GDS

Performance analysis

Starter Guide to Using Google Analytics

Content

Updates

Sample Information

Sample information under the 'Green Shield' icon near the reporting title (see screenshot)

When sampling is in affect, you'll see a message at the top of the report that says '*This report is based on N% of sessions.*'
To the right of that message, you can now select one of two options to change the sampling size:

■ **Greater precision:** uses the maximum sample size possible to give you results that are the most precise representation of your full data set
■ **Faster response:** uses a smaller sampling size to give you faster results

Your data automatically refreshes using the new setting. Your preference is saved across all of your reports but resets after you close Analytics.

Find out more information about Data Sampling in Google Analytics:
https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/2637192

Report shortcuts

Shortcuts to reports can now be found under the Customisation tab under 'Saved Reports'. To save a report just click the 'Save' button and name it.

Tip: If you need to look up metrics all the time for the same page you can save it as a shortcut. The report configuration is saved and all you'll need to do is change the date range when you need use. If you tweak the report you can over save the report or save it as a new one.
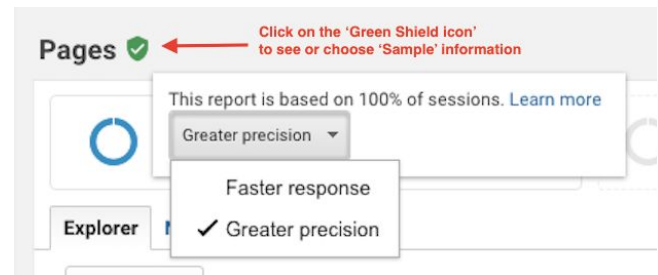
Save, Share or Export

Options to Save, Share or Export a report has now been moved above the date range option and are more visually accessible.

The *'Add to Dashboard'* feature has been removed. I will update this post once more information is available about this feature.
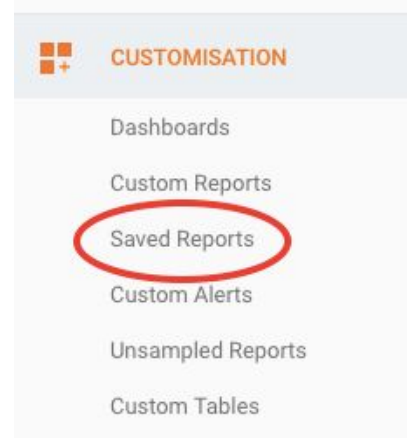
Basic GOV.UK Data Studio Dashboard

The following dashboard can be used for users with no Google Analytics access. A Google account is required to view and use:

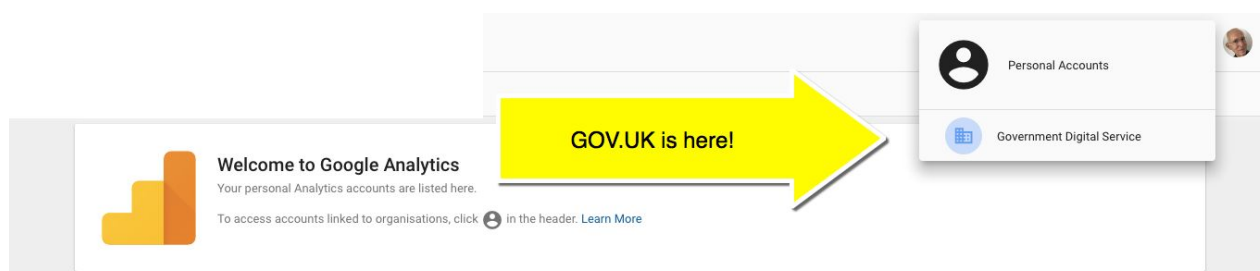https://datastudio.google.com/open/0B6_eMePoDI_KUDZqNnBWazY1UVU

How to login

Bookmark the following link to login to the interface:

www.analytics.google.com

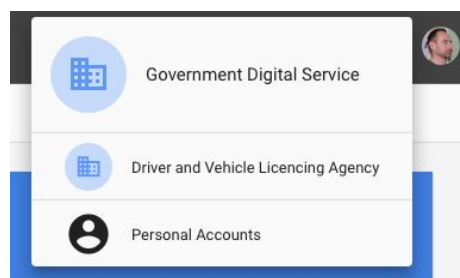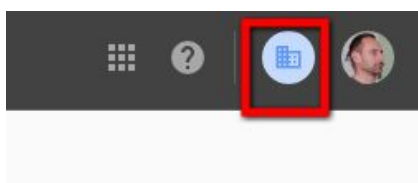Select 'Analytics' from the Sign-in drop down menu.

Then click on the **'Grey Avatar '** icon in the top right corner and select 'Government Digital Service' - you will then see the following view you have access to.

Most GOV.UK users will only have the GDS organisation option.

To switch back to other views you have access to click in the header. Any account that isn't linked to a Google 360 Suite will be grouped under **Personal Accounts.**

If you have access to a department's own GA account (example: DVLA) then you will have that option listed.

Google Analytics Navigation

Google Analytics metrics - What do they mean?

Unique page views: This represents the number of visits in which that page was viewed. So, if a user visits a page 5 times during their browsing session, it will show up as one unique pageview in Google Analytics.

Page views: This is a count of every time that page was viewed. Repeated views of a single page are also counted.

For example, if someone visits page X, then goes to page Y and then page X again, then page X will be shown having 2 pageviews (and one unique pageview).

Page views vs Unique page views (UPV): UPV gives you the number of visits where the page was viewed. A high number of Page views compared to UPVs can indicate that users are having trouble finding what they need.

Session: A session sometime called 'visits' is defined as a group of interactions one user takes within a given time frame on GOV.UK. Google Analytics defaults that time frame to 30 minutes. Meaning whatever a user does on GOV.UK (e.g. browses pages, downloads resources, purchases products) before they leave equals **one session**.

Entrances: This is the number of entries by visitors into the pages of your website. A high proportion of entrances to unique page views is good, as it indicates that the page is well optimised for search engine optimisation (SEO).

Bounce rate: A bounce is where a user only views one page on a site, and then leaves. This can be a good thing, if they find what they need straight away. Example: If a user lands on a transaction start page and the transaction takes longer than 30 minutes to complete, that will also be counted as a bounced visit. Bounce rate is calculated as a percentage of **entrances.**

Exit rate: Exit rate is the percentage of people who left the site from that page. Exits (user) may have viewed more than one page in a session. That means they may not have landed on that page, but simply found their way to it through site navigation or on site search. %Exit is calculated by dividing exits into page views**.**

Avg time on page: Provides a guide to how engaged users are with your page.
This metric should be used with caution! *– it ignores any visits with bounces or exits (which can't be measured) and only calculates the average time for users who click through to another page. Google Analytics also has no way of telling if the user has additional browser tabs open and if they're actively engaged with a different page within their browser window. As a general rule, the lower the % Exits rate, the more representative the average time on the page will be.*

New vs. Returning Visitors: New visitors are those users that have not visited your site before the time period specified, while returning visitors will have made at least one visit to at least one page on your site previously

Keywords and Search Terms: Keywords refer to traffic from search engines (organic search), whilst Search term refers to on site search (on-site search).

(not provided): This is where keywords that are withheld by Google (or other search engines) are grouped. Currently, around 80% of organic search traffic is categorised as *'not provided'*.

(not set): A direct visit or a referral from another site and Google Analytics wasn't able to identify.

Landing page: The page a user begins their visit on GOV.UK; quite simply, how they 'land' on GOV.UK.

# How to report on your content

Using Organisation IDs

Department/Organisation content under *www.gov.uk/government/…* is tagged with an unique ID.

