

International Baccalaureate
Diploma Program
CAS Guidebook



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CAS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Creativity, activity, service (CAS) is at the heart of the DP and is designed to strengthen and extend students' personal and interpersonal learning.

The CAS program formally begins at the start of the DP and continues regularly for at least 18 months (September/October of junior year through February/ March of senior year).

A **CAS experience** is a single event or an extended series of events.

It must:

- fit within one or more of the CAS strands (Creativity, Activity, Service)
- be based on a personal interest, skill, talent or opportunity for growth
- provide opportunities to develop the attributes of the IB learner profile

A **CAS project** is a collaborative series of sequential CAS experiences lasting at least one month. Students must be involved in at least one CAS project during the program.

All CAS students must maintain and complete a CAS portfolio as evidence of their engagement with CAS. The CAS portfolio is a collection of evidence that showcases CAS experiences and student reflections.

Types of portfolios include:

- scrapbook, video log, blog, files, website, journal, You Tube

A minimum of **three interviews** are required between the CAS coordinator and the DP students where student progress is discussed and advice is given.

At the completion of the CAS requirements, students will receive 3 credits on their final high school transcripts. CAS satisfies the Fine and Practical Arts requirement.



What I should aim to gain through CAS

Enjoy and find significance in a range of CAS experiences

explore new possibilities

identify goals

Purposefully reflect upon your experiences

embrace new challenges and adapt to new roles



develop strategies and determine further actions for personal growth

actively participate in planned, sustained, and collaborative CAS projects

understand you are a member of local and global communities with responsibilities towards the others and the environment

From the IB CAS guide (for students graduating in 2017 and thereafter)"



WHAT ARE THE CAS STRANDS?

Creativity (C):

Creativity covers a wide range of arts and other activities outside the normal curriculum that includes creative thinking in the design and carrying out of service projects. This could involve doing dance, theater, music, art, or supervised tutoring, for example. You should be engaged in group activities, and especially in new roles, wherever possible.

Activity (A):

Activity is physical exertion that contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Activity can include leading an expedition, team sport, or physical activity beyond what you already do. Activity also includes physical activity involved in carrying out creative service projects.

Service (S):

Service projects and activities are often the most transforming element of the Diploma Program. They have the potential to nurture and mold the global citizen. Service involves interaction, such as the building of links with individuals or groups in the community. The community may be the school, the local district, or it may exist on national and international levels (such as undertaking projects of assistance in a developing country). Service activities should not only involve doing things for others but also doing things *with* others and developing a real commitment with them.

-Service includes:

- Unpaid/voluntary
- Purposeful activities with significant outcomes (How did you make a difference)
- Personal commitment that challenges the student



HOW DO I PLAN A CAS EXPERIENCE OR PROJECT?

Guiding Questions to Consider:

- **Does the activity fit into a CAS strand?**
- Is the activity a new role for me?
- Will the experience be enjoyable?
- Is it a real task that I am going to undertake?
- What do I hope to learn from getting involved?
- How can this activity benefit other people?
- What can I reflect on during this activity?
- Am I passionate about the project so I will enjoy completing it?
- Deep involvement (rather than a passive role)
- Real value (for the student and other people)
- Real reflection (you can find meaning in what you accomplished)

