

# READER FOR STUDY BUDDIES



## WELCOME!

*Dear Study Buddies!*

*We would like to welcome you to the start of your Study Buddy Partnership, in which your own creativity and personal contributions will help to make your partnership thrive! As a tandem or small group, you define the topics and activities of your partnership – depending on your interests and the resources available to you.*

*In the beginning you may find that you have some questions or need some inspiration... How can you organize and design your Study Buddy Partnership? What makes a good partnership? ...*

*In this reader we want to offer you some suggestions and useful tips which might help you to find your own answers to these questions. The reader can accompany you during the Study Buddy Partnership, and we hope it may contribute to its success.*

*Our tips are organized by the following phases:*

- *Your preparation for the first meeting*
- *The first and second meeting*
- *Designing your Study Buddy Partnership*
- *Finishing your Study Buddy Partnership*

*We tried to present the content in an entertaining way and without requiring lots of time to read through it. Suggestions are based on the evaluation forms filled in by former Study Buddies, as well as on our experience as programme coordinators.*

*If you have more questions, comments on the programme or tips for future Study Buddies, please don't hesitate to contact us!*

*We would like to wish you many constructive, interesting and enjoyable experiences as a Study Buddy!*

*Your InDiGU team.*

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## YOUR PREPARATION FOR THE FIRST MEETING WITH YOUR STUDY BUDDY

Before meeting your Study Buddy for the first time, it is useful to think about your own wishes and expectations. What do you bring into the Study Buddy Partnership, what developments would you like to see, and what is important to you?

Based on the question catalogue on the following pages, you can get in tune with the Study Buddy Partnership and define your ideas more precisely. The questions may serve as a starting point for the first meeting with your Study Buddy and support you to find shared activities and goals.

(In the registration form you already wrote down some of your ideas, but these questions go a step further.)



**a) What is easy for you concerning your university studies and how could you support your Study Buddy with his or her university studies?**

- Drawing up a course timetable
- Preparing and revising the seminars (writing texts, doing exercises, ...)
- Preparing and conducting presentations
- Studying regularly for exams
- Writing papers (reports, exposés, essays, ...)
- Building networks concerning your studies, research projects or jobs
- Using digital university services, for example:
  - eCampus in general
  - UniVZ (course information and more)
  - StudIP (course registration and more)
  - ILIAS (learning platform)
  - FlexNow (registration for exams and more)
  - IPS2 (information platform for students)
  - Reservation of rooms in the LSG (Learning and Study Building)
  - ...
- Literature research und and how to borrow books, for example:
  - Reference books
  - GUK (Göttingen University Catalogue)
  - GVK (GBV Union Catalogue)
  - EZB (Electronic Journals Library)
  - DBIS (Databases)
  - ...
- Computer skills, for example, when using the following programmes:
  - Word
  - Power Point
  - Excel
  - Citavi
  - Zotero
  - ...
- Skills for managing programmes of specific academic disciplines (for example qualitative or quantitative data gathering or analysis, etc.)
  - ...
  - ...

- Finding study-related information (for example: how to understand the course and exam regulation, how to find specific courses, how to find persons responsible for certain issues, how to make appointments with university staff, how to find certain programmes...)
- Managing other study-relevant issues, for example:
  - ...

**b) What is difficult for you concerning your university studies and what kind of support would be helpful from your Study Buddy?**

- Drawing up a course timetable
- Preparing and revising the seminars (writing texts, doing exercises, ...)
- Preparing and conducting presentations
- Studying regularly for exams
- Writing papers (reports, exposés, essays, ...)
- Building networks concerning your studies, research projects or jobs
- Using digital university services, for example:
  - eCampus in general
  - UniVZ (course information and more)
  - StudIP (course registration and more)
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- Skills for managing programmes of specific academic disciplines (for example qualitative or quantitative data gathering or analysis, etc.)
  - ...
  - ...
- Finding study-related information (for example: how to understand the course and exam regulations, how to find specific courses, how to find persons responsible for certain issues, how to make appointments with university staff, how to find certain programmes...)
- Managing other study-relevant issues, for example:
  - ...

