



PDFs and attachments standard

This standard explains when to use attachments and how to prepare them for publication on our digital channels, including tfl.gov.uk. It covers accessibility and formatting.

Audience

- Writers and editors
- Designers
- Content owners
- Self-service publishers
- Relationship managers

Why we do this

We publish lots of downloadable documents on our website. They include PDFs of printed reports, plans for new infrastructure, information related to transparency and maps.

The attachments we publish **must** be cleared for publication and **must** meet legal accessibility standards.

Principles

In most cases it is better to publish information as a web page rather than using an attachment.

Increasingly people are using our website on mobile phones and it is often difficult to view attachments on mobiles.

We use attachments when:

- It is likely that people will want to print a version to use offline, such as a poster that could be printed and put up
- They are formal documents such as publications
- We want to provide data in a format that others can interrogate
- The audience is very niche and the amount of work to create and maintain webpages outweighs the advantages

We do not use attachments when:

- The content is for a mainstream audience and is likely to be read online. Instead, the text should be re-written for the web

Your responsibilities

You are responsible for the content of attachments and for ensuring that TfL has the right to publish them.

You **must** make sure the Press Office and the Information Governance team know what you are publishing and when it will be live.

Requirements

Your attachment **must** meet the minimum standard set out below.

Accessibility

All attachments **must** be accessible. The [Government Digital Service guidelines](#) explain how to create accessible PDFs.

Scans of printed documents are not accessible and we generally do not allow them on the site.

If there is no alternative to a scanned document, you **must** provide an email address to allow people to request an accessible version of the document. If an accessible version is requested you **must** provide it.

You **must** use a minimum of 12pt for all documents. Where possible, use 14pt as this increases accessibility to visually impaired readers.

File size

Attachments should be less than 10MB and **must not** be more than 25MB in size.

Meta data

All attachments **must** have meaningful meta data. Meta data is essential for search.

You can add the meta data to your original document and save it as a PDF or, if you have Acrobat Pro, you can add the meta data to the PDF.

An example of good meta data

File: annual-report-2018-19.pdf

Title: Annual Report 2018/19

Author: Transport for London

Subject: TfL's Annual Report summarises the achievements of the last financial year and the work done to improve London's transport network

How to add metadata to your document

- Open the document properties
- The 'Author' should be Transport for London
- The 'Title' should be the full title of your document.
- The 'Subject' should be a concise description of what's in the document
- Save the document to save these properties
- Use 'Save as' to save your document as a PDF. The PDF will retain the properties you have added to the original

How to update meta data in a PDF

- Open the document in Adobe Acrobat Pro (not Adobe Reader)
- Press Ctrl D
- Click on the 'Description' tab on the left
- Edit the author, title and subject fields
- Save the document

Creating a file name

- Use words that match the document title
- Use hyphens between words (not spaces or underscores)
- Use lowercase letters
- Don't use dates unless an older version of the document will remain on the site

Replacing an existing PDF

- Give your PDF the same properties and file name as the original document
- website and press Ctrl D
- To see the file name, open it on the website and look in the address bar at the top of the web page

Type: Standard
Owner: TfL Online Compliance
Department: TfL Online

Version history

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1.0	01/02/2016	First issue
1.01	16/12/2019	Updated link to GDS guidelines

Review history

Name	Title	Date	Comments
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