If you don't know your *Org ID* you can find the unique ID by looking at the HTML source code and searching for the following tag/word **govuk:** or **analytics**
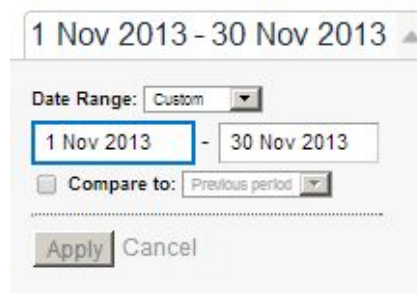

Departments start with D: <D123>
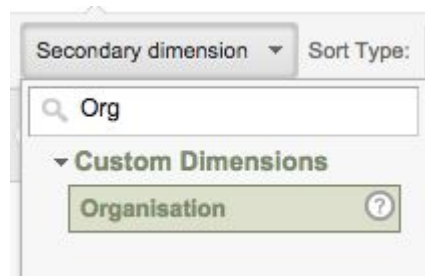Agencies or Public bodies start with E: <Exxx>

To look up content by Org ID Navigate to **Behaviour > Site content > All pages**
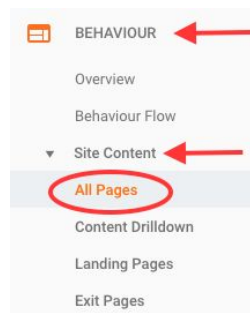
Don't forget to check that you're looking at the correct date range. You can also compare with a previous date range.
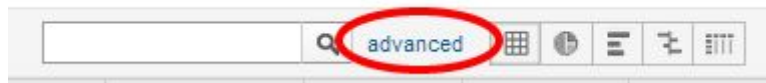

Click on the Secondary dimension drop-down, and then type in *org*. Click on **organisation**. Google Analytics will then insert an extra column into your report.
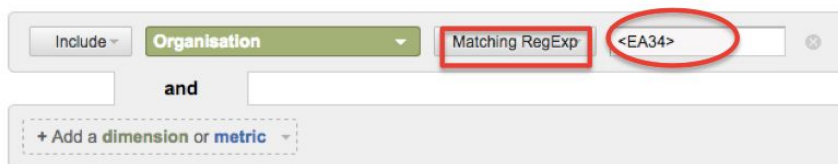
For data pre- 2 June 2015, select the **Custom Variable Value 09** instead.
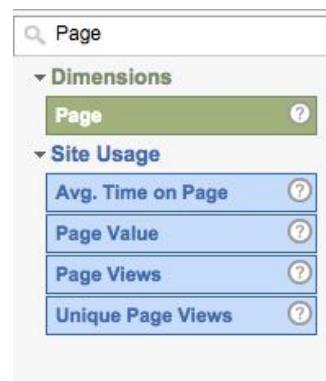
Click on **advanced** next to the filter box

Change the drop-down to Matching RegExp, type org ID e.g **<EA34>** into the text field and click apply.

You can edit the advanced filter, and add another dimension by selecting 'Add a dimension' e.g Page, and filter that to match, for example news, to get only your news pages
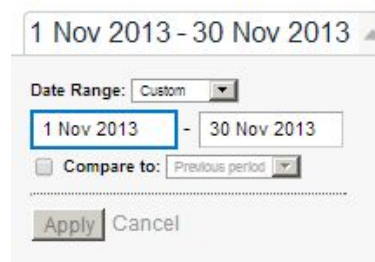

To only get pages which your organisation has published, type in **^<your org ID>** into the filter box.
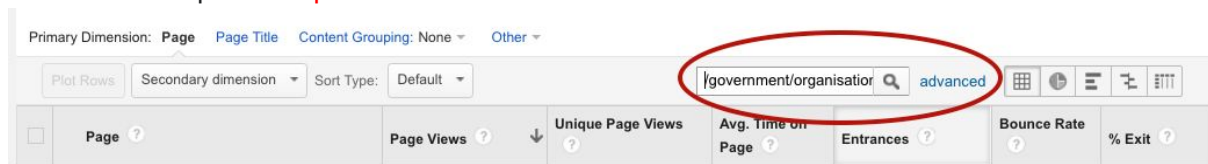
Look up analytics on a page (URL)

Navigate to **Behaviour > Site content > All pages**
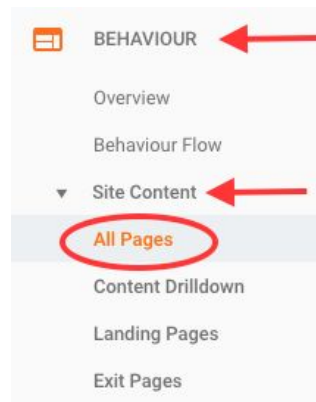
Don't forget to check that you're looking at the correct date range. You can also compare with a previous date range.

Then paste your URL path into the search box and press Enter to run the report. NB: do not include the url prefix http://www.

Advance

You can use Regular expressions (RegEx) to look-up multiple page[1]. If you have section of content that appears under the same URL path you can use a RegEx to get a report on all the pages.

Example:
www.gov.uk/government/statistics/water/page-1
www.gov.uk/government/statistics/water/page-2
www.gov.uk/government/statistics/water/page-3
www.gov.uk/government/statistics/water/page-4

You copy the duplicate URL into the advance box and then add the *RegEx* **.*** at the end
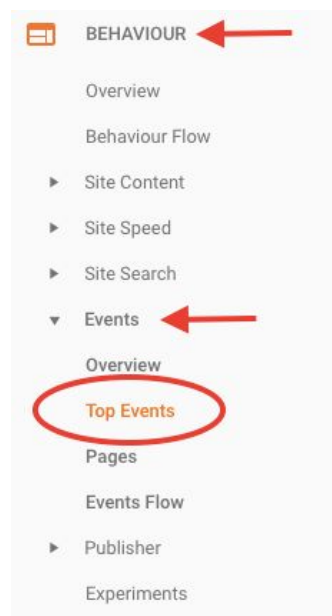
/government/statistics/water/.*

.* (dot asterisk) RegEx means it will grab anything after the URL (where it is placed)

---

[1] See Regular Expressions Glossary page 35

Tracking links and downloads

A quick way to look up **documen**t **download**, **external link** or **email link** data is by starting with the page the file(s) or link sits on
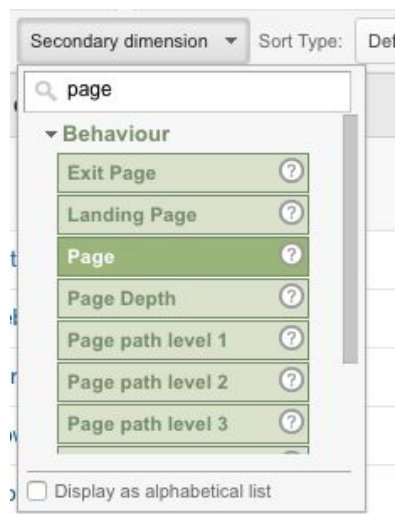
Go to **Behaviour > Events > Top Events**

Select the Event Category:

- **Download Link Clicked** for document download tracking

- **External Links Clicked** for external link tracking.

- **Mailto Link Clicked** for clicks on email links.
  (This is currently about the 15th most popular event category so doesn't show on the first page.)
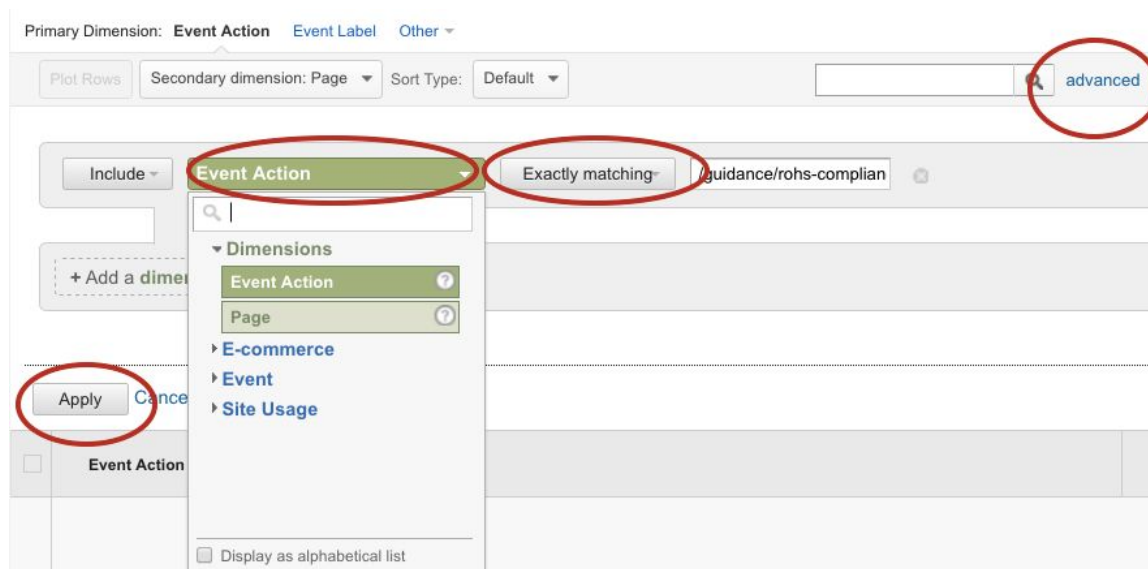
Then select **Secondary Dimension** menu and search and select **Page**

Once selected go the **advanced** link near the search field

From the drop down menu make sure **Page** and **Exactly matching** are selected in both drop-down menus and then paste the page URL into the field:

Click **Apply**. You'll then should see the download data for that page.

