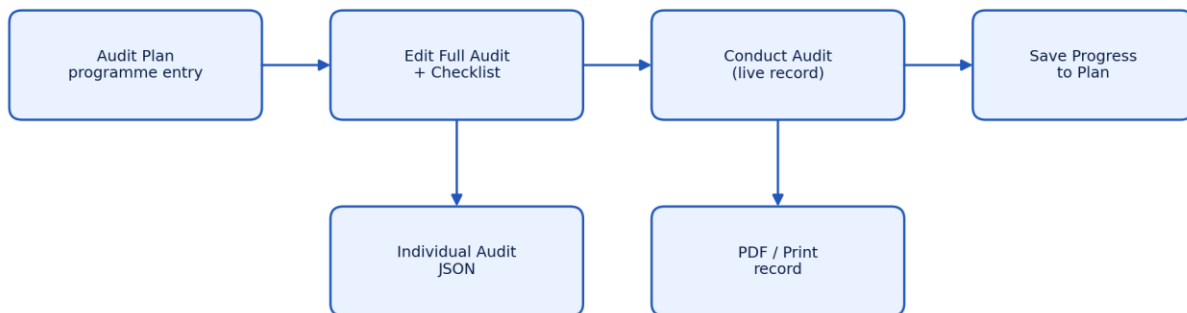


Figure 2 - Recommended relationship between programme planning, execution and records.

1. Getting started

1.1 Main navigation

The application is organised around five tabs. The tabs represent the natural audit lifecycle and can be revisited at any time.

Tab	Purpose	Typical use
Audit Detail	Defines the individual audit and participants.	Preparation and audit control.
Audit Plan	Maintains the audit programme.	Scheduling, programme monitoring and launching planned audits.
Audit Checklist	Builds and executes the checklist.	Preparation and live audit evidence capture.
Nonconformities	Records and tracks findings.	During and after the audit.



Audit Report	Records the final outcome.	Audit completion, approval and follow-up.
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1.2 Global controls

Control	What it does
Save Individual Audit JSON	Downloads the currently open audit only, including its detail, participants, checklist answers/evidence and findings.
Load Individual Audit JSON	Loads one previously saved individual audit JSON file.
Save PDF	Creates a formatted PDF audit report when the PDF libraries are available.
Print	Builds the printable audit report and opens the browser print workflow.
Clear Audit	Clears the currently open individual audit after confirmation. It does not intentionally delete the entire Audit Plan.

1.3 Status bar and autosave

The status bar reports whether the current audit has unsaved changes and shows checklist/finding completion information. The application also schedules browser local-storage autosave. Local autosave is a convenience, not a controlled backup. Export JSON records regularly.

GOOD PRACTICE: For important audits, save the individual Audit JSON at logical milestones and save the Entire Audit Plan JSON regularly. Do not rely solely on browser storage.

2. Audit Detail

2.1 Audit Identification and Control

Field	Meaning / use
Audit number / ref.	Unique reference used to identify the audit.
Audit type	Internal, External, Certification / Approval, or Supplier.
Audit scope	High-level classification: Process, Product, Special process, System, or Other.
Status	Planned, Open, In process, Review, Closed, or Cancelled.
Audit focus / title	Plain-language description of the audit focus.
Specification / procedure document	Primary specification, procedure, contractual requirement or audit basis.
Audit scope / boundaries	Processes, products, locations, departments, interfaces and exclusions included in the audit.
Created date	Date the audit record was created.
Planned date	Planned audit date.
Start date	Actual or intended start date.
Closed date	Date the audit is formally closed.

2.2 Participants

Auditors and auditees are maintained as repeatable rows. Each row contains a name and company/position field. Use Add Auditor or Add Auditee for additional participants and Remove to delete a row.



2.3 Audited item, criteria and notes

Field	Use
Audited item / location / process	Identifies the physical location, supplier, department, process or product being audited.
Criteria	States the requirements against which conformity will be assessed.
Notes	Preparation notes or other contextual information.

2.4 Linked planned audits

When an audit is opened from the Audit Plan, a linked-audit banner appears. Update Linked Planned Audit writes changes in the individual Audit Detail and working checklist back to the selected programme entry. Stop Editing Planned Audit breaks the working link.

GOOD PRACTICE: When working from the programme, keep the audit linked until you have saved the latest preparation or execution data back to the plan.