**c) Which study-related competencies would you like to learn or develop, perhaps together with your Study Buddy?**

- Course / workshop / qualification / certificate of...
- Reduce nervousness and anxiety before presentations and exams (via course or learning media)
- Reading techniques for academic texts (via course or learning media)
- 10-finger-typing (via course or learning media)
- Developing research projects
- Developing job-oriented projects
- ...

**d) Which topics, theories, methods or authors in your discipline are you particularly interested in?**

- ...
- ...
- ...

**e) Are you involved in any student self-administration program and would you like to inform your Study Buddy about it or invite him\*her to join it?**

- AstA (General Student Council)
- Student parliament
- Student faculty councils and faculty groups
- University groups or student initiatives/ associations...
- Council of International Students (ASR)...
- ...



**f) Which student volunteer organizations at the university would you like to get to know better together with your Study Buddy?**

- AstA (General Student Council)
- Student parliament
- Student faculty councils and faculty groups
- University groups or student initiatives/ associations/...
- Council of International Students (ASR)...
- ...

**g) Which other university student services would you like to recommend to your Study Buddy?**

- Opportunities for going abroad for studies or an internship
- Advisory/counselling centres concerning certain situations or questions
- ...

**h) Which other university student services would you like to get to know, together with your Study Buddy?**

- Opportunities for going abroad for studies or an internship
- Advisory/counselling centres concerning certain situations or questions
- ...

**i) What other questions or concerns do you have concerning your studies or your life in Göttingen?**

- ...
- ...
- ...

**j) Which (free time) activities or hobbies would you like to share with your Study Buddy?**

- Discovering and sharing favourite places in Göttingen, for example...
- Excursions near Göttingen, for example...
- Cultural life, for example...
- Night life, for example...



- Sports and dance, for example...
- Finding specific products or services you need, for example...
- Managing everyday or special situations, for example appointments at the doctor's, looking for a flat, bureaucratic issues...
- ...

**k) What do you want to know about your Study Buddy when meeting for the first time? Prepare some questions!**

- ...
- ...

## THE FIRST, SECOND... MEETING – AND NOW? IDEAS FOR YOUR STUDY-RELATED PARTNERSHIP AND PERSONAL WARMING-UP STRATEGIES

Here you will find some suggestions for starting your Study Buddy Partnership. Feel free to use them if you want to.

### Getting to know one another

- Contact your Study Buddy via e-mail.
- Meet at a comfortable place where both of you feel well.
- Allow for enough time.
- If you like, use the question catalogue to discover shared interests.

### Questions to get to know each other

- What do you enjoy doing? (concerning your studies, your free time...)?
- Which are your study modules this semester?
- Why do you want to have a Study Buddy Partnership?
- What is important for you concerning the Study Buddy Partnership?
- What would you like to learn from or know about your Study Buddy?
- What ideas do you have for our Study Buddy Partnership?
- What makes a successful and satisfying Study Buddy Partnership in your opinion?
- Do we have similar expectations? Is it possible to fulfil them?
- If we have different expectations: Can we compromise?
- What can each one of us contribute to meet our goals?
- ...



## Conversation input for your first or second meeting: The story of your study path

**Objective:** Get to know each other personally and discover study-related interests you both have in common.

**Time window:** Minimum of half an hour.

**Preparation:** You may bring an object with you that represents your study path. Alternatively, take white/coloured paper, pencils, brushes and watercolours, scissors, journals to cut, glue, etc. and portray your study path creatively.

### Realization:

**Step 1)** Allow yourselves 5-10 minutes, to reconstruct your individual study paths (separately). The following questions might inspire you: When did I start being interested in the topics of my studies? Did I get in touch with my discipline through school or in other ways? Do I remember a specific impulse, situation or person who inspired me? How did my study interests and focus develop? How did I come to Göttingen University? Which challenges and obstacles did I experience on my way to attending university? How did I resolve or overcome them and who or what supported me? What are my sources of energy and motivation for studying, even in difficult times? At what point in my studies do I find myself right now? Which topic do I want to focus on this semester and how (through texts, films, excursions, etc.)? ...

