

EXPLORING PHOEBE: A GUIDE FOR DELEGATES AT THE JISC ONLINE CONFERENCE 2009



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About this Guide

This "Getting Started" guide contains notes and suggestions intended to help you familiarise yourself with Phoebe, and to give an initial structure to your exploration. The notes and suggestions are enclosed in coloured boxes like this one. However, please feel free to disregard them and explore Phoebe at your will.

A suggested order of activities is:

1. Register your account (page 4).
2. Take a look at some of the shared designs to get a feel for what other people have done in Phoebe (pages 4 and 9).
3. Create a design from the default template and use the Design area to build it (page 5). To make this task as authentic as possible, we suggest that you *either* re-create one of your existing lesson plans as a Phoebe learning design, *or* use Phoebe to plan a learning session that you have to give in the near future.
During this time take a look at the "context-sensitive" help (page 8).
Also, make your design public and view it on the "Shared Designs" page.
4. Explore Phoebe's reference materials (page 12).
5. Try creating your own design template (page 10).
6. Change the default template to your new template (page 12) and create a design from it (page 6).

If you need help at any time, please contact marion.manton@conted.ox.ac.uk or liz.masterman@oucs.ox.ac.uk.

Introduction to 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 *pedagogic planner 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 was developed from 2006 to 2008 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. Information about the project can be found at <http://phoebe-project.conted.ox.ac.uk>.

Before You Start: Technical Information

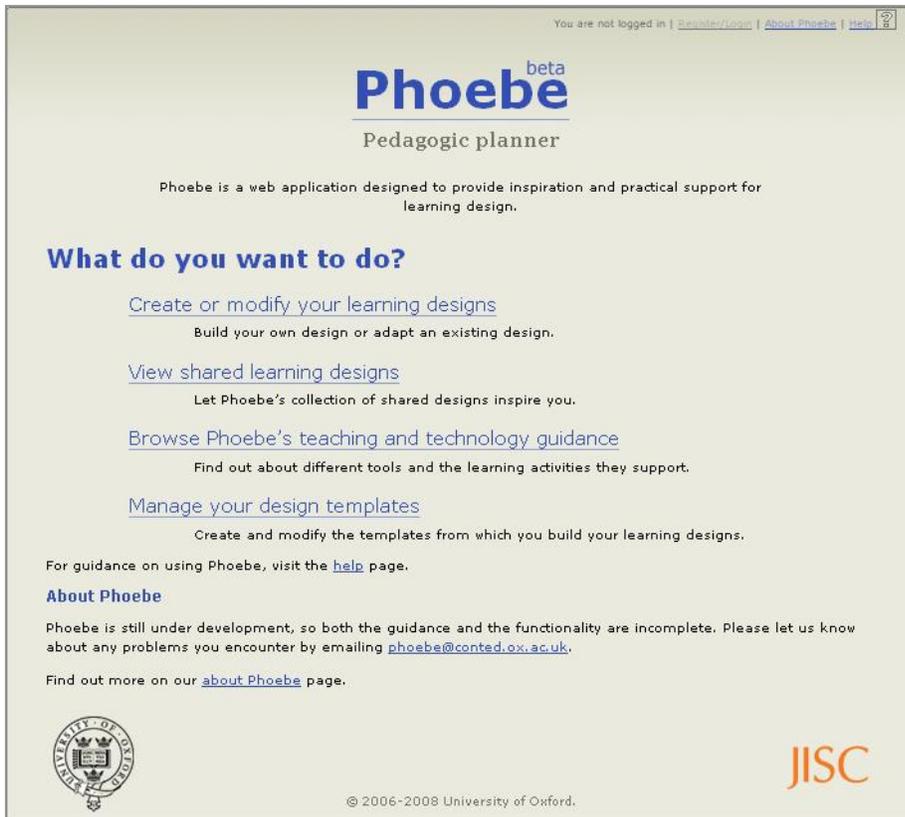
1. We recommend that you use one of the following Web browsers:
 - ❖ Firefox (Phoebe has been developed primarily using this browser, and it's easy to download from <http://www.firefox.com/>.)
 - ❖ Internet Explorer 7
 - ❖ Safari
 - ❖ Opera

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://www.phoebe.ox.ac.uk/> in your browser. The Home page appears:



The screenshot shows the Phoebe beta Pedagogic planner home page. At the top right, it says "You are not logged in | [Register/Log in](#) | [About Phoebe](#) | [Help](#)". The main heading is "Phoebe beta Pedagogic planner". Below this, it states: "Phoebe is a web application designed to provide inspiration and practical support for learning design." The page is divided into four main sections, each with a blue heading and a link:

- What do you want to do?**
 - [Create or modify your learning designs](#)
Build your own design or adapt an existing design.
 - [View shared learning designs](#)
Let Phoebe's collection of shared designs inspire you.
 - [Browse Phoebe's teaching and technology guidance](#)
Find out about different tools and the learning activities they support.
 - [Manage your design templates](#)
Create and modify the templates from which you build your learning designs.

