



### **The buddy program at Linnaeus University in Kalmar**

Linnaeus University receives about 1200 new international students every year of which about 350 study in Kalmar every year (including the Linnaeus University Summer Academy). All in all, the students represent somewhat 80 different countries across the globe, as well as cultures and languages. International students contribute to create a fantastic environment at Linnaeus University, and we are happy that you want to become a part of that. In Kalmar Linnaeus Union (Linnékåren) is the main organizer of the buddy program.

#### **What are the benefits of becoming a buddy? You get:**

- A possibility to become an important person in the everyday life of a new international student
- A close encounter with another culture
- The possibility to network with other students with an international mindset
- The possibility to learn a new language or practice the ones you already know
- Create a new circle of friends

#### **Some words about being a buddy**

Incoming students (in the program referred to as newbies) appreciate the informal and personal contact a buddy can provide. We know that new international students better appreciate the time away from home with a buddy who may introduce them into the study environment, the local society and way of life in Sweden. Do not be shy to take initiatives. Sometimes a “fika” is all that is needed, or perhaps a walk or join an event. Together you create your friendship.

Being a buddy means helping a newbie to settle in a new and unfamiliar environment. This could involve a minor responsibility but mostly a chance to get a new friend. It is common that buddies choose to be matched with more than one newbie. It is optional but encouraged since many international students are interested.

When you have received the buddy notice with info about your assigned newbie(s), introduce yourself. Use the contact details provided in the email. Find out what you have in common. Maybe you get questions about traveling to Kalmar, how to join a soccer team? What student associations to join? What are the best places for coffee and cake in town? Many students need help with searching for housing\*. It is good to be available upon the newbie’s arrival but not mandatory. Consider what you would appreciate as a newbie.

\*Linnaeus Union has a housing agency with private landlords, as well as general housing info, <https://linnek.se/eng/bostadsportal/> and <https://linnek.se/eng/bostadsinfo/>

#### **Suggestions on how to help your newbie:**

- Invite your student over for “fika”
- Take the newbie to the supermarket. Explain the difference between milk and yogurt package wise.
- Explain how to sign up for exams, buying different memberships, tickets to events
- Library card & copying, getting a router, buying a bus card etc.
- What is Academic quarter?

- How to act when visiting a Swede (for ex. we take off our shoes when invited to a friend's place)
- Explain pre-and after parties

### **Cultural differences**

When you have been informed where your newbies are from, try to update yourself a little bit on each country and its culture. You will, most likely, discover cultural differences between you and your newbie(s). Sometimes they are big, and sometimes they are insignificant, in most cases they can be overcome. Talk to each other, ask questions, explain, and try to understand from your different perspectives. The cultural differences can find expression in practical difficulties for the student. They may also result in cultural "stress". Try to help. If you feel that you cannot support your newbie refer to the Linnaeus Union or to the university.

### **Have you not yet registered?**

Sign up via <https://buddyprogram.lnu.se>



Upon registration you make several choices that will influence the possibility of being assigned a student with a similar profile. Newbies may stay anything from 4,5 months to 3 years. It is possible to indicate your preferences in your application and then we do our best to meet your expectations. Each semester you want to become a buddy to a new newbie you must re-register. This is because we continuously work to improve and upgrade the system used.

### **What happens after the registration?**

Buddies and students are matched in two rounds each semester. If you want to become a buddy in the fall you sign up in the spring and vice versa. The result is shared in June or July and in August for the fall semester, and in December and January for the spring. Registered buddies receive an email with the contact info to their assigned newbies while the newbies receive the buddy's name and a message from you (that is optional to write upon registration). If no email has been received with contact info to your newbies contact us but first look in your spam. If you are notified that you have not been matched, you must wait for the 2<sup>nd</sup> round. When you have been informed about who your newbies are, it is up to you to contact them. *If questions or concerns arise, let us know.*

Join the Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BuddyprogramKalmar/> Here news will be posted along with suggestions of events etc. Buddies can also post questions and help each other.

### **Events**

During the semester ESN Kalmar organizes events for all international students and for local students interested, <https://www.facebook.com/ESNKalmar/>

Linnaeus Union (Linnékåren) also organizes events, some open to all students and some are member exclusive, <https://www.facebook.com/Linnekaeren.kalmar/>

### **Buddy introduction**

Linnaeus Union arranges buddy introductions, often at the end of every semester. Introductions contain information about what we want buddies to do, info about the arriving students and how to support them. Buddies are invited to these introductions via email.

If you did not find the answers to your question here, contact the Student Coordinator.



“Tillsammans med dig skapar vi  
förändring och möjligheter”

**Karin Siöö**  
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