Remember to then select your date range for the data you want to see.

- **External link and Download tracking data is only available from 12 August 2015 onwards.**
- **Email link tracking data is only available from 22 February 2016 onwards**

What metrics to use?

Two metrics are available when looking at external link, download and email tracking. It's important to understand the difference. It's similar to pageviews vs unique pageviews.

Total events is a raw count of the number of times that event was triggered. If someone clicks a link 5 times in a session total events will register 5

Unique events will only count a single event.

Unique events is usually the best option but you need to think through what 'unique' means in context.

To learn more about tracking links and downloads using dashboard or custom reports see 'Advanced Reporting Techniques guide'*[2].

---

[2] Google Analytics Advanced Reporting Techniques
https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B3PA6H33k4UESmVrR0xCS2F1aHc

How to export or email reports

Export

You can export your data by selecting Export at the top of the report and selecting the format you want.

Analytics exports the report as it is currently displayed on your screen, so make sure that you've applied your desired date range, the number of line date and report settings.

Click **Export**, below the report title.
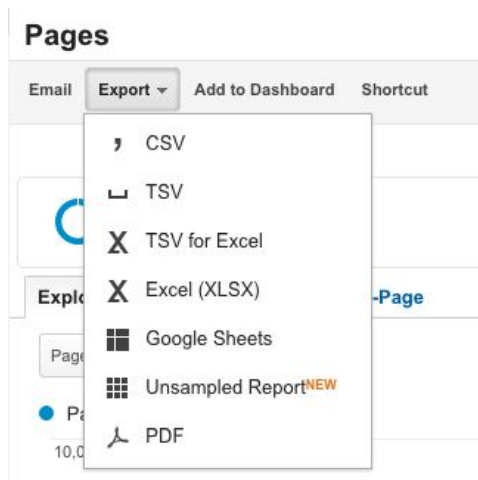
Select one of the export formats:

> **CSV**
> **TSV**
> **TSV for Excel**
> **Excel (XLSX)**
> **Google Sheets**
> **PDF**
> **Unsampled Reports** have to be requested via Zendesk.

Your file is generated automatically and available in the download directory on your computer.

Email a report

Open the report you'd like to email - (report as it is currently displayed on your screen)

Click **Email**, below the report title.

1. The email address you used as your login is listed in the *From* field.
2. In the *To* field, enter a comma-separated list of email addresses.
3. **Change the default subject**, and select the attachment format and frequency (Note: *Once* is a one-off report and is emailed straight away and the Time Zone is USA time).
4. If you selected a frequency other than *"Once"* in the previous step, click **ADVANCED OPTIONS** and select an *Active for* period. For example, if you selected "Daily" in the previous step, and an *Active for* period of "1 month", the email will be sent daily for a period of one month.
5. **You must enter text in the the text field** (body of your email).
6. Click **Send**.

To edit you schedule email go to ***Admin*** at the top and select ***Scheduled Emails***
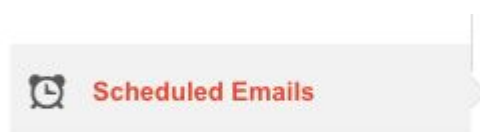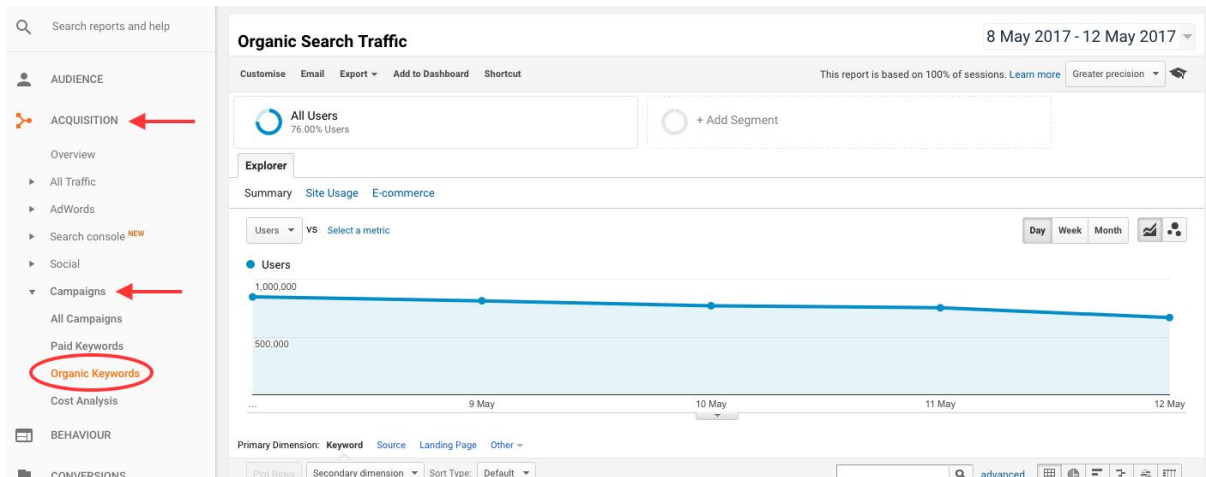
Click on the *subject link* to open the email interface to amend your email list, edit the subject/body text or change the frequency

Under **Actions** you can stop or extend your email schedule.
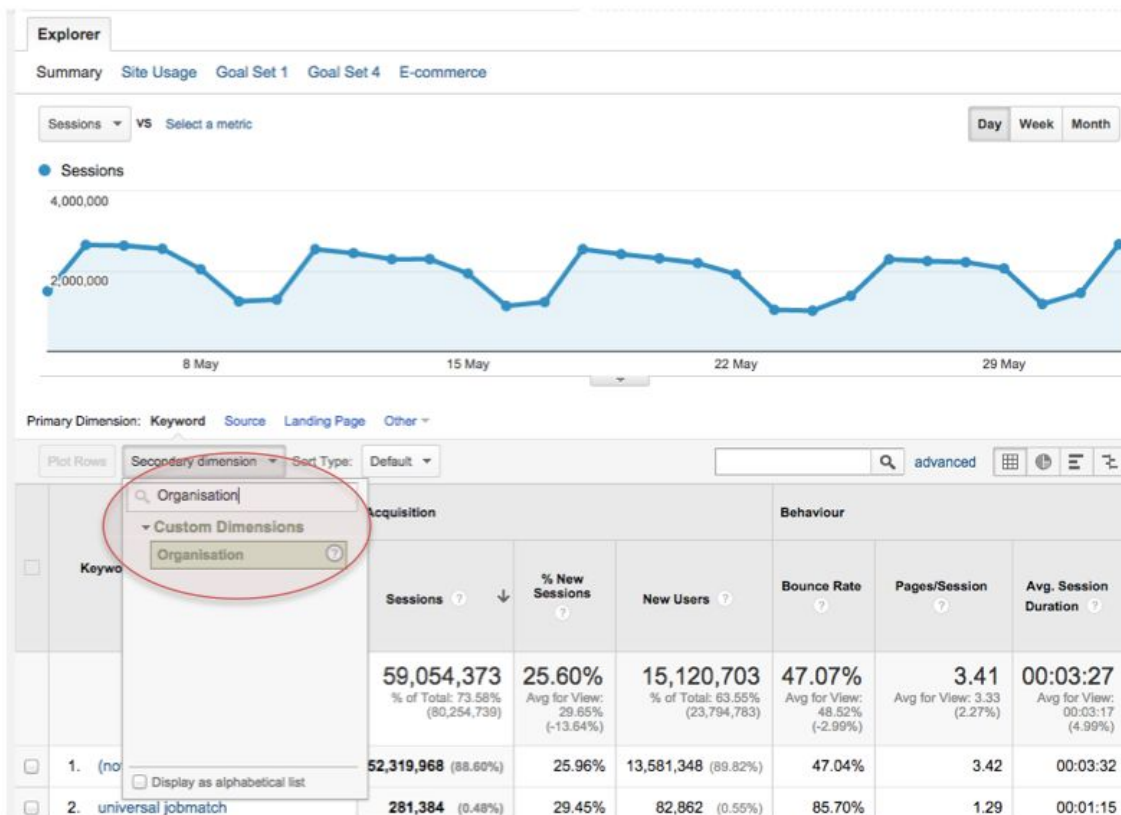
How to look-up Keywords

