Print Services
How to create a print-ready PDF

Goldsmiths
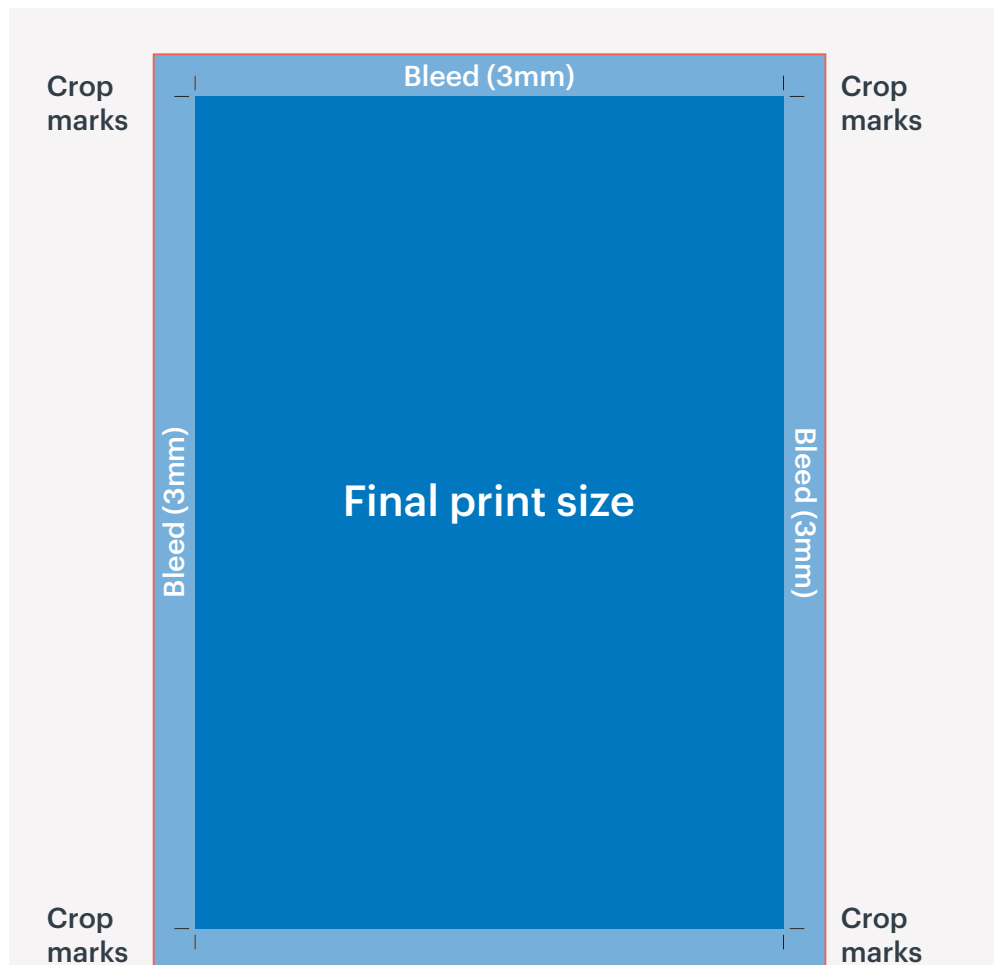UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

PDF workflow is the industry standard.

It is reliable and allows for faster production, fewer errors, and higher quality output.

What should your artwork look like?

To make sure your artwork prints all the way to the edge of the page, the PDF should have **bleed** – ie the image should run off the edge by 3mm all around. This ensures that trimming the artwork to the finished size won't produce a white line along the edge of the artwork.

Crop marks show you where the page will be cut after printing. Anything outside the crop marks will not show up on the page. If the artwork does not extend all the way to the crop mark, there will be a white 'gap' on the page.

Crop marks

Bleed (3mm)

Crop marks

Bleed (3mm)

Final print size

Bleed (3mm)

Crop marks

Crop marks

Once you've set up the bleed, there will be a red bleed line around your artwork. This won't appear in the final print. Extend your images/background to the red line.

CHECKLIST:
Is your artwork print ready?
Please use this checklist before sending us your PDFs to make sure they are print ready.

☐ **Size**
Is your document set up to the finished print size?

☐ **Spellcheck**
Have you run a spellcheck?

