

Tandems with credits

Learning in tandem

Linguistic tandem: a nice way to learn languages

What is it about? Develop your skills in a foreign language by meeting and sharing activities with a fellow student whose mother tongue is the one you want to enhance. In return you will help your tandem partner to improve his/her knowledge in your own mother language.

What can you do? You can attend a concert, a ballet, or visit an exhibition; go to the theatre or the cinema; go shopping, do administrative tasks or social activities; participate in sports events; read a newspaper or magazines, watch TV or use the internet; go to restaurants, cafés; travel somewhere by train, bus or metro, or take a walk; help each other with university work or go to conferences, etc...You may of course suggest any other activity.

All tandem combinations are possible under certain conditions. Please contact the supervisor of your linguistic exchange.

Tandems (with credits ECTS): what is it about?

You will develop your foreign language skills in a unique way as you will have privileged contact with a student whose mother tongue is the language that you want to master. In return

you will help your Tandem partner improve their skills in your own native language. You can obtain a validation of 5 ECTS or an attendance certificate.

For who?

ULB students, VUB students and UAntwerpen students (including Erasmus students), of any level of study (Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate), no matter their field of study, whether they need to improve their language skills for a course that is part of their curriculum, to prepare themselves for a stay abroad, for professional life, or simply to satisfy the desire to learn and discover.

When?

A tandem can be taken for one single term or for a full academic year, if you wish to take two different tandems, for two different languages or the same language.

Who can obtain a validation of 5 ECTS?

You can enrol in this module as part of your curriculum and obtain 5 ECTS. However: The credits will only be granted to ULB students (including Erasmus students), if the required program of the tandem is completed.

Both regular and Erasmus students of VUB and of UAntwerpen are only able to obtain an attendance certificate if the required program is completed.

If you are a regular student at ULB and you want the validation of 5 ECTS credits, check with your faculty secretary for the deadline for adding them to your course program and/if the ECTS credits can be validated!

If a student of ULB, VUB, UAntwerpen, or Erasmus student, does not wish to obtain the ECTS nor the attendance certificate, they can form a tandem exchange without following the requirements of the program.

Procedures to follow: 4 fundamental steps

1. Search for a partner via the platform Language Tandems
2. Contact the supervisor of your linguistic exchange for the validation of the exchange
3. Meet the program requirements
4. Contact the supervisor of your linguistic exchange for the final evaluation

How to obtain the validation of the exchange?

For a tandem to be validate, a well defined program must be followed and documents must becompleted and submitted to the supervisor of your linguistic exchange.

The program (5 ECTS) requires:

1. one individual logbook
2. two individual reports
3. one individual linguistic report
4. a bilingual portfolio on a common topic
5. one evaluation questionnaire

Activity Report (Interim Report and Final Report)

The activity reports to provide are two: one after the first 7/8 activities and the other after concluding all the activities (15 meetings in total of 2 hours each with your partner; schedule and theme to be determined in agreement with your partner).

The report on each activity should be a minimum of 500 words (for the 7 or 8 activities). Each report must be corrected by the Tandem partner.

The two activity reports should comprise 1000 words in total.

The reports are to be typed and the corrections should be visible, written in pen by hand or (ortyped using the « Review » tool on your word processor) on the type-written text.

We also wish to draw your attention to the fact that the « Activity Report » must be based on activities carried out together in tandem and not on the progress you have made in the learning of your target language, there will be a separate report on this progress (the linguisticreport).

Documents/corrections submitted in pencil will not be accepted. Please use « Times New Roman 12 » font and 1.5 line-spacing.

Please specify the following details on each report :

- the number of the report (1 or 2)
- your name, along with that of your partner
- the date of your activities
- the date of submission of your report
- the target languages of your Tandem partnership

Reports are to be deposited in the letter box next to the Tandems Office (AZ4 119), or handed in person to the Tandem Secretary or to your Tandem Assistant, or sent by email showing the inclusion of any corrections.

Linguistic Report

The linguistic report is on the progress you have made in the learning of your target language. Write at least 10 lines in each column (+/- 150 words).