**Step 2)** Choose one person to start. You have 10 minutes to tell your own story, maybe presenting your personal object or portrait. The other one listens carefully.

**Step 3)** After the first person told their story, the listener gives a short, acknowledging feedback, telling what has been especially inspiring and interesting for him\*her about the story. You may ask some friendly questions, too.

After this, pass through **step 2) and 3)** with changed roles.

## After the first meeting: Study Buddy Partnership – Yes or No?

We, the InDiGU team, try to find the best Study Buddy for you – based on the information in your registration form. This is no guarantee, however, that you will connect with the other person on a personal and study-related level. That's what you have to find out by yourselves!

How to continue?

To avoid a situation that may result in a loss of motivation, we recommend that you provide honest feedback to each other, directly or soon after your first meeting. Let the other person know if you want to have a Study Buddy Partnership or not! If not, justify your decision respectfully.

Furthermore, the InDiGU team would like to have a short feedback on the status of your study buddy partnership: Were you able to begin your Study Buddy Partnership? Did you decide not to continue? Would you like to try it with another Study Buddy? Please note: Depending on the discipline, there are different numbers of enrolments of internationals and Göttingen students in the Study Buddy Programme. Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee a second option for you. Our e-mail address: [indigu@zvw.uni-goettingen.de](mailto:indigu@zvw.uni-goettingen.de).

## ORGANIZE AND DESIGN YOUR STUDY BUDDY PARTNERSHIP – TIPS AND TRICKS

Here, you find more suggestions for building up your Study Buddy Partnership. Remember that it's up to you to decide how to individualize it.

### Develop a plan together

- Talk about the amount of time you can and want to invest in the Study Buddy Partnership in a week or month. Think realistically. Consider if you prefer a regular appointment or if you prefer spontaneous meetings.
- Talk about how you best want to communicate and what is important for you (for example: languages, channels, commitments, cancelling appointments, etc.).
- Talk about the activities you want to do as a tandem or in a group together with others. If you would like, create a realistic semester plan or schedule.



### Tips by former Study Buddies

- Be open-minded, ask questions, and propose activities.
- Try to understand the situation your international Study Buddy is in, and their possible fears and worries.
- Fix a weekday. Meeting regularly makes your conversation flow easier.
- If you have little time to meet: Go to the Mensa together.
- Integrate your Study Buddy into your network of friends.

## Beginning and finishing a meeting

To get in tune with each other, start each meeting with some basic questions such as:

- How are you?
- Which study-related tasks are you working on at the moment?
- Do you have any urgent problem we could resolve together? Which kind of support do you need?

At the end of each meeting, resume what you have achieved together that day, and make a plan for the next meeting:

- What was inspiring for me today? What did I learn?
- What remains unanswered or unfulfilled?
- Do we have any wishes or suggestions to improve our meetings?
- When and where do we want to meet next time?
- Which plans do we have for the next time?
- Is there anything to prepare? If yes, who can do it?





## Inspirations for study-related conversations

### a) Getting to know the German and international education and university system

**Time window:** A whole meeting.

**Preparation:** If you would like, bring with you photos, images, symbols, graphics, documentation, films, etc..

**Task:** Tell each other about the different educational systems (schools, universities, etc.) in your countries of origin. Who has access to university studies, who doesn't? Which difficulties and challenges exist, concerning peoples access to university studies? What possibilities and support exist? What social function and what is the significance of university studies in your country? Talk about your own path to university studies and try to think of the opportunities other persons of distinct social contexts have, too. How do universities work in each of your countries, what do universities offer, how can students participate actively in university life?

