



Using a social networking site to facilitate tandem language and culture learning

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What is tandem learning?

“a form of open learning whereby two people with different native languages work together in pairs in order:

- to learn more about one another’s character and culture;*
- to help one another improve their language skills, and often also*
- to exchange additional knowledge – for example about their professional life”*

(Calvert, 1999, p56)

Background



University of Surrey

- Around 14,500 students
- Large international cohort
- Strong track record in graduate employment

International Strategy promotes:

- Global Graduates
- Language and cultural learning partnerships

Project Aims

to set up a tandem learning scheme which would meet the following criteria:

- be ring-fenced to Surrey students only
- benefit both home and overseas students
- necessitate minimal administrative involvement
- promote autonomous learning
- promote cultural exchange as well as language exchange
- provide a “one-stop shop” where students could find partners and tools to support their learning

Which platform?

Livemocha

<http://www.livemocha.com/sihp>

Facebook

www.facebook.com

Ning

<http://uk.ning.com/>

<http://www.tandemlearning.net/>



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YOUR KEY TO AN AWESOME SOCIAL COMMUNITY

Create a perfect social website to bring people together. With your own look and feel, and choice of social integration, Ning opens new doors to revenue and involvement.

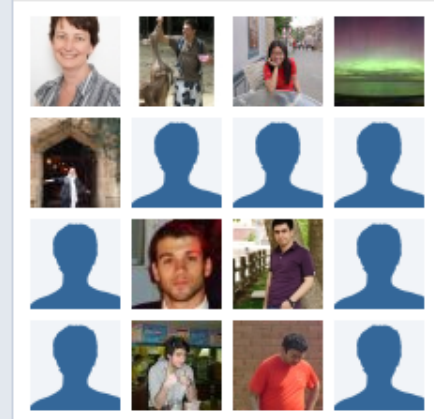
LEARN MORE

Surrey LACES

Where Surrey students go for cultural and language exchange

- Main
- Invite
- My Page
- Members
- Forum
- Events
- Groups
- Chat
- My Network

Members Edit



[+ Invite More](#) [View All](#)

Join this network to find a LACES partner at the University of Surrey to practise another language and discover another culture.

Events Edit

[Korean Laces Conversation Group](#)

Welcome to new members Edit

Welcome to new members of LACES this semester! Please read the information below to get the most from the network. I hope you enjoy using it and meet new people. Please leave me feedback if you wish, by posting on my page or sending me an email.

Best wishes
Cathy Howard

Join groups to contact potential language exchange partners Edit

How to find a language learning partner on LACES

Once your membership of LACES has been accepted, remember to join 2 groups - one for the language you want to learn and one for the language you want to offer (this must be your first language). It's a good idea to post a message on the group wall to let others know what you want to learn and what you can offer in return. Add any potential LACES partners as friends and arrange to meet up - somewhere public such as the Library or a coffee shop.

Activities you can try with your LACES partner

Once you have found a partner, follow this link for activities you could try together:
<http://sfedu.ru/tandem/tandem/inh01-eng.html>

Keep a LACES diary

It's a good idea to keep a record of what you and your partner learn in your LACES meetings. You can use it to set targets and record your progress. You could use the blogging feature on your LACES page - you can keep posts private or share them with your friends.

Cathy Howard

- Sign Out
- [Inbox \(1 new\)](#)
 - [Alerts](#)
 - [Friends - Invits](#)
 - [Settings](#)

Latest Activity Edit

Chen Yu is now a member of Surrey LACES Dec 13
[Welcome Them!](#)

Spanish LACES

Join this group if you want to learn Spanish or offer to teach Spanish to a LACES partner

Juan Lin joined Cathy Howard's group Dec 12

61 5

Surrey LACES Chat | 1 Online

Where Surrey students go for cultural and language exchange



Cathy Howard
Female
Guildford, Surrey
United Kingdom

Customize My Page

Like

- Blog Posts
- Discussions
- Events (1)
- Groups (47)
- My Apps
- + Add Apps

Welcome, Cathy Howard!