Specify your language level at the beginning of the Tandem Project (according to the criteria in the Logbook).

Points to be covered in your Linguistic Report:

1. Morphology/Word Formation (progress made in the knowledge of articles, nouns, adjectives, pronouns, verbs etc.; orally and in writing).
2. Syntax (progress made in sentence structure, e.g. in the order of words in a sentence; orally and in writing).
3. Lexicon/Vocabulary (progress made in word/vocabulary knowledge belonging to different word categories, e.g. sport, cooking, politics, cultural traditions; orally and in writing).
4. Learning Style (how have you organized your learning during the Tandem project; orally and in writing).
 - a. Specify what methods you and your partner have used to correct your respective errors; orally and in writing.
 - b. Specify the tools you have used to improve your knowledge of your mother tongue and your target language; orally and in writing: e.g. the Internet, grammar books, electronic grammar references, a variety of other books, etc.
5. Linguistic Oddities (different aspects of the language which you find interesting which do not exist in your mother tongue; e.g. 'false friends' which exist between the two languages, particular forms of discourse/speech, idiomatic expressions, word order in a sentence, etc.)
6. Your Opinion: Has your partner's language level improved after the Tandem experience with you? (Does s/he make fewer mistakes? Had s/he integrated your corrections into his/her language? Is s/he surer of her/himself when speaking?)
7. What are the pedagogical advantages of learning in a Tandem partnership, which you could never have in a traditional language lesson?

The Theme-Based Bilingual Dossier

This dossier is different from the report on the meetings/activities with your Tandem partner and should contain about four pages written in the two languages being learned, the theme should be chosen jointly by you and your Tandem partner.

Each student will complete the dossier in their target language.

If you do not wish to earn the ECTS, the Bilingual Dossier is not obligatory. However, if your partner wishes to earn the ECTS, it is essential that you complete your part of the dossier in addition to completing the corrections of your partner's dossier (according to the technical specifications) in order not to penalize your partner.

Before you begin writing, "the theme" of your dossier must be approved by a Tandem assistant.

Technical Specifications

- Title of the dossier to be in both languages.
- Identical layout of content in both languages (same subdivisions, same themes)
- 1000 words minimum in each language.
- First name and family name of both students to be mentioned clearly on the title page.
- Dossiers in the two languages to be submitted as one document.
- Both dossiers in the target language to be corrected by the mother-tongue speaker of the language.

The dossier is to be submitted in two versions :

A printed version: in which each part should contain the corrections made by the Tandem partner (these corrections can be handwritten or typed using the « Review » tool on your wordprocessor). The printed hard copy is to be handed in to the Tandems office by the given deadline.

A finalized electronic version: (in one of the following formats .odt, .doc, .docx, .rtf) showing the inclusion of all corrections. File in electronic format to be sent to the Tandems email address by the given deadline.

Tandem: evaluation

1) What did this experience bring you?

- A better knowledge of the country whose language I study and more particularly of Brussels
- New friends who made my stay more enjoyable and who allowed me to better integrate myself in ULB
- To reflect on my language as well as on the culture of my country and to understand them better
- Other:

2) How did you choose and organize the activities?

- By drawing mainly from the list of suggestions given by the tutor
- The choice was made spontaneously because I get along very well with my partner
- The activities took place in our free time during the day, evening or weekend in different places depending on the activity chosen
- The activities were well distributed/were not very well distributed during the term
- Other:

3) What difficulties did you encounter during the activities?

- Lack of time because of university courses or the commitments of each of the partners

- Incompatibility of character with my partner
- Lack of motivation due to a lack of understanding of the objective to be achieved
- Other:

4) What were the language difficulties?

- My language skills were superior/inferior to that of my partner
- My partner's explanations were not clear
- Other:

How were they resolved?

- Using grammar or other linguistic aids
- By consulting my teacher/tutor
- Other:

5) Do you feel that you have progressed in the target language?

- Yes, because
- No, because
- A little, because

6) Do you feel more comfortable in a conversation?

- Yes
- No
- A little

7) What modifications must be made for the tandem to function properly?