3. Audit Plan - programme management

The Audit Plan is the programme-level workspace. It is designed to schedule many audits, prepare linked checklists, monitor status and open a planned audit for detailed preparation or electronic execution.

3.1 Creating a planned audit

1. Enter Audit number / ref. and Audit title / focus.
2. Enter Start date and End date.
3. Choose Audit type and Status.
4. Enter the Lead auditor / owner and Location / auditee.
5. Define Audit scope / boundaries.
6. Enter Criteria and planning notes.
7. Optionally build the Planned Audit Checklist.
8. Select Add Planned Audit.

3.2 Plan fields

Plan field	Purpose
Ref	Programme reference for the audit.
Title	Audit title/focus.
Start / End	Date range; multi-day audits can span more than one date/month.
Type	Internal, External, Certification / Approval, Supplier.
Status	Planned, Open, In process, Review, Closed, Cancelled.
Owner	Lead auditor or accountable owner.
Location / auditee	Site, supplier, department or auditee.
Scope	Audit boundaries displayed in programme views.
Criteria and planning notes	Audit basis and planning information.

3.3 Planned Audit Checklist

Each planned audit can carry its own checklist. The checklist editor stores a checklist name and rows containing number, question and requirement. Use Add Checklist Item to build manually or Copy Current Audit Checklist to Plan to reuse the checklist currently loaded in the individual audit workspace.



3.4 Edit, conduct and delete one audit

Button	Action
Edit Full Audit + Checklist	Loads the selected planned audit into the detailed audit workspace for preparation.
Conduct Audit	Loads the selected audit, moves appropriate planned/open status to In process, sets a start date when absent, links the audit and opens the checklist for live execution.
Cancel Edit	Stops editing the selected plan entry in the plan editor.
Delete Audit	Deletes the selected individual programme entry after confirmation.

3.5 Calendar View

Calendar View displays audits in a monthly Monday-to-Sunday calendar. Previous, Today and Next change the displayed month. Audit events show the reference/title and use status styling. Closed, in-process/review and cancelled entries are visually differentiated; overdue entries receive an additional outline.

3.6 Multi-Month Plan

Multi-Month Plan presents the programme as audit rows against month columns. Planning periods of 3, 6, 12 or 18 months can be selected, together with the starting month. This view is useful for management reviews, workload balancing and programme coverage.

3.7 Filters and search

The programme can be filtered by Type, Status and Lead auditor / owner. The Search field searches programme information such as reference, title and owner. Filters affect the displayed programme and the printed Audit Plan list.

3.8 Programme metrics

Metric	Meaning
Total planned	Number of audits currently in the programme.
This month	Audits associated with the current month.
Overdue	Audits identified by the application as overdue.
In progress / review	Audits with In process or Review status.
Closed	Audits with Closed status.
Audits this year	Programme coverage count for the year.

3.9 Upcoming Audits

The Upcoming Audits list presents the next scheduled audits from today. Selecting an item loads it into the plan editor for review or editing.

4. Bulk import from Excel or CSV

Import Excel / CSV Audit Plan is intended for organisations that already maintain an audit schedule in a spreadsheet. The import is additive: imported audits are added to the current programme rather than replacing existing audits.

4.1 Required headings

Column	Imported to	Notes
Ref	Audit reference	Text.
Title	Audit title	Required. Blank titles are rejected.
Start	Start date	Required and must be a valid date.



End	End date	If blank, the start date is used.
Type	Audit type	Recognised values are normalised.
Status	Audit status	Recognised values are normalised.
Owner	Lead auditor / owner	Text.
Auditee	Location / auditee	Text.
Scope	Scope / boundaries	Text.
Criteria	Criteria and planning notes	Also stored in linked detail criteria.

4.2 Import procedure

9. Select Import Excel / CSV Audit Plan.
10. Read the format explanation. Select Cancel if the source file needs preparation, or OK to continue.
11. Choose a .csv, .xlsx or .xls file.
12. The application reads each row, validates required fields and dates, and adds valid audits.
13. Review the import result message. Any skipped rows are identified with a reason.
14. Review the programme in Calendar and Multi-Month Plan views, then save the Entire Audit Plan JSON as a backup.

4.3 Date and value handling

- Start and End accept valid Excel dates and common textual dates including YYYY-MM-DD and DD/MM/YYYY.
- An End date before Start is rejected.
- Blank rows are ignored.
- Type values are normalised toward Internal, External, Certification / Approval or Supplier.
- Status values are normalised toward Planned, Open, In process, Review, Closed or Cancelled.

