

Getting Started with Phoebe



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About Phoebe

Many teachers have found that introducing technology into their courses prompts them to think about the teaching and learning process in new ways. For example, new tools can open up exciting possibilities for active involvement on the part of students, they help to make “anywhere, anytime” learning a reality, they can supplement face-to-face interactions between teacher and students with extended online discussions, and they are making learning easier for students with disabilities. All this requires careful planning and the consideration of a number of interrelated factors.

Phoebe is a Web-based *pedagogy planning tool*: that is, a purpose-built application that guides teachers through the construction of plans for a whole course (module) and/or an individual learning session (i.e. a stretch of learning broadly equivalent to a lesson, lecture, seminar, tutorial, or practical class). It brings together the key components of a learning design (or lesson plan), prompts your thinking, allows you to record ideas and requirements, and makes it easy to cross-reference components as you design the activities that make up a learning experience. It offers both flexible and guided paths through the planning process, and provides access to a wide range of models, case studies and examples of innovative learning designs.

Phoebe has been developed by a team from the Technology-Assisted Lifelong Learning unit at Oxford University and Oxford University Computing Services with funding from the JISC Design for Learning programme. Development information can be found at <http://phoebe-project.conted.ox.ac.uk>.

Before You Start: Technical Information

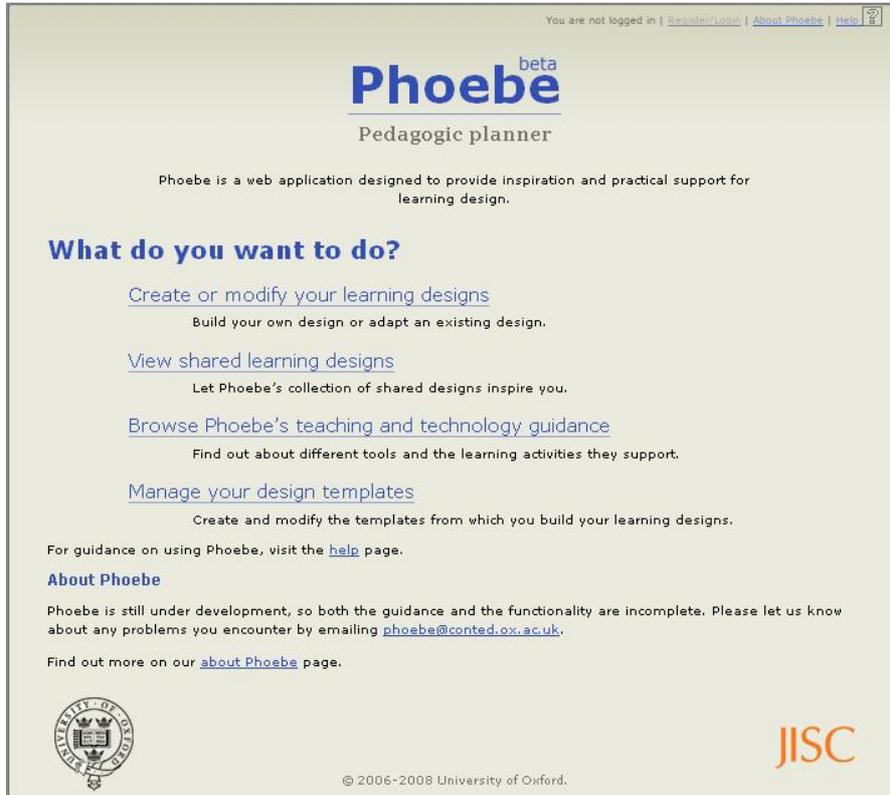
1. We recommend that you use one of the following Web browsers:
 - ❖ Firefox (Phoebe has been developed primarily using this browser, and it’s easy to download from <http://www.firefox.com/>.)
 - ❖ Internet Explorer 7
 - ❖ Safari
 - ❖ Opera

We have had to do some additional development to ensure that Phoebe runs on Internet Explorer 6. If you use this version, Phoebe may have reduced functionality and polish in some areas, particularly in the template editing window.

