

Advice for Using PDFs on the HSE Website

PDF's in general are bad for accessibility. This means they are difficult to read for those on mobile devices and they do not work well with assistive technologies like screen readers.

Where possible, it's best to create content in HTML.

If you need to publish a newly created PDF, please follow our guidelines so that we can give the document user the best possible experience.

PDF Guidelines

Size

The maximum document size we can publish is 7 MB.
If your document is too big, you will need to compress it before uploading it.

Name

To make sure people can find your documents online when they search for them, you must name the document in line with these guidelines.

Details on how to name and properly label a PDF are explained on the last page.

Specific

If the document has a generic name it will not be easy to find using HSE search, Google and other search engines. The name of your document must be specific and descriptive.

Bad example: Registration form GPC18

Good example: GP visit card for carers - registration form

No more than 60 characters

The document name should be no more than 60 characters; this is because Google typically displays the first 50–60 characters of a document name. If the document name is under 60 characters, it will display properly in Google.

No version numbers or dates

Version numbers and full dates should not be included in document names.
Years can be included where appropriate.

If a document is published monthly the name of the month can be included, for example, 'Maternity Patient Safety Statement - Dec 2018'. Abbreviations of month names can be used.

Bad example: HSE Annual Report & Financial Statements V6 20.11.18

Good example: HSE Annual Report and Financial Statements 2018

Do not use acronyms in the title

Document titles should not contain acronyms, wherever possible as they often have no meaning to users. The use of HSE as an acronym is acceptable.

Do not include the file format in the title

It is not necessary to include the name of the document format, such as 'pdf'.

Bad example: Medical card application PDF

Good example: Medical card application form

No illegal characters

No illegal characters are allowed in the document title. For example, % ~ < > & : / \ ^ * () ? [] _

Translated document names

Translated document names should be written in the language of the translation, with the English version of the document title at the beginning and the language name in English in brackets at the end.

Bad example: Polish version: Your Service, Your Say

Good example: Your Service, Your Say - Chcemy poznać Państwa opinię - Państwa opinia jest dla nas ważna (Polish)

Translated documents will often have names longer than 60 characters. This is ok.

Add a description where possible.

Web pages and PDFs that contain descriptions are more likely to be opened by users.

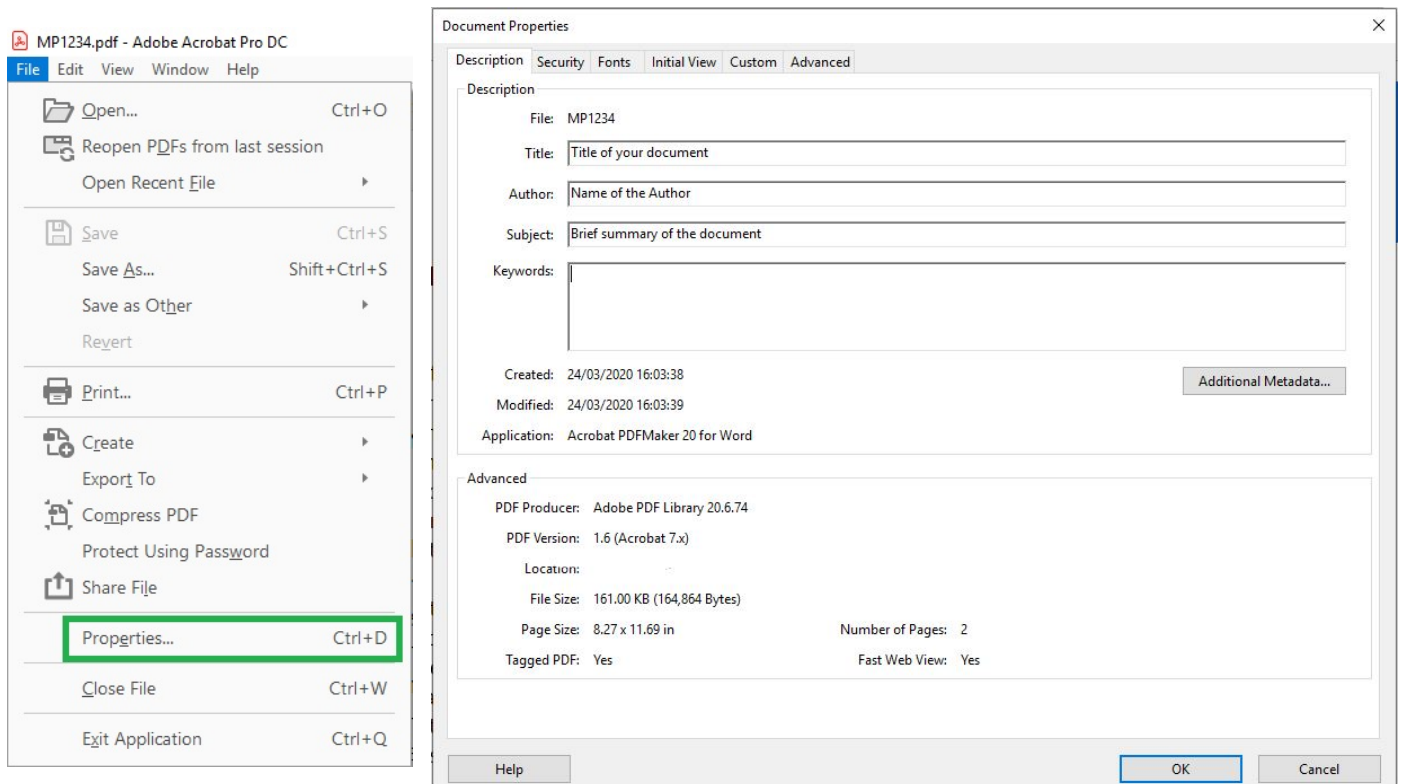
A description is a short explanation of the document that will appear under the main title and URL link on a search page.