GOOD PRACTICE: Bulk import does not populate linked checklists because the current import format contains only the ten programme columns. Attach or build checklists after import, or use the complete Audit Plan JSON format when transferring a programme that already contains linked checklists.

5. Saving, loading and deleting the Audit Plan

5.1 Save Entire Audit Plan JSON

This is the complete programme backup/transfer file. It contains every planned audit and can include linked checklists, stored detailed audit information, participants, nonconformities and report information held with each programme entry. The application prompts for a filename; the default is audit_plan.json.

5.2 Load Entire Audit Plan JSON

Loading an Entire Audit Plan JSON restores the saved programme and replaces the current plan in the browser. This is different from bulk CSV/Excel import, which adds audits to the current plan.

5.3 Delete All Audits

Delete All Audits permanently clears every programme entry from the current browser plan, including information stored with those planned audits. The control uses a two-stage confirmation and reports the number of audits to be removed. Save the Entire Audit Plan JSON first if there is any possibility the programme will be needed again.

5.4 Print Audit Plan List

Print Audit Plan List opens a landscape A4 programme report in chronological order. Current Type, Status, Owner and Search filters are applied to the printed list.



5.5 Excel and PDF plan outputs

The plan workspace also provides Download Excel Plan and Save Plan PDF controls for programme-level outputs. Use these for distribution and review; retain JSON when you need a restorable application data file.

Files, persistence and transfer

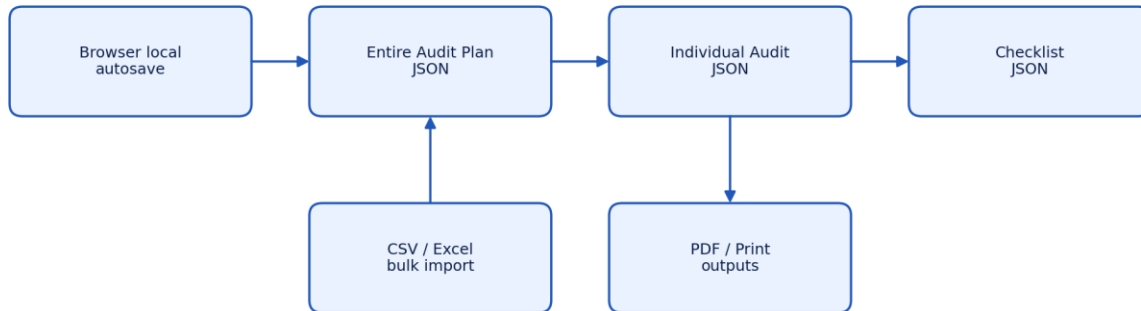


Figure 3 - Understand the difference between browser autosave, JSON data files, spreadsheet import and document outputs.

6. Building an Audit Checklist

6.1 Four ways to create a checklist

15. Build from the SPI Audit Question Library.
16. Load a pre-made online checklist from the configured checklist folder.
17. Open a local reusable checklist JSON.
18. Add free-text checklist items manually.

6.2 Checklist JSON versus Audit JSON

Reusable Checklist JSON is deliberately separate from Audit JSON. A reusable checklist saves the checklist name, question numbers, questions and requirements; audit answers and evidence are excluded. Use Individual Audit JSON when completed answers/evidence must be retained.

6.3 Pre-made online checklist

The Pre-made checklist file selector is populated from the configured SPI checklist folder. Load Online loads the selected checklist into the current audit. The application attempts to discover available JSON checklist files from the online checklist manifest/index.

6.4 Local checklist

Open Local loads a reusable checklist JSON from the user's computer. Save Checklist downloads the current checklist as a reusable template with answers and evidence cleared.

7. SPI Audit Question Library

The question library is a searchable source for building tailored checklists. Questions copied from the library remain editable in the working checklist.

7.1 Cascading filters

Step	Filter	Purpose
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1	Category	Broad process or management-system grouping.
2	Process	Narrows the selected category.
3	Standard / title	Narrows to a specification or standard/title.
4	Clause	Narrows to a clause; may default when only one remains.
5	Audit area	Narrows to a control theme within the selected requirement.

7.2 Additional filters

Priority and Question type provide further filtering. Search within filtered questions searches question, requirement, guide, evidence, keywords and source reference. Matched, Selected and Already added metrics help manage selection.