2. JavaScript must be enabled in your browser for Phoebe to work. However, in most browsers it’s usually enabled by default so you shouldn’t need to do anything. Phoebe will inform you if there is a problem in this respect.
3. The minimum recommended screen resolution for using Phoebe is 800x600.

Launching Phoebe

To launch Phoebe, type <http://phoebe-app.conted.ox.ac.uk/> in your browser. The Home page appears:



The screenshot shows the home page of the Phoebe beta Pedagogic planner. At the top right, it says "You are not logged in | [Register/Login](#) | [About Phoebe](#) | [Help](#)". The main heading is "Phoebe beta Pedagogic planner". Below this, a description states: "Phoebe is a web application designed to provide inspiration and practical support for learning design." The page is organized into sections under the heading "What do you want to do?". The first section is "Create or modify your learning designs" with the subtext "Build your own design or adapt an existing design." The second is "View shared learning designs" with "Let Phoebe's collection of shared designs inspire you." The third is "Browse Phoebe's teaching and technology guidance" with "Find out about different tools and the learning activities they support." The fourth is "Manage your design templates" with "Create and modify the templates from which you build your learning designs." Below these sections, there is a "For guidance on using Phoebe, visit the [help](#) page." and an "About Phoebe" section stating: "Phoebe is still under development, so both the guidance and the functionality are incomplete. Please let us know about any problems you encounter by emailing phoebe@conted.ox.ac.uk. Find out more on our [about Phoebe](#) page." At the bottom left is the University of Oxford logo, and at the bottom right is the JISC logo. The footer text reads "© 2006-2008 University of Oxford."

You can browse Phoebe's teaching and technology guidance without registering for an account. However, in order to create a design, you must register as a user.

Registering an Account in Phoebe

If you already have an OpenID account, then you can use it to log into Phoebe. Otherwise, it's quicker and easier to set up an account within Phoebe itself.

To set up a new account:

1. In the top right corner of the Home page, click [Register/Login](#).
2. On the Register/Login page, click [Register New Account](#) (below the log-in details).
3. Type a user name for logging into Phoebe, a password (twice) and your email address (twice). You can ignore the other two boxes.
4. Click [Register](#) to go back to the Home page and start working in Phoebe.

Browsing Phoebe's Collection of Shared Designs

A key feature of Phoebe is the ability to share your designs with other users and, conversely, to see theirs.

To browse the designs that have been made public in Phoebe (both yours and other people's):

- ❖ Click [View shared learning designs](#) on the Home page. Alternatively, if you are on the "Your designs" or "Design templates" pages, click [Shared designs](#).

To see a design in detail, either click its title or click the  icon to its right. See "Viewing Designs" on page 7.

If you have logged in, you can also "clone" any design and use it as the basis of a new design of your own. See "Cloning designs" on page 7.

Creating a New Design

You can create a new design in 4 ways:

- ❖ From Phoebe's default template.
- ❖ From any template in the collection of templates available to you.
- ❖ By "cloning" an existing design. See "Cloning designs" on page 7.
- ❖ By importing a design from XML. (Note: this option is not covered in this guide.)

Creating a new design from the default template

1. If you are currently on the Home page, click [Create or modify your learning designs](#). If you are on any other page, click [Your designs](#).
2. Click [Create a new design !\[\]\(f6ec0429e2f15dbd4a39b612501b6fa4_img.jpg\) from the default template](#).
3. Fill in the title and a brief description of the design. The title is how your design will be identified in Phoebe. If needed, you can edit the title and description later on the Editing page.
4. Specify whether or not you also want to copy any information that may have already been entered in the existing template. Note: Phoebe's three built-in templates are always empty.
5. Click the **Create design** button to go to the Editing page and fill in the details of your design.