### b) Getting to know your discipline in the German and international university system

**Time window:** A whole meeting.

**Preparation:** If you would like, bring with you photos, images, symbols, graphics, documentation, films, etc..

**Task:** Tell each other how studies in your discipline work in your countries of origin. Which topics, theories, methods, models, perspectives, authors are taught and discussed? Thinking globally, where does this knowledge come from? Do you read articles written by researchers in your countries? Which modalities for teaching and learning exist? Which kind of exams? Do students participate in research projects? What do you enjoy about your studies? Which courses and professors do you consider to be the best or the most interesting, and why? What would you like to change and how?



## Ideas for activities

- **International Certificate:** Through the International Certificate, Göttingen University certifies your intercultural competences. It is obligatory to participate in one (or more) workshops, and to engage in intercultural programmes or organizations. Your engagement as a Study Buddy is one of several possibilities to get involved! Inform yourself about the different certificate options.  
Link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/108465.html>
- **Tip Hub:** Through this facebook group, recently enrolled international students receive extra support during their preparation for studying and living in Göttingen and during the first weeks after their arrival. Each year, from August to November and from February to May, we look for volunteers who enjoy posting information and providing insider tips to the group and answering the students' questions. If you are interested, please contact Patrick Lajoie (department Göttingen International), Tel. +49 (0)551/ 39-21340 / E-mail: [patrick.lajoie@zvw.uni-goettingen.de](mailto:patrick.lajoie@zvw.uni-goettingen.de)
- **Academic writing partnerships at the International Writing Center (ISZ):** Here you can participate in writing workshops und shared writing projects, promoting your knowledge exchange and improving your writing techniques in different types of texts.  
Link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/112396.html>
- **Writing consultation at the Faculty of Social Sciences:** Here you will find informative materials, workshops and individual consultation to improve your academic writing skills.  
Link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/123160.html>
- **Foyer International:** Foyer International offers a varied, free of charge-programme for building networks between German and international students, from language cafes and creative workshops to culture and cooking evenings. Inform yourselves about the possibility to get credits for the International Certificate.  
Link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/2554.html>
- **Excursions by Entdecke! – Discover! Niedersachsen and Bremen**  
Link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/523385.html>
- **Excursions through the Outdoor Society**  
Link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/goeout18/>

- **Intercultural/international student initiatives:** Here you find a list of student initiatives with an international or intercultural focus. As a participant in one of these initiatives, you also get credits for the International Certificate.  
Link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/618529.html>
- **Student groups, initiatives, associations:** Here you find a list provided by the AStA.  
Link: <https://asta.uni-goettingen.de/studierendenschaft/studentische-gruppen/>
- **Student idea competition:** Yearly, students can submit their innovative project ideas to improve studying and teaching. Get informed about this year's focus.  
Link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/66563.html>
- **Center for Intercultural Competences:** Here you can participate in various workshops for intercultural sensitivity offered in English or German. Inform yourselves about the possibilities to get credits for the International Certificate or for the study area of key competences.  
Link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/77553.html>
- **Language tandem:** You want to learn and improve your language skills through focused language exchange with your Study Buddy? Here you find interactive materials and individual consultation.  
Link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/572807.html>
- **Career Service:** Do you want to know more about first job opportunities, become aware of your potential and goals, or prepare an internship in Germany or abroad? Then get to know the Career Service: individual consultation, events, workshops, (digital) information and self-learning material. The new community #workinginternationally at *Rocket.Chat* is a network where you get in touch with other students interested in international jobs. Inform yourselves about the possibility to get credits for the International Certificate.  
Link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/292.html>
- **SUB (Göttingen State and University Library):** The SUB offers lots of courses, workshops, guided tours, self-study materials and media. Some of them are in English. Inform yourselves about the possibility to get credits for the International Certificate.  
Links: <https://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/en/news/>

<https://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/en/learning-teaching/courses-guided-library-tours/>

<https://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/en/learning-teaching/self-study-materials/>

- **ZESS (Center for Languages and Key Competences):** Maybe you find a course you would like to do together! Starting from journalism to project management to rhetoric and work-learn-life-balance.