7.3 Adding library questions

19. Choose filters from left to right.
20. Review the matching question cards.
21. Select the questions required.
22. Use Select visible if appropriate, or clear/reset selections as needed.
23. Select Add Selected Questions to Checklist.
24. Review and edit the copied questions and requirements before use.

GOOD PRACTICE: Verify current specification revisions, clauses and contractual applicability before relying on library content for a compliance decision. The application itself presents this warning.

8. Conducting the audit electronically

Conduct Audit opens a planned audit as a linked live audit record. The execution banner identifies the linked audit and presents a four-step sequence: Review, Record evidence, Raise findings, Save progress.

How a planned audit becomes an executed audit

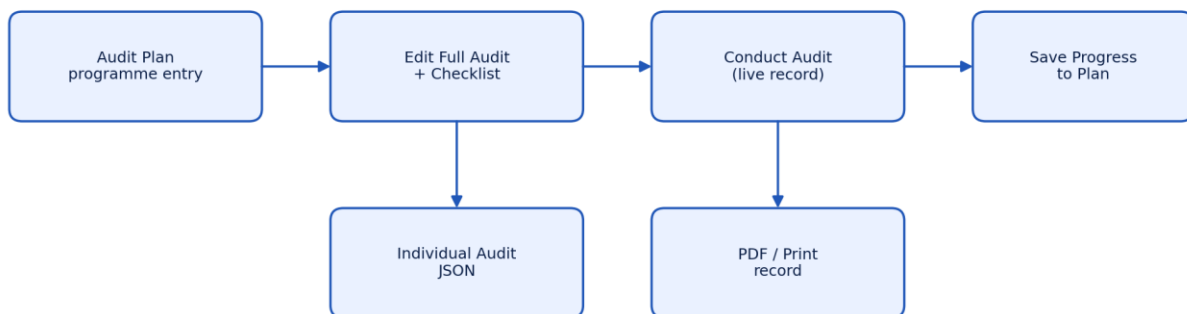


Figure 4 - Linked execution keeps the programme entry and live audit record connected.

8.1 Checklist results

Result	Meaning
Yes	The requirement was demonstrated as conforming.



No	The requirement was not demonstrated. Record objective evidence and consider creating a nonconformity.
N/A	The requirement does not apply. Record the reason when useful.

8.2 Objective evidence

Notes / Evidence should be specific enough for another reviewer to understand what was sampled and why the conclusion was reached. Suitable entries can include record identifiers, serial or batch numbers, job numbers, procedure revisions, interview evidence, observed conditions and traceable samples.

8.3 Create NC

Create NC copies the checklist question/finding context and requirement into the Nonconformities tab. This reduces retyping and maintains a clear relationship between the audit test and the finding. Review and rewrite the finding so it states the factual nonconformity and objective evidence clearly.

8.4 Saving progress

Save Progress to Plan writes the linked audit's current state back to the programme. Use it regularly during electronic execution. Save Individual Audit JSON provides a separate file record of the current audit. Print / Save Checklist PDF produces a paper/PDF checklist record.

8.5 Completion metrics

The checklist dashboard reports Total items, Yes, No, N/A, Unanswered and Completion percentage. Completion is based on whether each checklist item has a selected result.

9. Nonconformities and OFIs

The Nonconformities workspace records findings and supports closure tracking. Findings may be created manually or copied from a failed checklist item.

Field	Use
No.	Finding identifier.
Nonconformity	Factual statement of what was found.
Requirement	The requirement that was not met.
Classification	Major, Minor or OFI. Apply your organisation/customer rules.
Planned close out	Target closure date.
Actual close out	Actual closure date.
Status	Open, In process or Closed.
RCCA	Root cause and corrective-action information.
Notes / Closure Evidence	Evidence supporting implementation and closure/effectiveness.

9.1 Finding metrics

The dashboard shows total findings, Major, Minor, OFI, Open / In process and Closed. These are calculated from the finding rows currently in the audit.

9.2 Recommended finding structure

25. State the requirement.
26. State the factual condition observed.
27. Identify the objective evidence/sample.
28. Avoid unsupported conclusions or vague wording.



29. Track correction, root cause, corrective action and effectiveness/closure evidence in accordance with the applicable process.

10. Audit Report and Conclusion

The report tab is used after checklist completion to summarise the audit outcome, conclusions and follow-up.