☐ **Errors**
Have you checked for any errors in the file (eg overset text and missing links [images])?

☐ **Bleed**
Does your artwork have 3mm bleed all around?

☐ **Crop marks**
Does your artwork have crop marks?

☐ **Resolution**
Are your images sharp enough for print? They should have a resolution of 300 dots per inch (dpi). You should not use images from the web.

☐ **PDF**
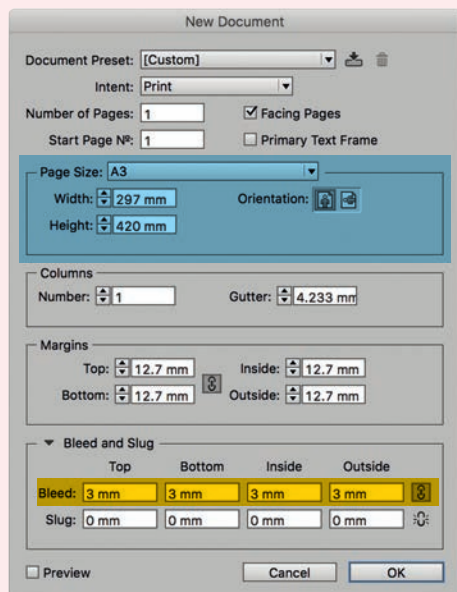Have you exported or saved your PDF as single pages (not spreads)?

Create a print-ready PDF
in InDesign

Step 1

Set the page size to the finished size of the document (eg A4 or A3), and set the bleed as 3mm.

A If you are creating a new document, go to **File > New Document.**
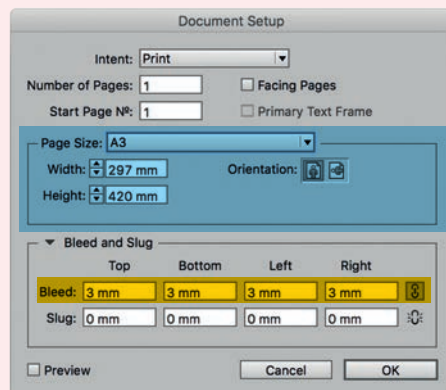
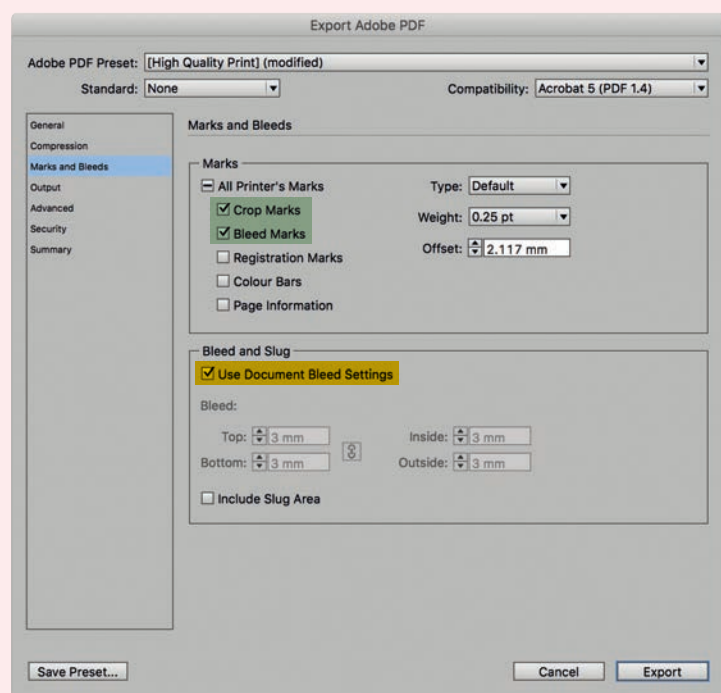Under **Bleed and Slug** click on the 'Make all settings the same' icon . Click on OK.

Go to **Step 2**

B If you are working on an existing document, go to **File > Document Setup**.

Under **Bleed and Slug** click on the 'Make all settings the same' icon . Click on OK.