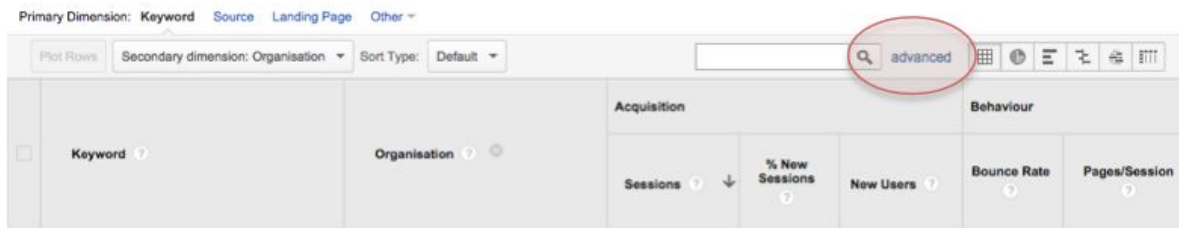Navigate to **Acquisition > Campaigns > Organic Keywords**

Look-up keywords by Organisation ID

Select Secondary dimension, then type *'Org'* in the search box and select the
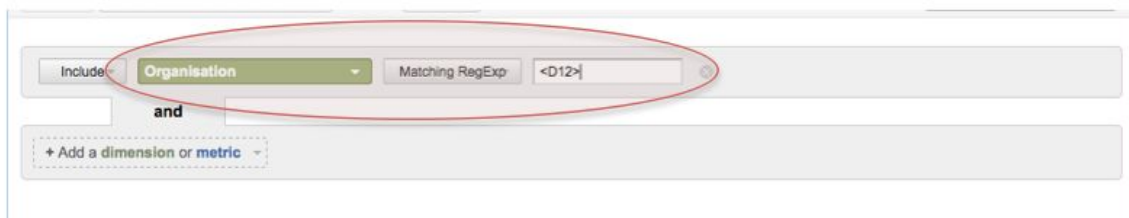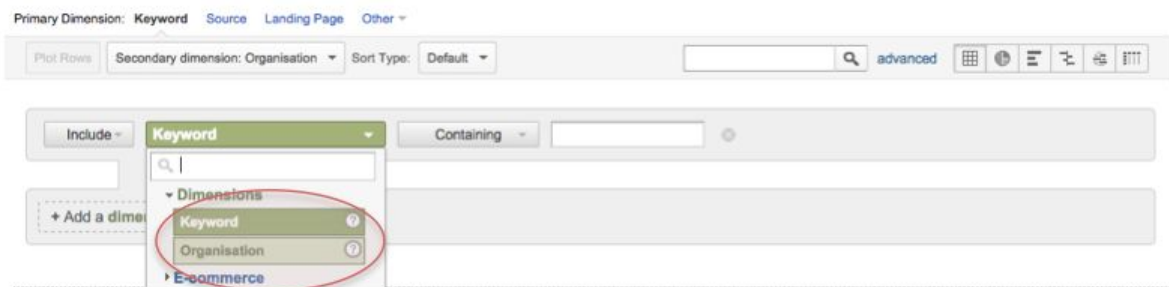**Organisation** dimension.

Click on the **advanced** near the search link

The advanced search will open, with *Keyword* already selected you will need to select **Organisation**

Change the drop-down to **Matching RegExp**, and type in your Organisation ID e.g <D25> in the box.

Then click + **Add a dimension or metric**, select *Exclude, Keyword* and then select *Matching RegExp* and type in **not set|not provided** (the | is on the keyboard above the \).

This gives you your top keywords for your all your pages.

Look-up keywords by page

To find out keywords used to find a specific page, same as above click from the Secondary dimension menu, select the **Search Destination Page** dimension.

Then click on **advanced** near the search link

The advanced search will open, you will then need to select **Search Destination Page and Matching RegExp** from the drop-down menus and then paste your Page URL into the box and then click **Apply.**

How to look-up Search Terms (on-site/GOV.UK search)

Navigate to Behaviour > Site Search > Search Terms
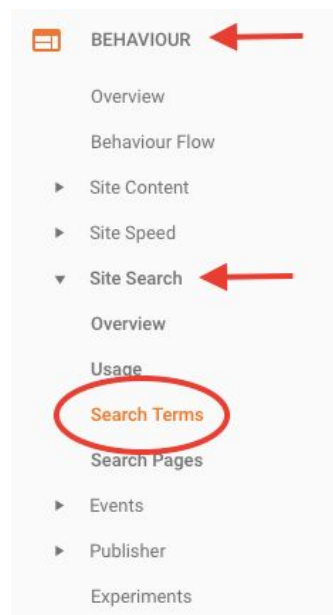
Look up Search Terms by Organisation ID

Select Secondary dimension, then type *'Org'* in the search box and select the **Organisation** dimension.
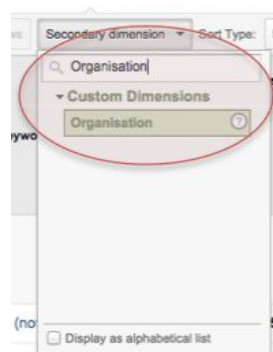
Click on the **advanced** search link

The advanced search will open, with ***Organisation*** already selected. Change the drop-down to **Matching RegExp**, and type in your Organisation ID e.g <D12> in the box and then click *Apply.*

Look up Search Terms for a page

Select Secondary dimension, then type
'Page' in the search box and select the
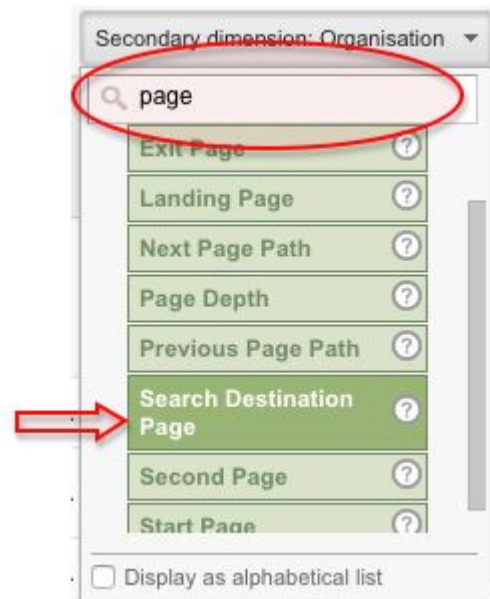**Search Destination Page** dimension.