For guidance on using Phoebe, visit the [help](#) page.

About Phoebe

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

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

Suggested activity: Take a look at some of the following learning designs, to see the variety of ways in which Phoebe can be used for planning:

- ❖ [Charlotte Bronte](#) – a design created by Marion from an existing online course
- ❖ [Applying Theory to Practice in E-learning](#) – a design created by Liz in preparation for a classroom teaching session
- ❖ A selection of designs which have been created by participants at our evaluation workshops and by numerous visitors to Phoebe from all over the world. The selection is ever-changing, but as of 06/11/09 included:
 - ◆ [Climate change - Greenhouse effect, global warming, solutions to a problem](#)
 - ◆ [Geography: France Learning session 1](#)
 - ◆ [Greek \(Language\)](#)
 - ◆ [Life Processes and Living Things 1 – Cells](#) (also the other three designs in the series)
 - ◆ [The Heart and Circulatory System](#)
 - ◆ [Visual Principles \(Part 1\)](#)

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 9.

If you have logged in, you can also copy any design and use it as the basis of a new design of your own. See "Copying designs" on page 9.

Creating a New Design

Phoebe works on the principle of copying and adapting, rather than creating from scratch. This means that everything must be created from something else; either:

- ❖ An existing learning design that's fairly similar to the one you want to create,
- or
- ❖ A "template:" i.e. a skeleton design which contains just a set of labelled boxes for you to fill in. Phoebe comes with three built-in templates, but users can create their own (by adapting a built-in one). For more information, see the section on Design Templates on page 10

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 copying an existing design. See "Copying designs" on page 9.
- ❖ By importing a design from XML. (Note: this option is not covered in this guide.)

Creating a new design from the default template

Generally speaking, the default template is the one that you will use most often. When you first use Phoebe, the default template is already set to the "Basic" built-in template, but you can change it at any time (see page 12). We recommend that you use Phoebe's default template when creating your first design. Note, however, that at present you can't transfer a design from one template to another.

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 !\[\]\(223f1a84e0bc2cacb9c165f716817dcc_img.jpg\) 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

Suggested activity: Try this once you have successfully created a design from the default template. Either use one of Phoebe's other built-in templates or one of the custom templates that has been made public.

Note: The "1066" template was created to demonstrate how a template can be created for a related set of designs – in this case a series of history lessons on the Battle of Hastings. It shows how you can use the template to "pre-fill" some of the boxes so that their contents appear by default when users create a new design from that template (provided that they select the "Copy Information" box). They can, however, change those default values when editing the design.

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

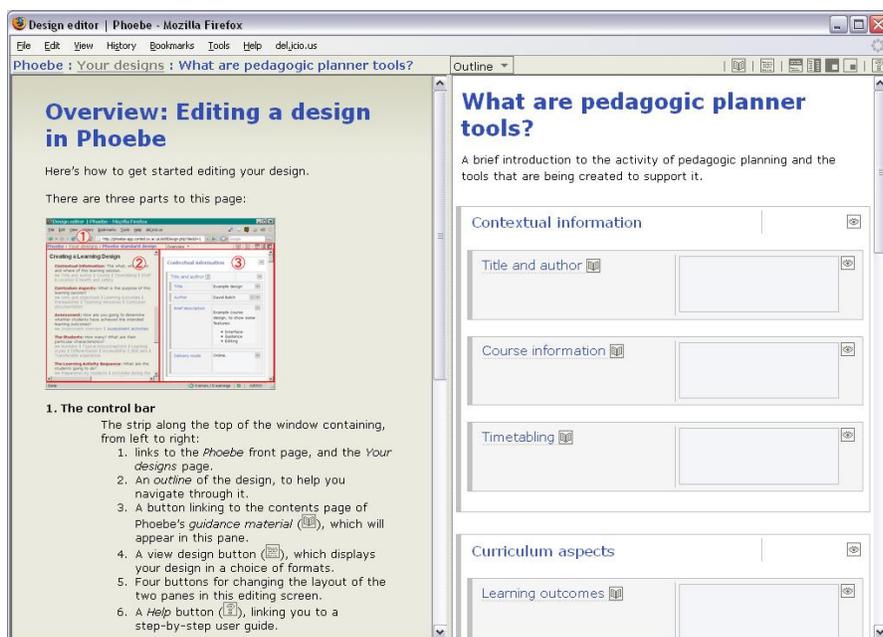
Suggested activity: As suggested in "About this Guide," you will probably gain the most from Phoebe by creating or re-creating a real-life design. There is a great deal that you can do on this page, so we recommend exploring in this sequence:

1. Experiment with configuring your view of the workspace and navigating round it.
2. Fill in some boxes with information about your plan.
3. Experiment with hiding boxes.
4. See what happens when you duplicate (copy) a box
5. Explore 2 or 3 topics in the context-sensitive help.
6. View your design.
7. Make your design public so that you can share it with others.