Creating a new design from any other template

To create a design from a template other than the default one:

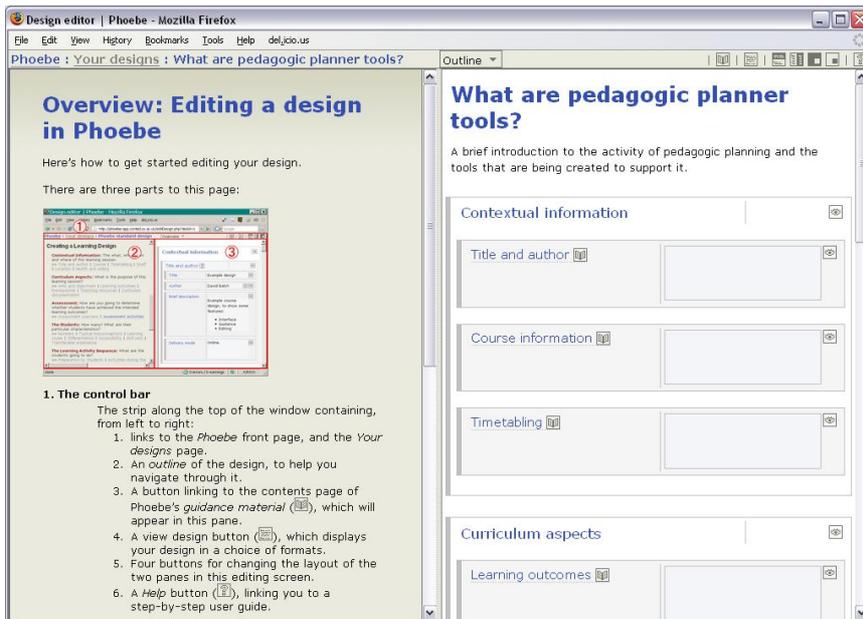
1. If you are currently on the Home page, click [Create or modify your learning designs](#). If you are on any other page, click [Your designs](#).
2. Click [Choose a different template for your new design](#).
3. On the Templates page, click the  icon to the right of the template from which you want to create the design.
4. Follow steps 3-5 above.

Editing a Design

Note: You can only edit designs that you have created or cloned yourself.

To display the Editing page, either:

1. Go through the initial steps in creating a design (see previous section), *or*
2. If you are modifying an existing design, go to your own page of designs and click either the title of the design you wish to modify, or the  icon beside it.



Configuring your view of the workspace and navigating around it

The Editing page is split into two areas. When you first see the page, the right-hand area is where you enter and edit the details of your design. The left-hand area displays advice and guidance as you ask for it.

Configuring the workspace

To adjust the relative sizes of the Design and Guidance areas, you can:

- ❖ Click and drag the dividing line between them, *or*

- ❖ Change the relative positions of the two areas using the four icons on the far right of the bar at the top of the Editing page.

Navigating in the workspace

- ❖ To go directly to a specific part of your design, use the **Outline** drop-down in the bar at the top of the Editing page. This short-cut is particularly useful if your design is long and complex. To close the drop-down list, simply move the mouse pointer to another part of the screen.
- ❖ Use the "breadcrumb trail" to go back to the Home page or the Your Designs page.

Working in the Design area

Filling in the boxes

You enter the details of your design into a set of boxes, which are grouped so that related information can be easily identified. To type information into a box, click it and start typing.

You can also edit the main title description of your design: simply click anywhere in the original text, make your changes and click away from the text (i.e. click any other part of the Design area).

Hiding boxes that you temporarily don't need

A Phoebe design can contain a great many boxes. To aid readability and navigation, you can temporarily hide an individual box, or group of related boxes that if you don't need them for the time being.

To hide a box (or group) temporarily, click the  icon beside the one you want to hide.

To redisplay hidden items, scroll to the bottom of the screen where you will see a list of the currently hidden fields (i.e. boxes). Then click the names of the box, or group, which you want to restore.