Go to **Step 2**

Step 2
when your artwork is ready, choose **File > Export**

Step 3
specify a name and location for the file

Step 4
in the **Format** tab, choose **Adobe PDF (Print),** and click **Save**

Step 5a
in the **Adobe PDF Preset** tab, at the top of the dialog box, choose **High Quality Print**

Step 5b
under **Marks,** tick **Crop Marks** and **Bleed Marks.** Under **Bleed and Slug,** tick **Use Document Bleed Settings**

Step 5c
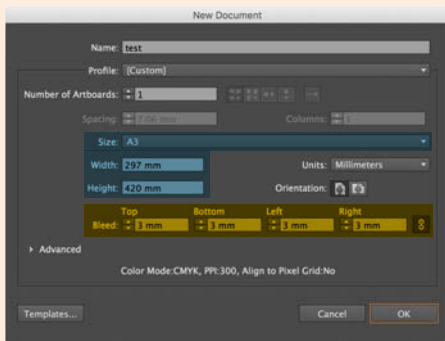click **Export** to create the print-ready PDF

Create a print-ready PDF
in Illustrator

Step 1

Set the page size to the finished size of the document (eg A4 or A3), and set the bleed as 3mm.

A If you are creating a new document, go to **File > New Document.**
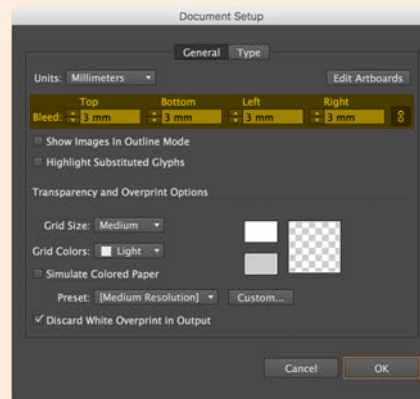
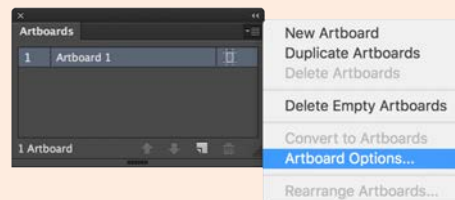Under **Bleed,** click on the 'Make all settings the same' icon ⑧. Click on OK.

Go to **Step 2**

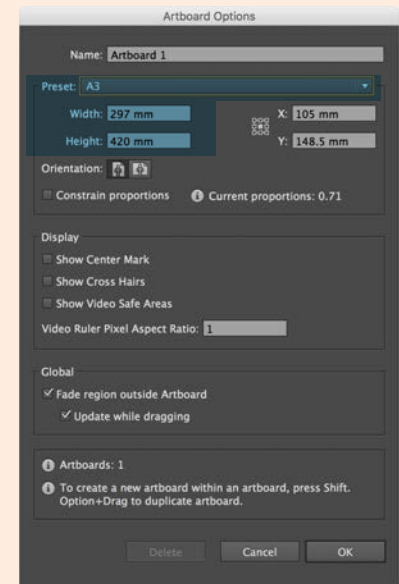**B** If you are working on an existing document, go to **File > Document Setup.**

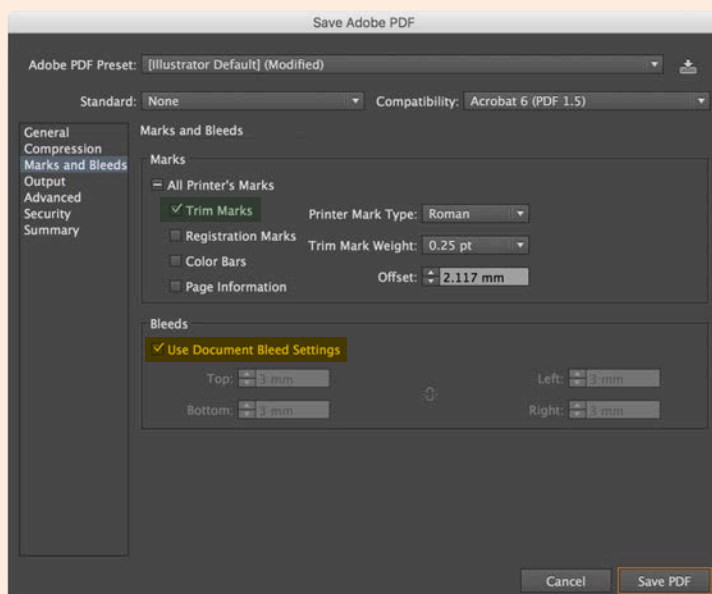Under **Bleed,** click on the 'Make all settings the same' icon ⑧. Click on OK.