Click on the **advanced** search link

The advanced search will open, with *Search Destination Page* already selected. Change
the drop-down to **Matching RegExp**, and type in the URL of the page you want to look up,
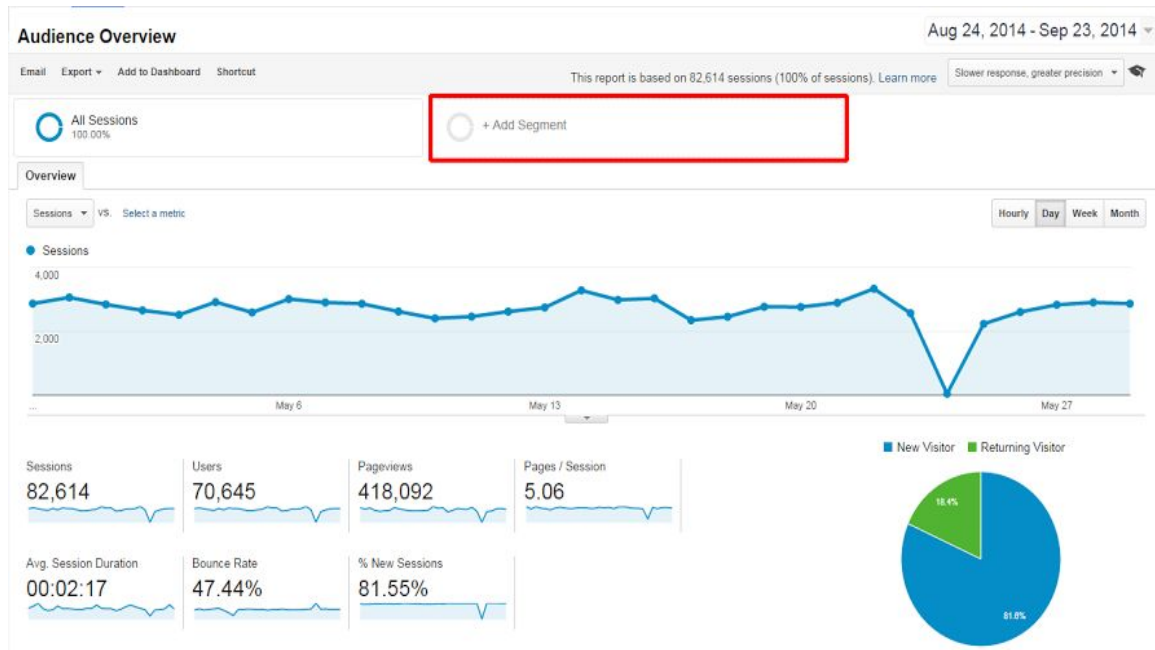then click *Apply.*
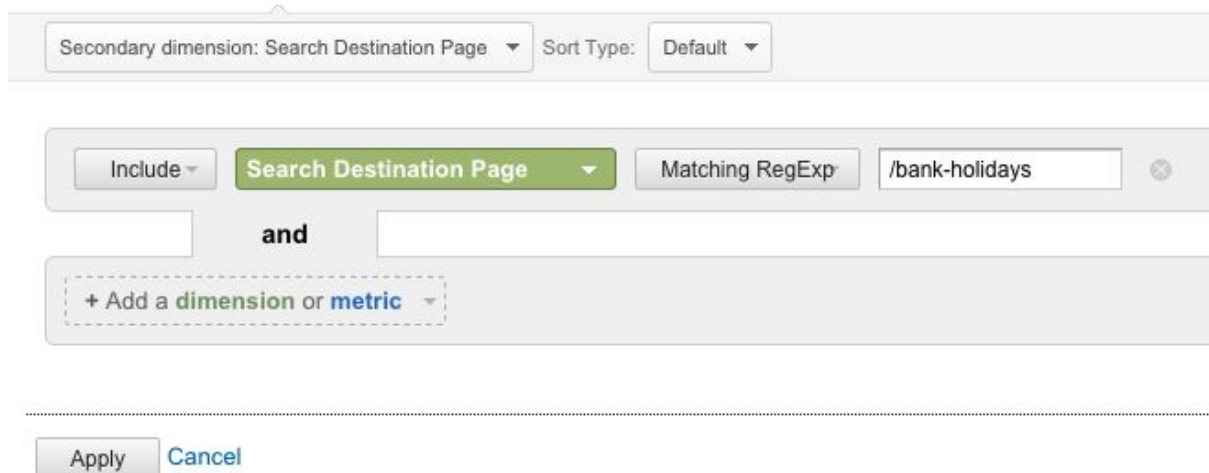
You will then get a list of search terms for the page.

How to create a Segment

To make a segment click **+ Add Segment.**

To open the Segment builder select **+ NEW SEGMENT**.

Under the **Conditions** screen, add the Custom Variable Value 09 and add your orgnisation ID.
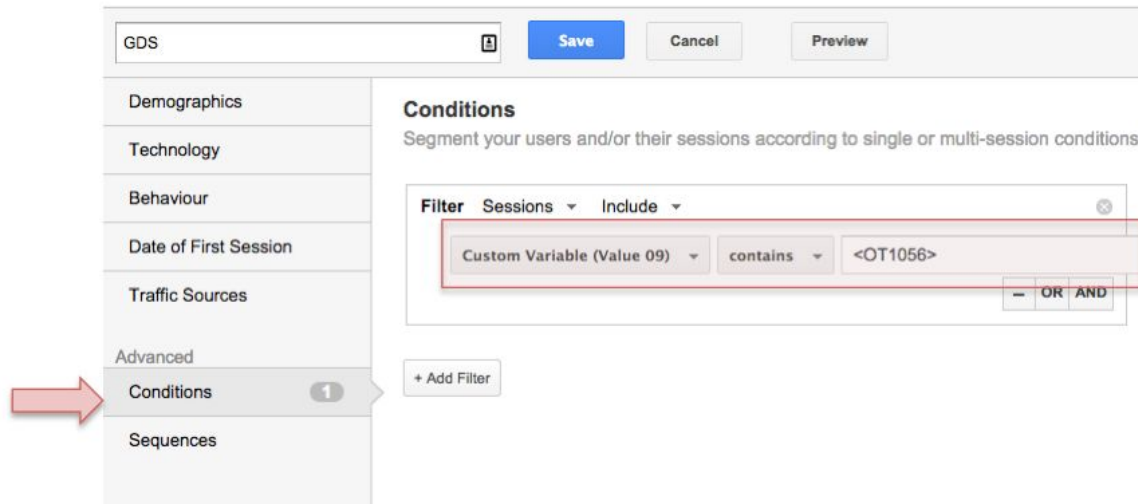
then click on the **'OR'** button to add a new filter condition.
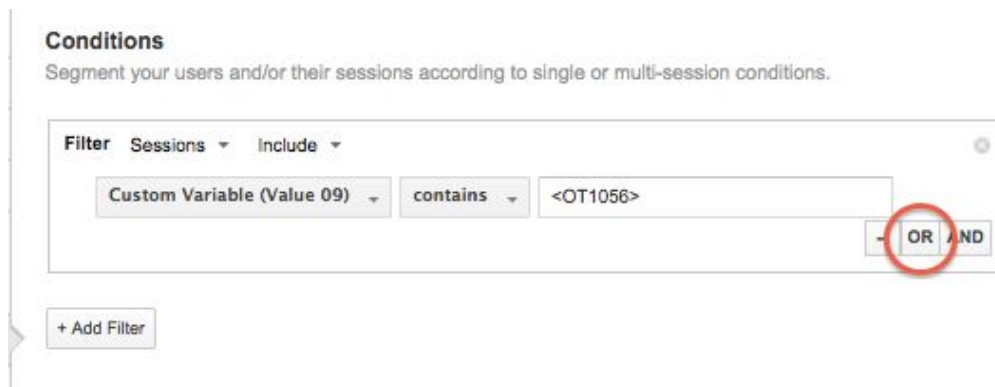
Under the **Dimensions** menu, type in *org* and then select the **Organisation dimension.**
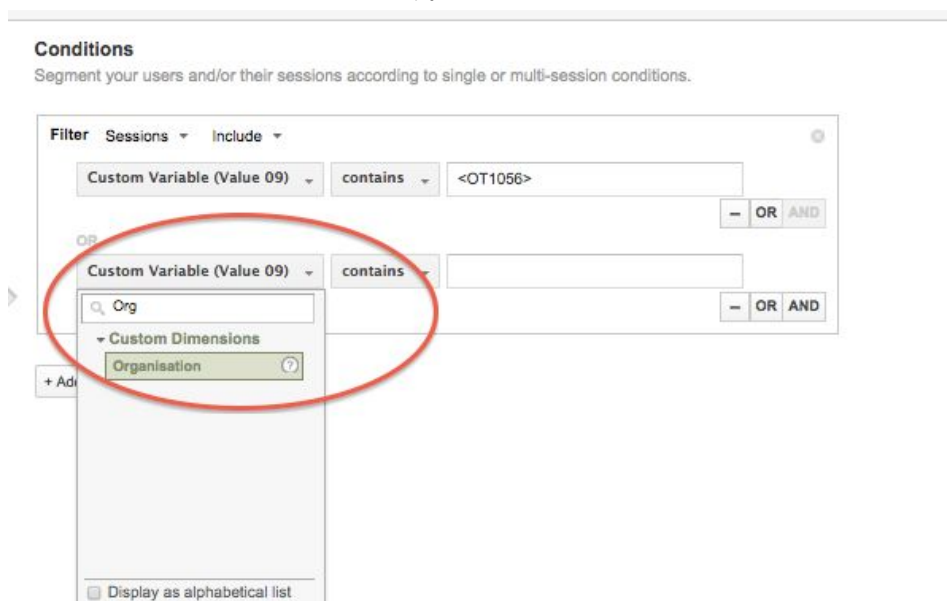
Type in your Department ID in the field and then **Save.**

Enter a name for the Segment and then **Save.**

How to create Report Shortcuts

Shortcuts are a good way to save reports which you have to look-up regularly. The reporting configuration is saved, and all you have to do is change the date range when viewing, if you change the configuration you just over save the shortcut.