Note: You can only edit designs that you have created or copied 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

Suggested activity: Before starting to edit your design, familiarise yourself with these interface features.

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 any of these four icons in 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 list 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 a group of related boxes, 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 (copying) 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.

Each new box (or group) is inserted immediately after the first one. Use the  and  icons to reposition them.

Getting help while you are working

Suggested activity: For now, just look at some of the context-sensitive guidance (a later activity will cover the reference material: see page 12); for example:

- ❖ [Learning outcomes](#)
- ❖ [Teaching resources](#)
- ❖ [Assessment](#)
- ❖ [Learning activities](#)

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 9.)

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 list 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 list 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

This functionality was provisional only: the next stage of development envisaged more sophisticated techniques for exporting designs into a range of format.

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.

Copying designs

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

To copy a design:

1. If you are copying a design of your own, go to the "Your designs" page.
2. If you are copying someone else's design: go to the "Shared designs" page.
3. Click the  icon beside the design that you want to copy.
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

Important note: This part of Phoebe was the most recent to be developed. Although it was tested during the project, we cannot guarantee its robustness.

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 copying and adapting an existing template. To copy 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 copy: 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

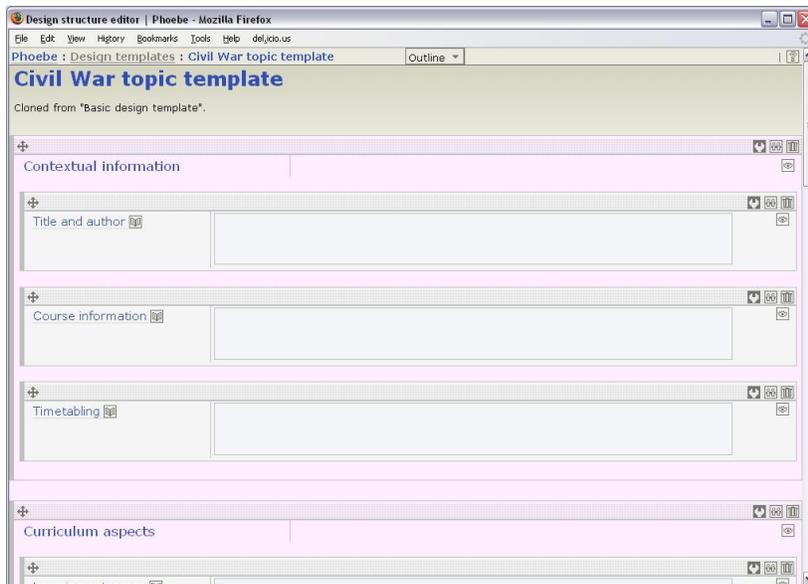
Suggested activity:

1. Try entering some information in a few boxes. When you create a design from this template later, select the "Copy information" box.
2. Edit the properties of a box to change its title and the "Guidance URL" for context-sensitive help relating to the box. You can put in any URL you like. When you create a design from this template, try displaying this "help."

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.
-  Copy (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

Suggested activity: Change the default template to the one you just created; then create a new design from it.

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

Suggested activity:

1. Explore the A-Z listing of different tools ("What can I do with...?"): e.g.:
 - ❖ Blogs
 - ❖ Electronic voting systems
 - ❖ Wikis
2. Take a look at the mapping of activities to technologies ("What technology can I use...?"): e.g.
 - ❖ General learning activities → Research, gather information... → Search engines
 - ❖ Evaluation & assessment → Evaluate → Quiz tools
 - ❖ Collaborative dimensions → Clarifying & developing... → Discussion forums
3. Review the guidance on teaching approaches (incomplete): e.g.
 - ❖ Models of learning – Instructional design, Problem-based learning
 - ❖ Techniques – Google jockeying, Digital storytelling
4. If you are unfamiliar with social bookmarking, take a look at some of the resources in Phoebe's Delicious account – but perhaps read the guidance on social bookmarking in "What can I do with..." first!

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.