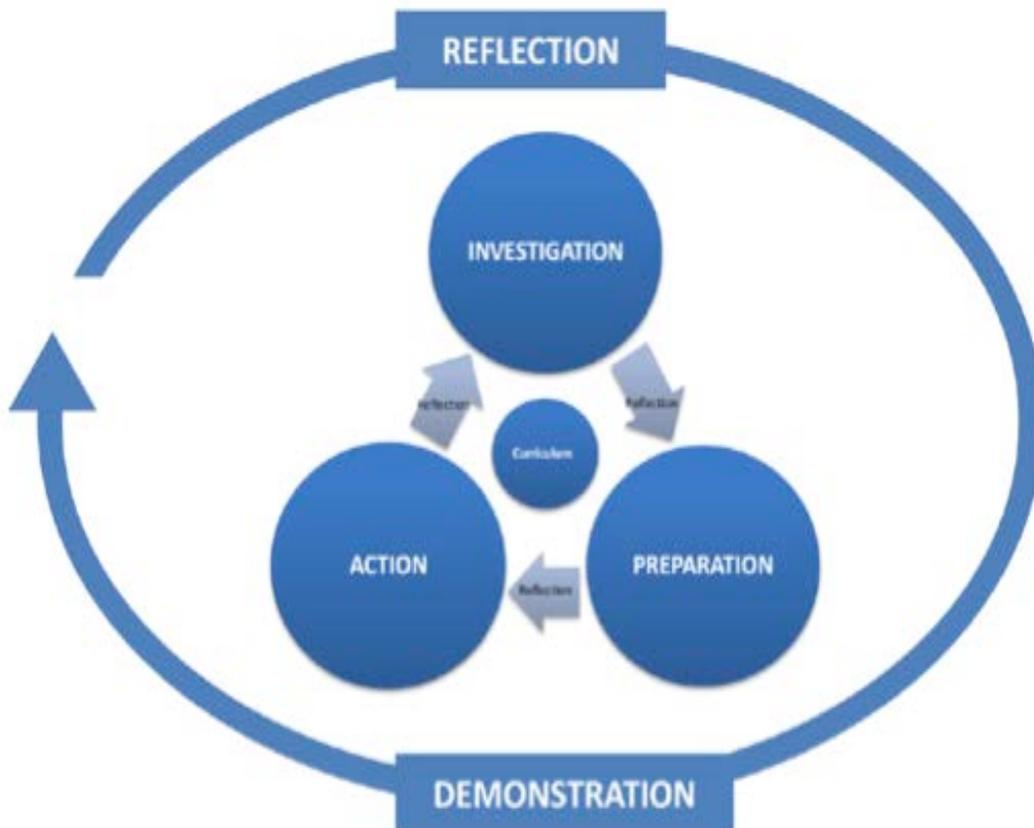
CAS PROJECT

- Teamwork with other students or members of the greater community in a project that lasts at least a month
- Show initiative, perseverance, cooperation, problem-solving and decision-making
- Single strand or combination of two or three strands
- Use CAS stages** as a framework.

** Refer to next page for CAS stages.



CAS STAGES



INVESTIGATION: Students consider opportunities based on their interests, skills, talents and areas for personal growth.

PREPARATION: Students develop a plan of action, identify resources and timelines.

ACTION: Students implement their plan or idea. They may work individually, with partners, or in groups.

REFLECTION: Students describe what happened, express feelings, generate ideas and raise questions. Reflection may lead to new action.

DEMONSTRATION: Students make explicit what they learned and accomplished through their CAS portfolios and in discussion with others.



WHAT CAS IS NOT!

A CAS experience should be satisfying and rewarding. The purpose is lost if it becomes an hour counting exercise.

Here are some examples of what would *not* count as CAS:

- Any class, activity or project that is already part of your Diploma Program
- An activity for which you are personally rewarded (financially or some other benefit like receiving a grade or credit) unless the benefit is passed on to a worthy cause
- Doing simple, tedious and/or repetitive work (like shelving books or cans, or clerical tasks)
- Working in elderly care facilities when you:
 - Have no idea how the facility works
 - Are just making sandwiches
 - Have no contact at all with the elderly
 - Actually do no service for the elderly
- A passive pursuit such as a visit to a museum, art exhibit, vacation tours, concert or sports event, unless it clearly inspires work in a related activity in which a student is already engaged and provides some benefit beyond self
- All forms of duty within a family
- Work experience that only benefits the student
- Fund-raising with no clearly defined end in sight
- An activity where there is no leader or responsible adult on site to evaluate and confirm student performance. This adult cannot be a member of your family.
- Activities that cause division amongst different groups in the community (e.g. work on a political campaign or attending a demonstration)



CAS REFLECTIONS

Reflection is central to building a deep and rich experience in CAS. It leads to improved problem-solving, higher cognitive processes and greater depth of understanding. Reflection is a dynamic means for self-knowing, learning and decision-making and can take many forms. Here are four:

- **Describing what happened:** Students retell their memorable moments, identifying what was important or influential, what went well or was difficult, obstacles and successes.
- **Expressing feelings:** Students articulate emotional responses to their experiences.
- **Generating ideas:** Rethinking or re-examining choices and actions increases awareness about self and situations.
- **Asking questions:** Questions about people, processes or issues prompt further thinking and ongoing inquiry.