You can save any report you make into a shortcut by scrolling to the top of the page (report), and clicking on **Save.**
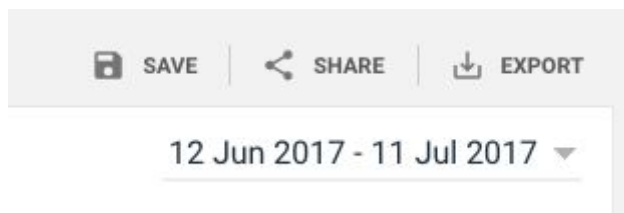
Choose a memorable name and then hit **OK**.
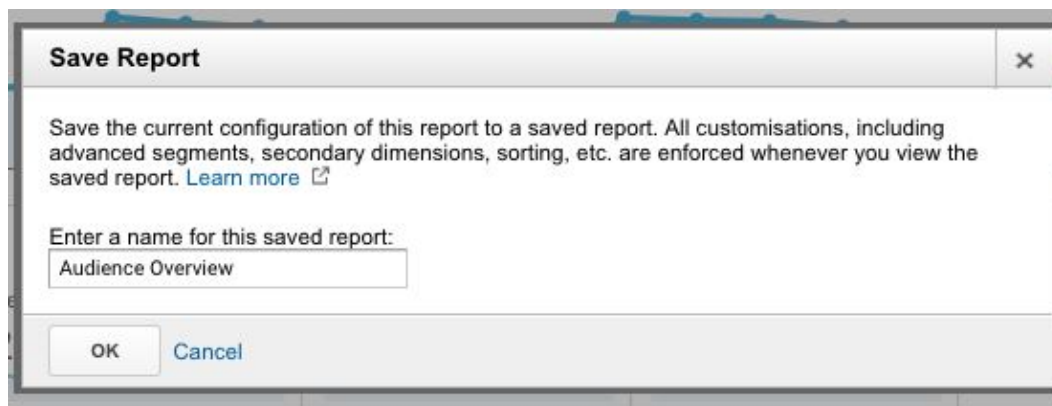
You can find saved reports shortcuts under the **Saved Reports** section in the left hand menu under the **Customisation menu**.
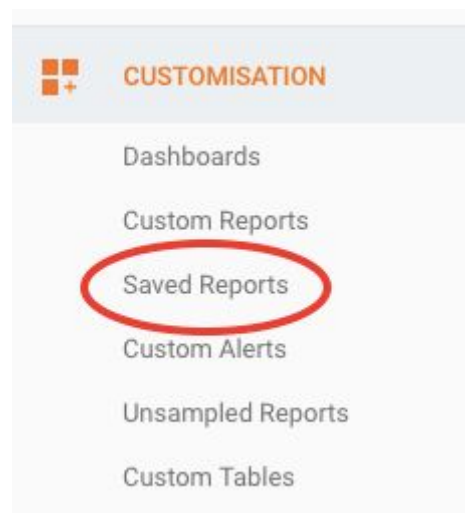
Generic dashboards you can import and customise

Generic dashboard:

Based on the performance platform

https://www.google.com/analytics/web/template?uid=bsUCnkMbQyisFuujtWYpBg

Content dashboard:

Useful for departments shows top 10 pages of News, Publications, Speeches etc.

https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/template?uid=nvLfLL9zTp6y6Vp0_m85NA

To import into your account, first log into Google Analytics and then click on the links above, then select the view **1a. GOV.UK - Main Profile**
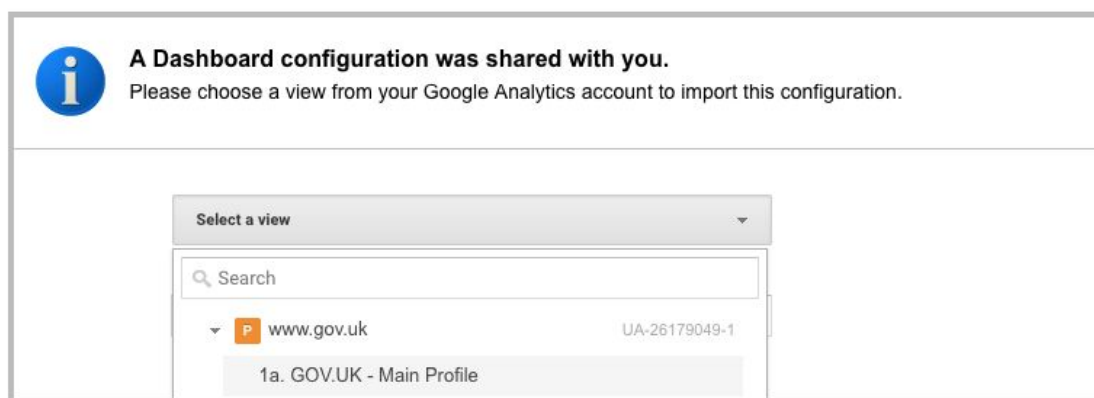
Your imported Dashboard can be found under the **Customisation** menu on left hand side
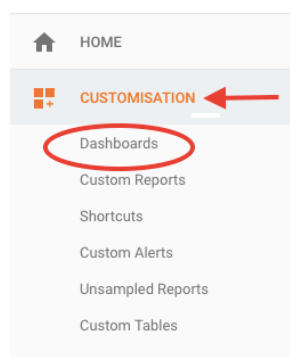
To add your Organisation ID hover over the top of an existing widget, until you see the pencil icon, next to the X.

Click on the pencil.

Unique visitors to org. content

0

% of Total: 0.00% (14,249,997)
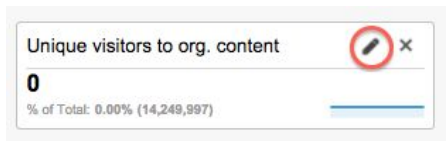
The widget settings will open in a new window

Type in your ID into the field and then save

| Only show | Page | Begins With | /government/news |
| Only show | Organisation | Begins With | <D12> |

Add a filter

NB: These Dashboards will only collect data from 2 June post switchover to Universal Analytics.

For pre switchover data you will need to change the Organisation Custom Dimension back to Custom Variable Value 09.

If you have the space, (you can create up to 20 dashboards), you can have one dashboard for pre June 2 and another for post June 2 by duplicating the dashboard and changing the **Organisation** Custom Dimension to **Custom Variable Value 09** under each widget.

To copy a dashboard click on **Share** and select **Share template link**

Share ▾   Email   Export ▾

⊖ Share template link

▲+ Share in Solutions Gallery

Make sure the **Share template link** is selected and then click the **Share** button

Select a method for sharing GDS, OTC   ×

⊖ ● **Share template link**
      Generate a URL for the object template. Share the URL so that other users can implement the same object configuration. _Learn more_

▲+ ○ **Share in Solutions Gallery**
      Share this template with the public in Solutions Gallery. Once it's shared, other users can find the template in Solutions Gallery and implement the same configuration. _Learn more_

Share   Cancel
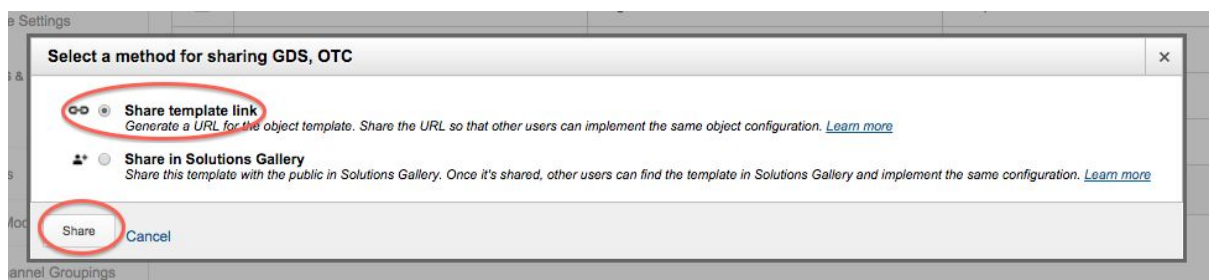
You will then be presented with a **link** to copy into a new browser window and import into your account.