Link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/423445.html>

- **Culture ticket:** With your Culture ticket, you have access to lots of cultural events and courses – free of charge or with a nice discount.

Link: <https://asta.uni-goettingen.de/en/offers/semester-tickets/>

<https://asta.uni-goettingen.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Semesterticket-englisch-2019-Seite-1-Webversion-zusammengefuegt-1.pdf>

- **Semester ticket:** With your Semester ticket, you can travel all over the state of Lower Saxony. Inform yourselves about the bus and train lines you are allowed to use.

Links: <https://asta.uni-goettingen.de/en/offers/semester-tickets/>

<https://asta.uni-goettingen.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Semesterticket-englisch-2019-Seite-1-Webversion-zusammengefuegt-1.pdf>

- **Faculty newsletter:** Have a look at the newsletter of your faculty, stay informed about the orientation week, events, workshops, summer schools, projects, etc., and participate together!

- **Open day:** Many university institutes and other places in the city, such as museums, open their doors to the public. It's a nice opportunity to have a look behind the scenes.

- **University collections:** Are you fascinated by historical curiosities? Then discover the scientific university collections. From living organisms, measuring instruments, minerals and mummies to arts and ritual objects from all over the world.

Link: <https://sammlungen.uni-goettingen.de>

- **Alumni Talks at the department of Intercultural German Studies:** Graduates of Göttingen University give insight into their professional activities.

Link: <https://www.ikg-goettingen.de/alumni/studium-und-beruf/alumni-talks/>

- **Calendar of University events:** All events at a glance.

Link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/3218.html>

### Information and counselling centres at the university and Studentenwerk

You are going through difficult times or you have specific questions concerning your life and study situation? Then it may be helpful to contact a professional for confidential information at the counselling centre.

You have noticed that your Study Buddy is having personal or study-related troubles, is overwhelmed with a certain situation or does not feel well? Encourage him\*her to contact one of the following counselling centres.

- The **Equal Opportunities and Diversity Unit** offers support and counselling services for the following topics: compatibility of family life and studies/work, gender diversity, discrimination, sexualised assaults and harassment.

Link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/52597.html>

- The **Psychosocial Counselling at Studentenwerk Göttingen** provides support in situations related to (self-)doubt, anxiety, pressure to perform, study-related crisis, loneliness, problems, conflicts and other difficult situations.

Link: <https://www.studentenwerk-goettingen.de/beratung-soziales/psycho-soziale-beratung-psb.html>

- The **Psychotherapeutic Outpatient clinic for Students of the University of Göttingen (PAS)** offers support in different languages in cases of acute crisis or depression, exhaustion, learning disorders, partnership or family conflicts and other situations.

Link: <http://www.pas.uni-goettingen.de/starteng.html>

### Sports, dance, culture and creative activities

Bring balance to your study life...

- Join the **Hochschulsport**

Link: <https://store.sport.uni-goettingen.de/sports/sport>

- Join **courses at the Studentenwerk**

Link: <https://www.studentenwerk-goettingen.de/en/culture-events.html>

- Join **courses at the VHS (Volkshochschule)**

Link: <https://vhs-goettingen.de>

## FINISHING YOUR STUDY BUDDY PARTNERSHIP IN A GOOD WAY

Both you and your partner decide how long your Study Buddy Partnership will last. If it is time to end the partnership, inform your Study Buddy.

Take some time to give each other respectful and friendly feedback. What was fun, interesting, inspiring or helpful? What did you miss, what could have been better? What do you want to give your Study Buddy to take with them? If you would like, check the different feedback methods available to you on the internet.

### Evaluation of the Study Buddy programme

At the end of every semester, we ask you to fill in the online evaluation form. You need about 5 minutes to do that. Your information and suggestions help us to improve the matching and support of the Study Buddy Partnerships and to improve this reader. Thanks a lot!

Here's the link: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/564599.html>

You can also write us an e-mail at any time or come to our office (please check our office hours) to give us some constructive feedback, as well!

