



Shortening URLs

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About shortening URLs

A URL is the address of a webpage. For instance, the URL of the university website is www.nottingham.ac.uk

There are times when a full URL to a page is too long to be used in various printed and online communications. In these cases, there are ways of providing a shortened URL.

As an example below, assume we need a URL for a page about phones, and the actual URL is something like www.nottingham.ac.uk/it-services/connect/telephones/index.aspx

We will now work through the options for how to shorten this URL:

- Aliases
 - /go aliases
 - Aliases in your own URL space (in-site aliases)
- nott.ac links
- Redirects



Aliases

An alias is an alternative address that can be used to redirect users from a shorter URL to your page.

There are two ways to use aliases to create shortened URLs - /go and setting up aliases in your own URL space.

Option 1 – Using /go aliases

Shortened URL example using /go redirects: www.nottingham.ac.uk/go/phones


/go redirects are easy to set up and maintain in the CMS. /go URLs are activated on the same day they are created, often within 30 to 45 minutes. These are sometimes referred to as page aliases.

How to setup a /go redirect (for site admins only)

1. Decide on your URL – for example www.nottingham.ac.uk/go/phones
2. Check that this URL isn't already in use by entering it into the address bar of your internet browser
3. Navigate to the page you want to create a shortened URL for
4. Edit the page
5. Select the **Properties** tab
6. Expand the **Aliases** section

Aliases

0 aliases have been added



If the URL of the page is /AboutUs/Contacts/GeneralEnquiries.aspx you may want to add an alias of contact making the URL much simpler to remember e.g. www.yourdomain.com/contact. Just add the alias contact to the page.

7. Add the additional URL you want the page to be accessible via and click add (+)
 - This should be in the following format: **/go/shortnameyourequire**
 - For example, enter /go/phones for www.nottingham.ac.uk/it-services/connect/telephones/index.aspx
8. Save, Preview, and Submit and Approve the page
9. Once the page has published, the alias will start working, but be aware that it may take a while to do so, as there is a further CMS process which takes place automatically from time to time and which picks up the new aliases



Option 2 – Aliases in your own URL space

Shortened URL example in your own URL space: www.nottingham.ac.uk/it-services/phones


You can also create aliases within your own URL space – so if you're working in Sports, where URLs start /sport, you can set aliases like 'www.nottingham.ac.uk/sport/football' if you'd prefer that to '/go'

How to setup an alias in your URL space (for site admins only)

1. Decide on your URL – for example www.nottingham.ac.uk/it-services/phones
2. Check that this URL isn't already in use by entering it into the address bar of your internet browser
3. Navigate to the page you want to create a shortened URL for
4. Edit the page
5. Select the **Properties** tab
6. Expand the **Aliases** section

Aliases

0 aliases have been added



If the URL of the page is /AboutUs/Contacts/GeneralEnquiries.aspx you may want to add an alias of contact making the URL much simpler to remember e.g. www.yourdomain.com/contact. Just add the alias contact to the page.

7. Add the additional URL you want the page to be accessible via and click add (+)
 - This should be in the following format:
/yourtoplevelfolder/shortnameyourequire
 - For example, enter /it-services/phones for www.nottingham.ac.uk/it-services/connect/telephones/index.aspx
8. Save, Preview and Submit and Approver the page
9. Once the page has published, the alias will start working, but be aware that it may take a while to do so, as there is a further CMS process which takes place automatically from time to time and which picks up the new aliases

The alias URLs can only be for top level folders that are already proxied, for example, /it-services/phones is fine because www.nottingham.ac.uk/it-services/ already exists but /phones wouldn't work because www.nottingham.ac.uk/phones doesn't exist.



nott.ac links

Shortened URL example using nott.ac: www.nott.ac/phones

The web team can set up nott.ac links for you, along with QR codes.

Requesting a nott.ac link

To request a nott.ac URL:

- Decide on your URL – for example www.nott.ac/phones
- **Check that this URL isn't already in use** by entering it into the address bar of your internet browser
- Complete the web team support form, selecting **Short URLs and QR codes** in the request type

Redirects

A redirect sends users attempting to access specific URLs to alternative URLs instead. We often use redirects when replacing old websites with new versions.

Redirects have to be set up by the web team. Complete our [web team support form](#).