Under **Dimensions** menu, type in *09* and then select the **Custom Variable Value 09** and then **Save.**
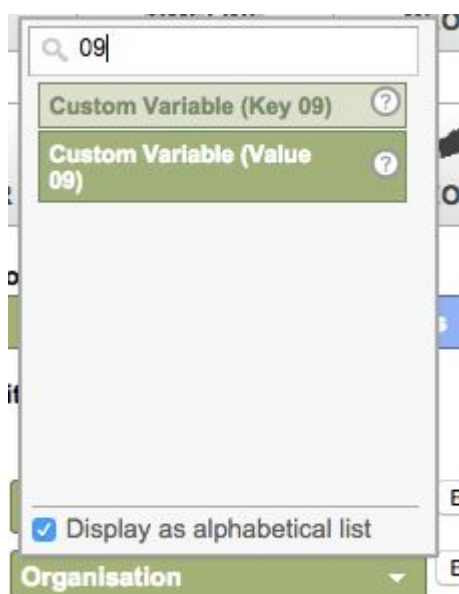
Basic GOV.UK Data Studio Dashboard

The following dashboard can be used for users with no Google Analytics access. A Google account is required to view and use:

https://datastudio.google.com/open/0B6_eMePoDl_KUDZqNnBWazY1UVU

Sharing Dashboards (and other assets)

There is a Share button at the top of each of your dashboards, but you can share all of your dashboards, custom segments and custom reports in just one link.

Click on the **Admin** link on the left hand side of analytics user interface, then scroll down to the last item on the right hand side of the page.

Under the View menu, scroll to the bottom and select **Share Assets.**
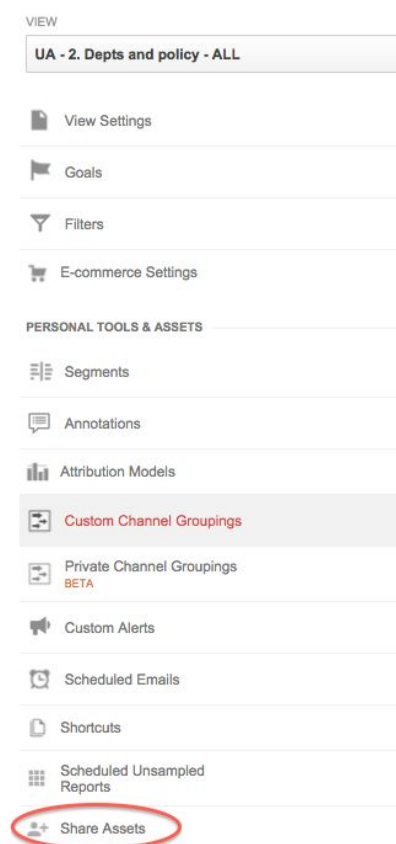
You can then select the Assets (dashboards, segments and custom reports) you want to share, by checking the box next to the asset name.

You can share more than one asset at a time.

Once checked click the **Share** button.

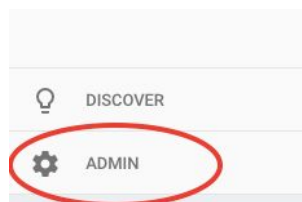

Make sure the **Share template link** is selected and then click the **Share** button

You will then be presented with a **link** to copy into an email to share.

Recipients of the link will need to click on it or copy and paste the link into a browser window and then follow the on screen instructions (Tip: The recipient should log into Google Analytics before clicking on the link)

All they need to do is select the view (profile) for the dashboard to be imported example **1a. GOV.UK - Main Profile**

Custom Reports

1. Building Custom Reports

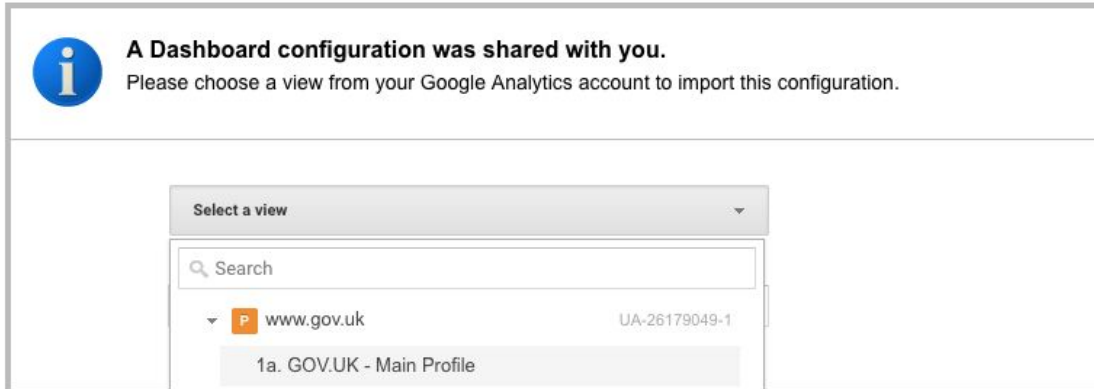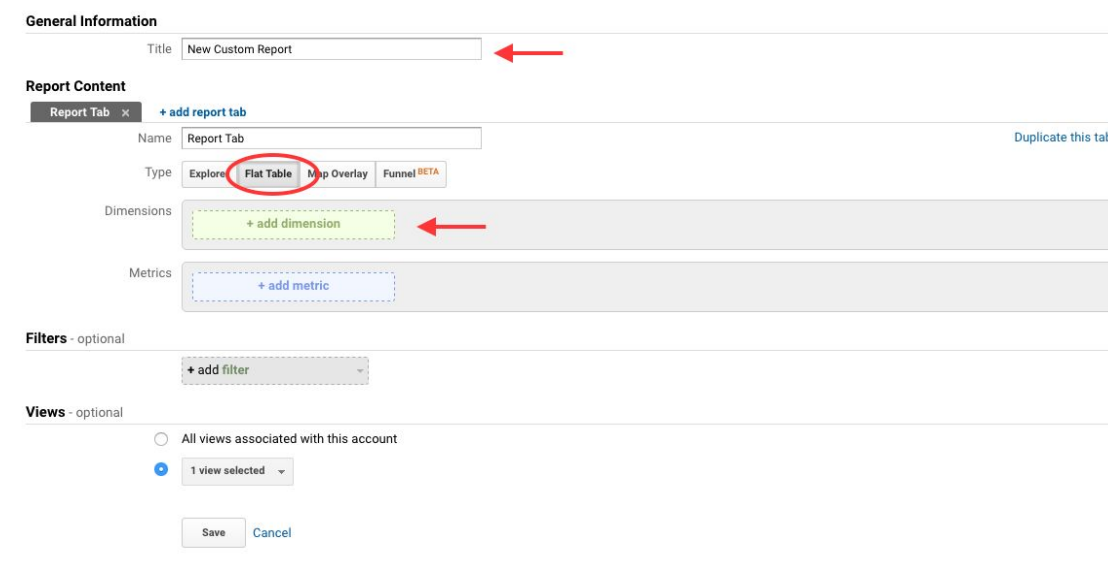Building your own custom reports is a good way to learn how dimensions and metrics work together and can give you a different overview.
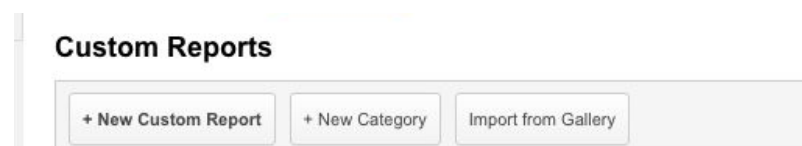
Build a basic report

1. Select the **Customisation** menu and then **Custom Reports**.
2. Click **+New Custom Report** from the top of the table.
3. *If you don't see this option, select **Custom Reports > Overview** in the left navigation.*
4. Enter a **Title**.

Select a report type **Flat Table**

1. Select **Dimension** you want to look up e.g **Page** by clicking **Add Dimension**
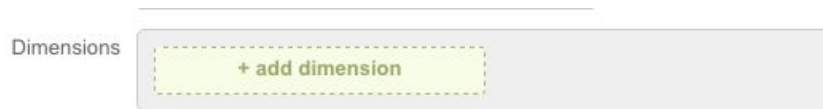
If you are unsure what the a dimension or metric is you can click on the ? mark to find out. The Google Dimensions & Metrics Explorer is also a good tool to use to match dimensions to the right metrics:

https://developers.google.com/analytics/devguides/reporting/core/dimsmets
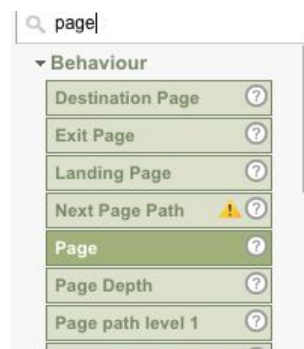
2. Select the **Metrics** you want to see for the pages, by clicking **Add Metrics -** see the image below to for basic metric examples

Filter the dimension you want to see

1. **+add filter** to limit the report to specific dimensions.