Field	Use
Audit report notes	Summary of audit outcome, strengths, weaknesses, significant observations and context.
Overall conclusion	Conforming; Conforming with OFI; Minor nonconformities identified; Major nonconformities identified; Follow-up audit required; Approval recommended; Approval not recommended.
Follow-up / review date	Date for review, surveillance or follow-up.
Report prepared by	Report author.
Report approved / reviewed by	Approver or reviewer.

10.1 Final record

30. Complete checklist results and objective evidence.
31. Ensure all findings are correctly recorded and classified.
32. Complete the report narrative and conclusion.
33. Set follow-up information where required.
34. Save Individual Audit JSON.
35. Generate the PDF and/or print the report in accordance with local record-control requirements.
36. If the audit originated in the programme, save progress/update the linked planned audit and then save the Entire Audit Plan JSON.

11. PDF and print outputs

11.1 Individual Audit PDF

The PDF report is generated in landscape A4 and includes audit detail, participants, audited item, criteria, checklist, nonconformities and report information. If the required PDF libraries cannot be loaded, the application advises the user to use Print and select Save as PDF instead.

11.2 Browser Print

Print uses a dedicated print layout that suppresses the interactive controls and produces the audit report sections. Browser print settings control the final printer/PDF destination.

11.3 Checklist print/PDF

During linked execution, Print / Save Checklist PDF provides a checklist-focused record suitable for field use or retention.

11.4 Audit Plan outputs

Programme outputs include the filtered Audit Plan print list, Excel plan download and Plan PDF. These are distribution formats; they are not substitutes for the restorable Entire Audit Plan JSON.



12. Data management and record integrity

12.1 Understand the four record types

Record type	Contains	Best use
Browser autosave	Local working state.	Convenience/recovery on the same browser.
Individual Audit JSON	One complete audit.	Controlled transfer/backup of an individual audit.
Reusable Checklist JSON	Checklist template without answers/evidence.	Reuse across audits.
Entire Audit Plan JSON	Whole programme and stored linked audit information.	Programme backup, transfer and restoration.

12.2 Suggested backup discipline

- Before bulk import: save the current Entire Audit Plan JSON.
- After major programme changes: save the Entire Audit Plan JSON.
- During important audits: save Individual Audit JSON at logical milestones.
- At audit completion: save final Individual Audit JSON plus PDF/print record.
- Before Delete All Audits or loading a replacement plan: save a programme backup.

12.3 Moving to another computer

For a complete programme transfer, save the Entire Audit Plan JSON on the source computer and load it on the destination computer. For one audit only, use Individual Audit JSON. For reusable checklist templates, use Checklist JSON.

13. Example operating scenarios

13.1 New supplier audit

37. Create a Supplier audit in Audit Plan.
38. Define supplier as Location / auditee, scope, criteria, dates and owner.
39. Build or attach the supplier checklist.
40. Use Edit Full Audit + Checklist to complete preparation and participants.
41. At the audit, select Conduct Audit.
42. Record results and evidence; Create NC for failed requirements.
43. Save Progress to Plan throughout the audit.
44. Complete the report, save final Audit JSON and PDF, then update/save the programme.

13.2 Importing an annual audit programme

45. Prepare the spreadsheet with the ten required headings.
46. Save the existing programme JSON as a backup.
47. Use Import Excel / CSV Audit Plan and select the file.
48. Review skipped-row messages, if any.
49. Use Multi-Month Plan to check distribution and ownership.
50. Attach checklists to relevant audits.
51. Save the new Entire Audit Plan JSON.

13.3 Reusing a checklist

52. Prepare the checklist once.
53. Select Save Checklist to create a reusable JSON template.
54. For a future audit, use Open Local or the online checklist selector.



55. Tailor the checklist to the specific audit scope and current criteria.
56. Save the completed audit as Individual Audit JSON; do not overwrite the reusable template with evidence as the reusable format intentionally excludes results/evidence.

14. Troubleshooting

Issue	Likely cause / action
Bulk import says no audits could be imported	Check exact headings, ensure Title and Start are populated, and verify date formats.
Some import rows were skipped	Read the row-specific error message; common causes are blank Title, invalid Start or End before Start.
Checklist online list is empty	The online checklist manifest/index may be unavailable or no JSON checklist files were returned.
PDF library unavailable	Check internet access for required libraries or use Print > Save as PDF.
Audit plan print window blocked	Allow pop-ups for the site and retry.
Changes appear only on this PC/browser	Browser local storage is local. Save JSON for transfer or backup.
Loaded Audit Plan replaced existing audits	This is expected for Load Entire Audit Plan JSON. Use bulk CSV/Excel import when the intent is to add audits.
Imported audits have no checklists	The current bulk import format does not contain checklist data. Add/copy checklists after import.
Question library does not load	Use Reload; verify network access to the configured question_library.csv source.
Accidental programme deletion	Restore the most recent Entire Audit Plan JSON backup.