- More discussions with the tutor
- Less/more report to be returned
- Clearer instructions
- Other:

8) Do you think the time spent in tandem is enough to reach the goal?

- Yes, I had the time to do all the activities during the year with my partner and I achieved the goal
- No, there are too few activities over the year to reach the goal
- No, I can't seem the combination of tandem and studies. I don't have enough time, because of the labs, to devote to the tandem to reach my goal
- Other :

9) Would you be willing to continue the tandem next year with another partner?

- Yes, because it is an effective and interactive way to learn the language, the culture and more
- No, because the exchange was not interesting/because there was no affinity with my partner
- Other:

10) Could the "Tandem project" be the start of a long-term language exchange?

- Yes, if both participants are motivated and diligent, because it's an effective exchange for learning a language
- Yes, it is the possibility to find a correspondent for a foreign language in the long term
- No, because there are too few activities to establish a bond or a long-term contact
- Other:

Remarks :

Frequently Asked Questions

Everything you always wanted to know about tandems and ... that you have already dared to ask us

For who?

All ULB, VUB and UAntwerpen students (including Erasmus students), of any level of study (bachelor's, master's, PhD), no matter their field of study. Regular students must verify with their department or faculty secretary whether they are able to include the ECTS in their course program.

I am not a ULB, VUB or UAntwerpen student, or I have finished my studies, can I still do a tandem?

No.

Will I be able to obtain credits from my tandem?

The credits will only be granted to ULB students (including Erasmus students), if the required program is completed.

Regular and Erasmus students of VUB or UAntwerpen are only able to obtain an attendance certificate if the required program is completed.

If a student of ULB, VUB, UAntwerpen, or Erasmus student, does not wish to obtain the ECTS nor the attendance certificate, they can form a tandem exchange without following the requirements of the program.

Can I do a tandem without requiring the 5 ECTS?

Yes, you can do the tandem exchange freely without asking for credits.
Please contact the supervisor of your exchange languages.

Can I do a tandem with ECTS even if my partner does not need them and vice versa? Yes, you can. The student who does not require the ECTS must accompany their partner, who needs the credits, throughout the tandem and come with them to the final evaluation in order to facilitate the assessment about the work that has been done throughout the semester.

Can I receive an attendance certificate?

Yes, you can ask for an attendance certificate. However, you must complete the program as well as be evaluated at the end of your tandem exchange.

Will my tandem be evaluated?

Yes, if you wish to obtain the 5 ECTS or if you want to obtain an attendance certificate.

Which languages are included?

German / English / Arabics / Chinese / Croatian / Spanish / Greek / Italian / Japanese / Dutch / Persian / Polish / Portuguese / Romanian / Russian / Slovenian / Czech / Turkish

Can I do the exchange in a language that is not my mother tongue?

Yes, as long as your language level is at least C1.

Here are some links to test your language level:

http://www.languagelevel.com/index_fr.php

Can I do a tandem if my language is at beginner's level?

Yes.

What is the code for the Tandems with ECTS?

TANDB100 (Q1) et TANDB200 (Q2)

Can I do more than one tandem at a time?

Yes, the module codes in semester 1 are: TANDB100 for the first tandem, TANDB101 for the second, etc...

The module codes in semester 2 are: TANDB200 for the first tandem, TANDB201 for the second, etc...

You can contact students by email. As soon as you have found a partner, contact the assistants who are in charge of your language exchange in order to validate your tandem.

Can I cancel my tandem or change my partner?

You can cancel your tandem if necessary. Please email the supervisor to cancel the tandem along with the name of your potential partner. To find a new partner, please follow the same procedure.

I have not found a tandem partner. What should I do?

Keep looking for a partner via the platform Language Tandems.

We advise that you talk to other students as well as teachers as this can be a helpful way to find a partner.

Where can I find the instructions to write the reports for the tandems with ECTS?

The instructions can be found on the page “Tandems with ECTS”, How to validate your program.

By clicking on “two individual reports”, a PDF document will open with the instructions for each.

Where can I download my logbook?

The logbook can be found here : <https://langues.ulb.be/fr/etudiant/tandems/logbook>