Duplicating (cloning) boxes

You will often want more than one box (or group) of the same type. For example, a design will almost certainly have more than one learning outcome and/or learning activity. Where a box (or group) can be duplicated in this way, you will see two additional icons:

-  Duplicate this box, or group of boxes. Note that any information already in the box(es) will be copied automatically.
-  Delete a box, or group of boxes which you have duplicated in this way.

Note: At present, each new box (or group) is inserted immediately after the first one. We therefore suggest that you start by duplicating all the boxes (groups) that you think you will need before you start filling any of them in.

Getting help while you are working

While you are working on your design, you can obtain advice and guidance in the Guidance area as follows:

- ❖ Context-sensitive guidance:

Click  beside the box (or group of boxes) for which you want guidance. Advice on what sort of information to enter in this box, or group of boxes will appear in the Guidance area on the left-hand side of the page. The advice may include links to external Websites that go into further about a topic.

Note: If you then navigate to a different box and start editing it, the guidance does not change automatically.

- ❖ Reference material on teaching approaches, learning activities and technologies:

Click  in the control bar at the top of the page to display the Contents page. Alternatively, if you are currently reading context-sensitive guidance, you can get to the reference material by clicking the [Contents page](#) link in the Guidance area.

- ❖ Step-by-step help to using Phoebe:

Click  in the control bar at the top of the page. This opens another window in your browser and displays the online user guide.

Saving and viewing your design

Generally, your design and the information you enter are automatically saved as you go along. However, in the larger boxes you must click the **Save** button to store the content.

At any time when you are working on your design, you can view it in a choice of formats. To do so, click  in the bar at the top of the Editing page. (See “Viewing Designs” on page 7.)

Sharing your design with other people

By default, your design is private to you. When you are ready for others to see it too:

1. Go to the Your Designs page.
2. Click the **Access** drop-down to the right of your design and select **Public**.

Note: The current access rights are provisional only. We intend to implement the Creative Commons licensing scheme (<http://creativecommons.org/>), so that you can specify more precisely what other users can do with your design.

Viewing Designs

You can view your own designs, and other people’s designs, in a choice of formats wherever you see the View icon: .

By default, the design appears in a tabular format (“HTML tables”). However, you can also use the drop-down menu to select a hierarchical view (“HTML hierarchy”) or the XML code underlying the design.

You can also choose whether or not to hide empty fields: i.e. boxes in which you haven’t typed anything.

If you wish to change your view of the design, click **Change format** when you have made your selection.

Printing your design

Click [Print design](#) either just above the large blue title of your learning design or at the foot of the design.

Exporting your design

You can copy or paste the view of your design into a word-processing document or spreadsheet. To do so:

1. Drag your mouse across the entire design (from the large blue title downwards).
2. Choose Edit→Copy from the browser’s menu.
3. Switch to the application (e.g. Word, Excel) into which you will paste the design.

4. Choose Edit→Paste from menu of that application.
5. Format the layout as needed.

Cloning designs

Cloning provides you with a shortcut when creating a new design which will be similar to one that already exists. It allows you to copy (clone) a design and then adapt it to your needs. The existing (cloned) design can be one of your own designs, or it can be someone else's design that has been made publicly available.

To clone a design:

1. If you are cloning a design of your own, go to the "Your designs" page.
2. If you are cloning someone else's design: go to the "Shared designs" page.
3. Click the  icon beside the design that you want to clone.
4. Give the new design a title, amend the description and specify whether or not you also want to copy the information from the existing design to the new one.
5. Click **Create design** to go to the Editing page and edit the design as normal.

Working with Design Templates

About templates

Templates for Phoebe designs allow you to control the structure of your designs. A template is simply a skeleton design which contains just a set of labelled boxes for you to fill in. It's analogous to a blank form, similar to the sort that many teachers currently fill in when creating a lesson plan using Word.

Phoebe is supplied with three templates – Basic, Mid and Full – but users can also create their own by adapting a built-in one. We recommend starting with either Basic or Mid. The Full template has a very large number of boxes and is best only used for creating your own templates.