15. Quick-reference procedures

Create a planned audit

57. Audit Plan > enter plan fields.
58. Optionally add planned checklist.
59. Add Planned Audit.
60. Confirm it appears in Calendar/Multi-Month Plan.

Conduct a planned audit

61. Select the planned audit.
62. Conduct Audit.
63. Review scope and checklist.
64. Record Yes/No/N/A and evidence.
65. Create NC where appropriate.
66. Save Progress to Plan regularly.
67. Complete report and final records.

Back up the programme

68. Audit Plan > Save Entire Audit Plan JSON.
69. Choose a meaningful filename.
70. Store the downloaded JSON in the organisation's approved location.

Delete the programme

71. Save a backup first if required.
72. Audit Plan > Delete All Audits.



73. Read both confirmations carefully.
74. Confirm deletion only when the entire current plan is intended to be removed.

Appendix A - CSV / Excel import specification

Position	Heading	Required?	Example
1	Ref	Recommended	AUD-2026-001
2	Title	Yes	Supplier Process Audit
3	Start	Yes	2026-09-14
4	End	No	2026-09-15
5	Type	No	Supplier
6	Status	No	Planned
7	Owner	No	A. Smith
8	Auditee	No	ABC Plating Ltd
9	Scope	No	Zinc-nickel plating process
10	Criteria	No	AS9100D; PO requirements; process specification

One audit is entered per row. The first row contains the headings. Keep the headings exactly as shown for predictable import behaviour.

Appendix B - Status and classification reference

Area	Values
Audit type	Internal; External; Certification / Approval; Supplier
Audit scope	Process; Product; Special process; System; Other
Audit status	Planned; Open; In process; Review; Closed; Cancelled
Checklist result	Yes; No; N/A
Finding classification	Major; Minor; OFI
Finding status	Open; In process; Closed

Appendix C - Records checklist

- ☐ Audit reference and title are unique and meaningful.
- ☐ Scope and criteria are defined before execution.
- ☐ Auditors and auditees are identified.
- ☐ Checklist is tailored to the actual audit scope.
- ☐ Objective evidence is traceable and specific.
- ☐ No results are supported by a clearly stated finding where applicable.
- ☐ Findings identify the unmet requirement.
- ☐ RCCA and closure evidence are retained where applicable.
- ☐ Audit conclusion and follow-up are completed.
- ☐ Individual Audit JSON and final PDF/print record are saved.



- ☐ Linked programme entry is updated.
- ☐ Entire Audit Plan JSON backup is current.

Appendix D - Application architecture at a glance

Files, persistence and transfer

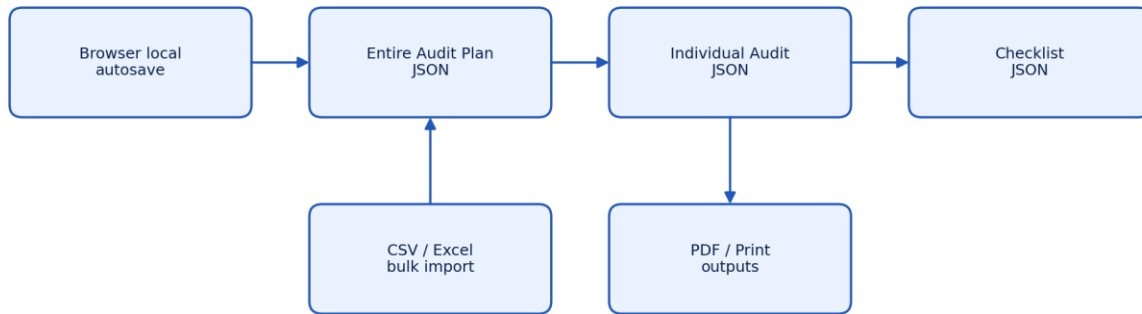


Figure 5 - Application data and output architecture.

The application is intentionally file-friendly: browser storage supports day-to-day working, JSON preserves structured application data, CSV/Excel supports bulk programme intake, and PDF/print/Excel outputs support human review and distribution. Choosing the correct format is important because not every output contains enough information to reconstruct the working audit record.