Latest Activity Edit

Share: Discussion · Event



What are you up to?

140 Share



English Language Support Programme Registration at Online



January 17, 2012 to March 23, 2012

If you would like to register for English Language Support classes in Semester 2, the link is now open. You may enrol for a maximum of 3 classes. Please check your main timetable to ensure that you are available before signing up. You should check your University email account for confirmation of your enrolment before you join the class. ELSP classes start the week commencing 6th February. [See More](#)

An event by Cathy Howard was featured 18 hours ago

0 Comments 0 Likes



English LACES



Join this group if you want to learn English or offer to teach English to a LACES partner

Cathy Howard

Sign Out

- Inbox (1 new)
- Alerts
- Friends - Invite
- Settings

Main Room Members Online (1)

Surrey LACES

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All Groups My Groups

+ Add Cathy Howard

Sign Out

- Inbox (1 new)
- Alerts
- Friends - Invits
- Settings

All Groups (47)

Sort by: Latest Activity



Portuguese LACES
 14 members
 Latest Activity: Dec 13
 Join this group if you want to learn Portuguese or offer to teach Portuguese to a LACES partner



Spanish LACES
 76 members
 Latest Activity: Dec 12
 Join this group if you want to learn Spanish or offer to teach Spanish to a LACES partner



Korean LACES
 16 members
 Latest Activity: Dec 12
 Join this group if you want to learn Korean or offer to teach Korean to a LACES partner



Japanese LACES
 32 members
 Latest Activity: Dec 12
 Join this group if you want to learn Japanese or offer to teach Japanese to a LACES partner



French LACES
 68 members
 Latest Activity: Dec 12
 Join this group if you want to learn French or offer to teach French to a LACES partner



English LACES
 122 members
 Latest Activity: Dec 12
 Join this group if you want to learn English or offer to teach English to a LACES partner

Surrey LACES Chat | 1 Online

View Groups

Information



Join this group if you want to learn Korean or offer to teach Korean to a LACES partner

Location: University of Surrey

Members: 16

Latest Activity: Dec 12

Like 4 members like this

Korean Language Learning

Edit

Korean LACES Conversation Group every Wednesday in Room 14AC03 from 17.00 - 18.00.

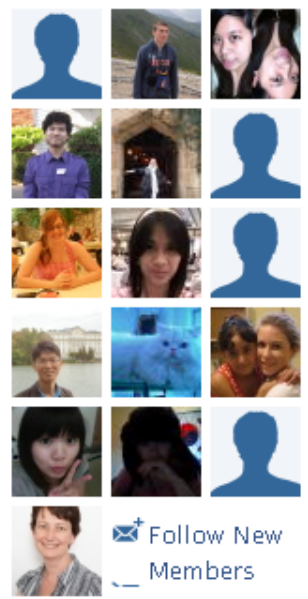
Here are some useful links for practising Korean:

http://www.talktomeinkorean.com/category/lessons/level-1/

http://www.kosnet.go.kr

Send Message to Group

Members (16)



Follow New Members

Invite More View All

Pages (0)

Add a Page

Friends - Invite Settings

Surrey LACES Chat | 1 Online



Benefits

- Significant membership
- Wide representation
- Successful pairings and groupings
- Links made between students from the *same* culture



Difficulties

- Lack of understanding of the function of the network
- Members of large language groups less successful in finding partners.
- Speakers of less popular target languages unlikely to make partnerships
- Reluctance/shyness in participating
- Difficult to monitor success rate

In conclusion....

- Overall – successful
- Easily replicated
- Easy to administer but there is a significant workload at startup and at start of each academic year.



Looking forward

- Social evenings to enable LACES members to meet up with each other face-to-face
- Surrey Staff LACES launching in January 2012
- Extending membership to staff/students from global partnership institutions.



Questions?

LACES
Staff LACES

References

- Brick, B. and Lloyd, E. 2010. 'A review of tandem learning: from face-to-face to social networking software' *LLAS E-learning Symposium*. (Online video) Available at: <http://www.llas.ac.uk/video/6126> [accessed 21/12/2011]
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