You can also specify a "default template": i.e. the one which you are likely to use most often.

Creating a new design template

You can only create a new template by cloning and adapting an existing template. To clone a template:

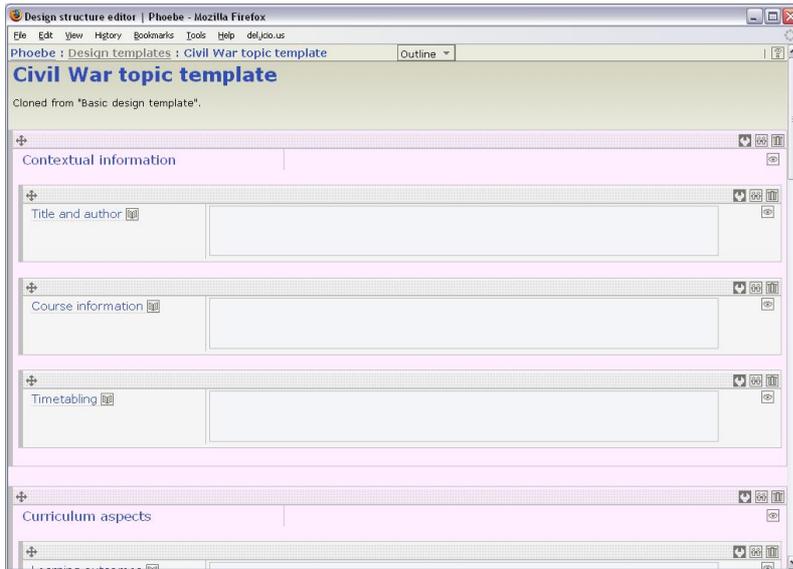
1. If you are currently on the Home page, click [Manage your design templates](#).
If you are on any other page, click [Design templates](#).
2. Click the  icon beside the template that you want to clone: i.e. use as the basis for your new template.
3. Give the new template a title, amend the description and specify whether or not you also want to copy any information that may have already been entered in the existing template.
4. Click the **Create template** button to go to the Template Editing page and set up your new template.

Editing a design template

Note: You can only edit templates that you have created yourself.

To display the Template Editing page, either:

- ❖ Go through the initial steps in creating a template (see previous section), or
- ❖ If you are modifying an existing template, go to the "Design templates" page and either click the title of the template you wish to modify, or click the  icon beside it.



To edit a design template, use the following icons:

-  Move a component of the design (i.e. an individual box or group of related boxes) to a different part of the design by clicking and dragging this icon to the required position.
-  Edit the properties of a component.
This will let you change the name of an element and specify or change the guidance that will appear when users click the  icon beside the component in the Design area of the Editing page.
-  Delete a component.
-  Clone (duplicate) a component if you want multiple components with the same characteristics.
-  Temporarily hide a component while you are working on the template.

Choosing a default template

When you first start using Phoebe, the default design template is the inbuilt "Basic design template." However, you can change this to any other template available to you on the "Design templates" page. To choose a different default template:

- ❖ Click the "Default template" radio button beside the template which you wish to make the default one.

The change affects your account only: i.e. each user can choose their own default template.

Browsing Phoebe's Reference Materials

Phoebe includes a set of resources to help you plan your learning sessions. You can access these resources in two ways:

- ❖ While editing a design. See "Obtaining guidance" above.
- ❖ As a stand-alone reference system. To access Phoebe in this way, either go to the Home page and click [Browse Phoebe's teaching and technology guidance](#), or click [Browse guidance](#) on the "Shared designs," "Your designs" or "Design templates" page. The Contents page for Phoebe's guidance appears on a full-width page. Use the links on each page and your browser buttons to navigate through the guidance.

The Contents page is divided into two sections. The top part is general guidance, while the bottom part gives you direct access to the "context-sensitive" help that you can display on the Editing page. It allows you to get help from Phoebe without necessarily using the planning tool.