To look up all your department page:

Select the **Custom Dimension** and select **Organisation** and then add your Org ID in the field

OR
To look up a specific page:

Select **Page** and then add the page path in the field.

2. Then select **Save**

2. How to export Custom Reports

You can export a report into range of formats. Click on the export button at the top and select the format you want.
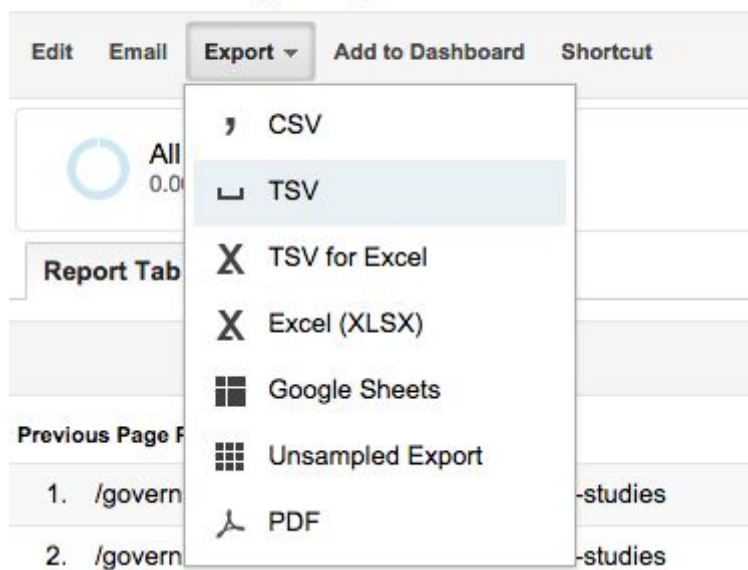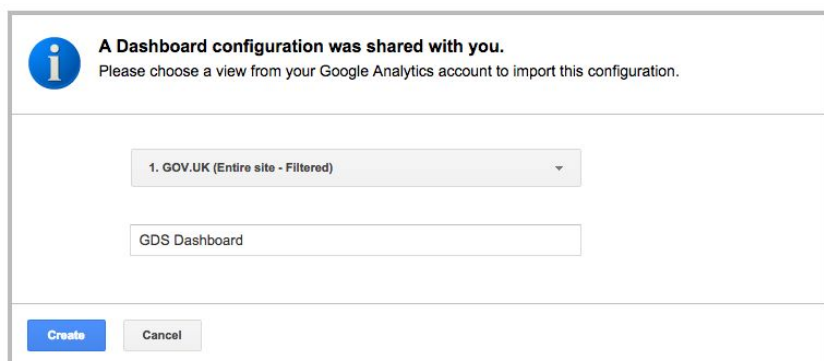
3. Import basic Custom Reports

Here are some generic reports that can be created within Google Analytics (GA). Make sure you are logged into Google Analytics before clicking on the links.

How to import

Select the view (profile) for it to be imported into e.g **1a. GOV.UK - Main Profile**

The custom report will be imported under **Customisation** left hand menu under the **Customisation menu**.
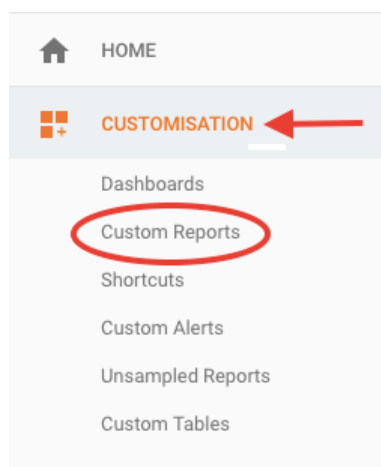
Click 'Edit' to change/add the URL path to the page you want to look up.
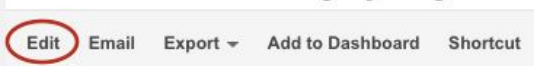
4. Custom Report templates

Name of Report	Link to report	Notes
On-page search terms for a page	https://www.google.com/analytics/web/template?uid=8eyhvb1pSCGdicPTGx8_rA	Find data on specific search terms for a page 1. Click on 'Edit' (top left corner) 2. Enter your URL slug before the ^ in the Landing page field 3. Click Save
Traffic sources by Page (which channel users arrive from)	https://www.google.com/analytics/web/template?uid=ikA62VYES-WUPo6lGLxJKg	Data on the traffic sources on a specific page 1. Click on 'Edit' (top left corner) 2. Enter your page slug in the Page filter 3. Click Save
Traffic from social media channels by Org ID	https://www.google.com/analytics/web/template?uid=xHkcbyuRQI6DpnP5m-uewA	Data on a specific to Org 1.Click on 'Edit'(top left corner) 2. Enter your Org ID in the Organisation filter 3. Click Save
Search Engine Keywords	https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/template?uid=bftVIjNBQ_S_PAGpMJ474A	1.Click on 'Edit' (top left corner)

		2. Enter your page slug in the Landing Page filter 3. Click Save
Previous Page	https://www.google.com/analytics/web/template?uid=ib2L6Y_aTcmHaiBJoBmkMQ	1. Click on 'Edit' (top left corner) 2. Enter your page slug in the Previous Page filter 3. Click Save
Next Page	https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/template?uid=0lWcgg-HSSa8NPP9tNlvEA	1.Click on 'Edit' (top left corner) 2. Enter your page slug in the Page filter 3. Click Save
External Link Tracking by Page*	https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/template?uid=Z-Hny2JNQOuGBkJc2rXTXA	Data on the external links on a specific page 1. Click on 'Edit' (top left corner) 2. Enter your page slug in the Page filter 3. Click Save
External Link Tracking by Link*	https://www.google.com/analytics/web/template?uid=q9TTzHipSYqrUMdvOIHfUA	Data on a specific external link 1. Click on 'Edit'(top left corner) 2. Enter your FULL external link in the Event Action filter

		3. Click Save
Document downloads by page*	https://www.google.com/analytics/web/template?uid=De5wfgP0RxSSnWUmMJ2bgA	1. Click on 'Edit' (top left corner) 2. Enter your page slug in the Page filter 3. Click Save Recommend exporting results to view
Document tracking by Org ID*	https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/template?uid=X8nuDAZSTS6RFvADmGpQ_Q	1.Click on 'Edit'(top left corner) 2. Enter your Org ID in the Organisation filter 3. Click Save Recommend exporting results to view

Data is only available from 12 August 2015 onwards.

Regular expression glossary

Useful website:
www.ohow.co/regular-expressions-regex-google-analytics

\ Backslash	*Turns special RegEx characters into everyday, plain characters.* *Example:* */folder?pid=123* *RegEx:* */folder\?pid=123*
| Pipe	Means OR Example: *Car|Vehicle*
? Question Mark	A question mark means, *"The last item (which, for now, we'll assume is the last character) is optional."* Use to capture different spellings of words example: Robbin and Robin RegEx: Robb?in
( ) Parentheses	Use for grouping
[ ] Square brackets	Use to make lists Example: So **p[aiu]n** will match **pan, pin and pun**. **But it will not match pain**, because that would require us to use two items from the [aiu] list, and that is not allowed in this simple example.
$ Dollar sign	Must end (URL must end with) Example: /government/statistics/water$
^ Caret	Must begin (URL must start with) Example: ^/government/publications
. Dot	The dot matches any character (letter, number or symbol)
.* Dot Asterisk (star)	Matches anything Example: /government/statistics/water.*

Useful links and resources

Key learning resources

Google Analytics online help guide and support:

- https://support.google.com/analytics

Beginners Level
Google Analytics online tutorial, you will learn the basics of Google Analytics which you can use in conjunction with this starter guide.

You should only do Units 2 and 3

- https://analytics.google.com/analytics/academy/course/6

Intermediate Level
Useful links when deciding on building campaigns

- URL Builder:
  https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1033867?hl=en

- Related blog post:
  https://gdsdata.blog.gov.uk/2015/03/25/evaluating-an-e-bulletin-with-google-analytics/

Explore Google trending search topics with Google Trends:

- https://www.google.co.uk/trends/

Advance Level
Good guides on understanding Regular Expressions for Google Analytics:

- http://www.lunametrics.com/regex-book/Regular-Expressions-Google-Analytics.pdf

- https://www.ohow.co/regular-expressions-regex-google-analytics/

Dimensions & Metrics Reference guide to use with Google sheets and the Google Analytics add-on:

- https://developers.google.com/analytics/devguides/reporting/core/dimsmets

Webmaster tools
- https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/home?hl=en