Go to the **Window > Artboards** dialog box and select **Artboard Options**

In **Artboard Options,** select the finished size of the document

Go to **Step 2**

Step 2
when your artwork is ready, choose **File > Save As**

Step 3
specify a name and location for the file

Step 4
in the **Format** tab, choose
Adobe PDF (pdf), and click **Save**

Step 5a
in the **Adobe PDF Preset** tab, at the top of the dialog box, choose **High Quality Print**

Step 5b
under **Marks and Bleed: Marks** tick **Trim Marks.**
Under **Marks and Bleed: Bleeds,**
tick **Use Document Bleed Settings**

Step 5c
click **Save PDF** to create the print-ready PDF

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Create a print-ready PDF
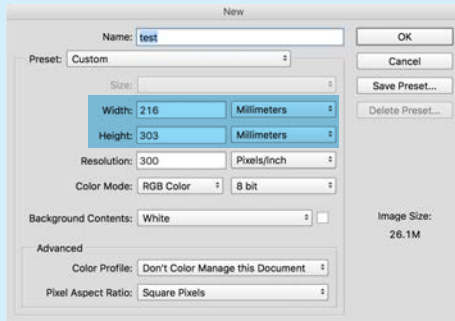## in Photoshop

Step 1

<u>Set the page size to the finished size of the document (eg A4 or A3), and set the bleed as 3mm.</u>

A If you are creating a new document, go to **File > New.**

For 3mm bleed all around the artwork, add 6mm to the width and height of the canvas. For an A4 document, this will be 216 x 303mm.
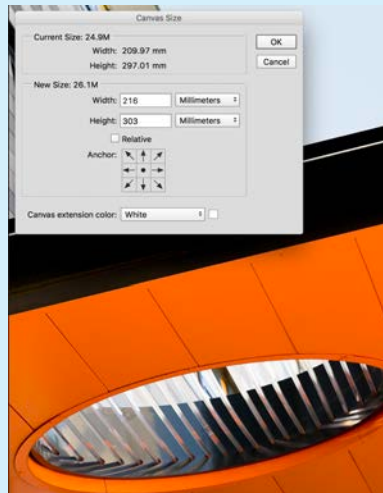
You can use guides to show the artwork area while you are working on the document.

Save your artwork and go to **Step 2**

B If you are working on an existing document, go to **Image > Canvas Size.**

For 3mm bleed all around the artwork, add 6mm to the width and height of the canvas. For an A4 document, this will be 216 x 303mm.

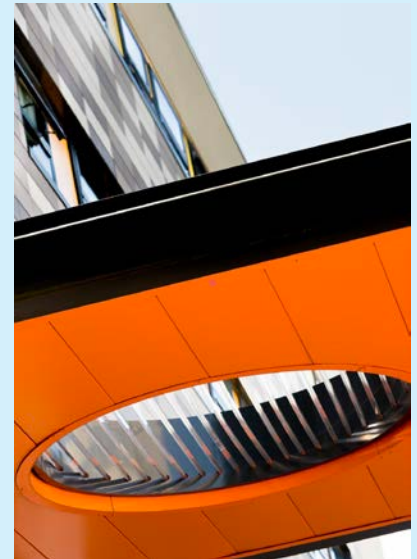A white border (3mm wide) will appear around the edges of the artwork.

You need to extend the existing artwork to the edges of the document. To do this, go to **Edit > Free Transform.** Small boxes (handles) will appear at the corners and mid-points of the artwork.

Hold the Shift Key (to maintain the proportions of the image) and **drag the top left corner handle outwards** so that the artwork extends to the left edge of the document.

Still holding the Shift Key, drag the bottom right corner handle outwards so that the artwork extends to the right edge of the document.

The white border around the artwork should now have disappeared.

Save your artwork and go to **Step 2**

Step 2

There is no easy way to add crop and bleed marks in Photoshop, so you should do this in InDesign. Create a new document in InDesign, import the artwork that you have adjusted in Photoshop, and export the document as a print-ready PDF following the instructions on page 2 of this guide.