The HSE website uses a PDF's subject field as it's description.

How to edit / name a PDF

If creating a PDF using Adobe Acrobat, the file properties can be added / changed by clicking on "File" on the menu bar (top left corner) and clicking on "Properties" from the drop down menu.

In this box you can add the title, author and subject of each PDF.



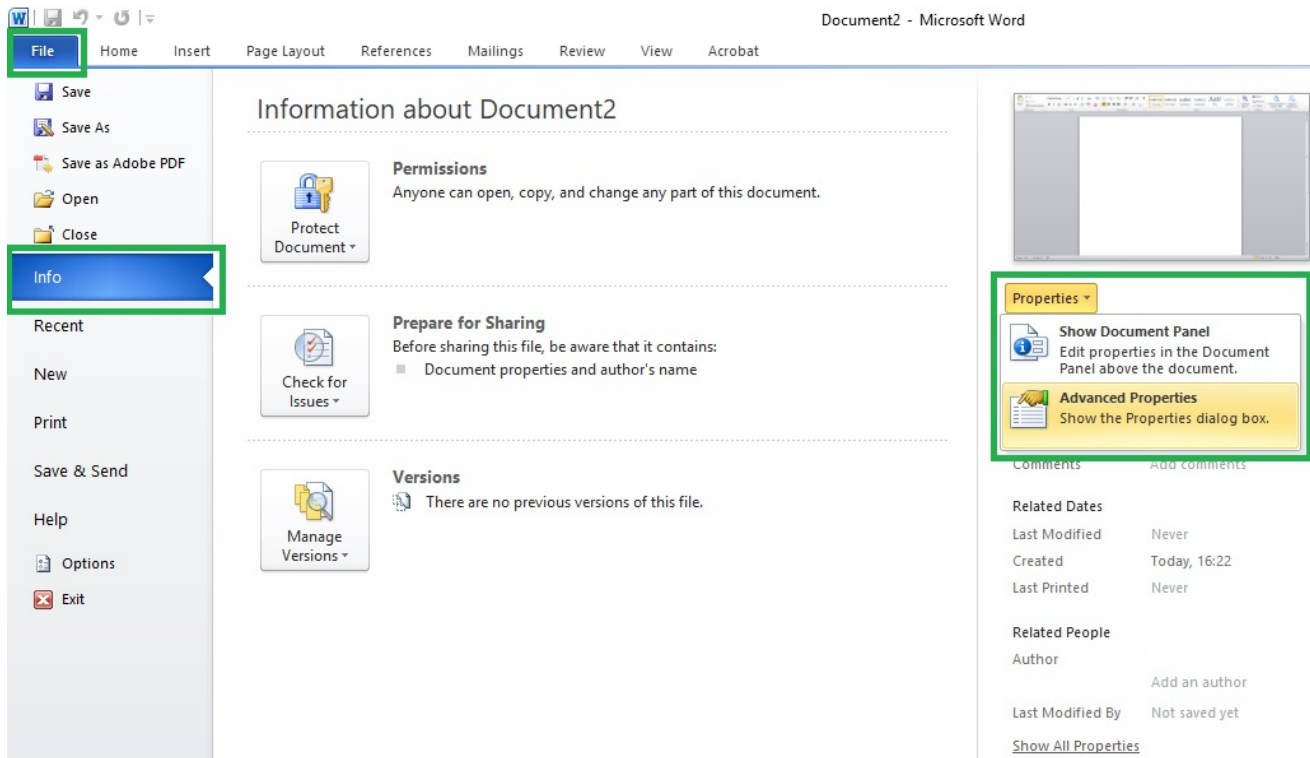
This editing option is available in either Adobe Acrobat DC's paid or free versions. Adobe Acrobat's free version remains on your system after a trial period is finished.

If you create PDFs through Microsoft Word, you can also change the properties of your document.

From the menu bar in Word, select "File".

From here select the "Info" tab.

On the right hand side of this window, under the reduced image of your document, click on "Properties" and then select "Advanced Properties".



This will open a new window where you can change the document's properties.

