Learning Together –
The Benefits of Learning Languages via eTandem

Dear participants,

The eTandem programme is not only an opportunity to extend your foreign language skills flexibly and sustainably, but also a way to have fun, to network internationally, and to develop personal and intercultural competencies.

✓ Would you like to refresh and improve your foreign language skills?
✓ Perhaps you are planning a stay abroad?
✓ Are you currently learning a new foreign language and looking for learning support?

In all those cases, eTandem is just right for you!

The eTandem programme is part of the project Begleitetes Autonomes Fremdsprachenlernen, developed and directed by the Sprachlernzentrum (Centre for Language Learning) of the University of Bonn.

Via eTandem both partners support each other in the process of refreshing, deepening and expanding their foreign language skills. Simultaneously, the eTandem provides the opportunity for personal and intercultural exchanges.

eTandem is …

… interactive.

Improve your foreign language skills autonomously while working together with someone who is a pro in your target language. eTandem is a personal and cooperative form of language learning that can be particularly motivating.

During eTandem sessions, linguistic accuracy is secondary to successful communication. The principal objective is to understand each other rather than speaking perfectly – via video call – or writing without any mistakes - via e-mail or text chat. At the same time, you are benefitting from the authentic input and immediate feedback of a native speaker – your eTandem partner. Thus, you will develop skills such as:

✓ your language use
✓ non-verbal means of communication (e.g. facial expressions and gestures)
✓ cultural and regional characteristics (e.g. salutations)
✓ error correction
... intercultural.

Through the personal exchange with someone belonging to another linguistic and cultural community, eTandem enables much more than the acquisition of foreign language skills. You will discover interesting and useful details about the history, traditions and everyday culture of your eTandem partner’s country and hometown. Therefore, eTandem is an excellent preparation for a stay abroad. If you are planning an Erasmus+ exchange or an internship in Bonn, eTandem allows you to make connections with students from the University of Bonn beforehand.

... digital.

eTandem sessions are based on the use of digital media, such as video call, text chat or e-mail. Therefore, you have a high degree of flexibility in arranging your eTandem sessions. In addition, you have the opportunity to further develop your digital competence.

In order to communicate, you and your partner do not have to synchronise schedules to arrange meetings in physical locations, since your laptop, tablet or smartphone respectively allows you to connect with your partner anywhere. You can choose the form of communication with your partner entirely according to individual requirements and personal interests.

To support and enrich your eTandem work, you can access a variety of resources online. Numerous websites provide materials created specifically for foreign language learning. You will find selected recommendations in our Support materials on Moodle. However, you are free to organise your eTandem work entirely according to your individual taste and joint interests. For example, you may want to read online newspapers, listen to podcasts or watch videos for subsequent discussions with your partner.

Furthermore, you can save your eTandem sessions. This feature allows you to evaluate your joint eTandem work and your individual progress.

Last not least, eTandem contributes to your personal development.

Via eTandem, you improve your intercultural, linguistic and digital competencies. On top of that, you also develop your personal strengths. Not only will you increase your ability to implement your (learning-) objectives but you will also gain mental strength through continuously motivating yourself to surmount personal obstacles in creative ways and through reflecting your accomplishments.

Who may I contact with questions and suggestions?

For ask for guidance or support, to discuss your experiences or to ask questions about the eTandem, please turn to the Head of German Studies, Dr Clive Earls, or the local OeAD-Lecturer at Maynooth or contact the eTandem office in Bonn, either by sending an e-mail to etandem@slz.uni-bonn.de or via our homepage:

www.slz.uni-bonn.de/etandem