REMEMBER!

1. Students should not postpone reflections on a particular activity. Before, during and after an activity are all good times to reflect.
2. Reflection can appear in countless forms. For example:
 - Take photographs while hiking and reflect on them later.
 - Compose a song with a friend.
 - Write a poem.
 - Produce a short video summarizing a CAS experience
 - A group of students create a poster highlighting aspects of a shared experience.
 - Write a paragraph or a letter.

ALSO REMEMBER!

1. Reflecting should be enjoyable.
2. Reflections can be included in the portfolio.
3. Reflection is not right or wrong.



PORTFOLIO

The CAS Portfolio required of all DP students should provide evidence of, and reflection about, the student's CAS activities. The portfolio must show evidence of attainment of the CAS learning outcomes** and reflection of the CAS journey along with a completed CAS Coordinator meeting log.

The CAS Portfolio is a personal project, which should be completed throughout grades 11 and 12, as part of the CAS journey. The CAS Portfolio may take many forms (notebook, scrapbook, electronic), but must contain the following information for each activity or project:

- Name of activity/project and approximate hours (designate creativity, action or service)
- Summary of activity/project and how you interacted with others
- CAS Learning Outcomes** achieved by activity/project
- Reflection of activity/project (suggestions listed below):
 - What did you hope to accomplish through the activity/project?
 - How successful were you in achieving your goals?
 - What difficulties did you encounter? How did you overcome them?
 - What did you learn about yourself and others during this activity/project?
 - What abilities, attitudes, and values have you developed?
 - Did anyone help you think about your learning during this activity/project? If so, who helped and how?
 - How did the activity/project benefit others?
 - What might you do next time to improve?
 - How can you apply what you have learned in other life situations?

Be creative! You may include the information in a variety of ways, not only in a narrative form. The CAS Portfolio should be an expression of you and your journey. Students can address any questions they may have at the three formal meetings with the CAS coordinator.

**CAS Learning Outcomes on next page



CAS Learning Outcomes

Through your CAS Portfolio, a diploma candidate must provide evidence of meeting these 7 outcomes, not necessarily all in the same experience or project:

- **Identify own strengths and develop areas for growth.**
You are able to see yourself as an individual with various skills and abilities, some more developed than others, and understand that you can make choices about how you wish to move forward.
- **Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken.**
A new challenge may be an unfamiliar activity, or an extension to an existing one.
- **Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience.**
Planning and initiation will often be in collaboration with others. However, you yourself must be in a leadership role.
- **Show perseverance and commitment in CAS experiences.**
Students demonstrate regular involvement and active engagement in CAS.
- **Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively.**
Students are able to critically discuss the benefits and challenges of collaboration.
- **Engage with issues of global significance.**
Understand global issues, make responsible decisions, and take appropriate action in response to local, national and international issues. (for example, environmental concerns, hunger, caring for elderly).
- **Consider the ethical implications of one's choices and actions.**
Ethical decisions arise in almost any CAS activity of dedicated time engagement. Examples are in unique club experiences such as Model UN, leadership roles, and in relationships with others, particularly children. Evidence of thinking about ethical issues can be shown in various ways which should include reflective writing..



IB Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programs is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

Make sure to reference the IB Learner Profile words in your reflections to communicate how you developed these characteristics throughout your CAS project.

IB learners strive to be:

Inquirers They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

Knowledgeable They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

Principled They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Open-minded they understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

Risk-takers They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas, and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.



CAS student check list for Learning Outcomes

<i>Learning Outcome</i>	<i>Achieved? (√)</i>	<i>Evidence</i> <i>(web log [date]; journal [page xx]; progress form [date])</i>
Increased awareness of strengths and areas for growth		
Undertaken new challenges		
Planned and initiated activities		
Worked collaboratively with others		
Shown perseverance and commitment in activities		
Engaged with issue of global importance		
Considered the ethical implications of their actions		

NAME OF STUDENT:

_____ **date**

NAME OF CAS ADVISOR:

DATE AND SIGNATURE OF CAS ADVISOR:

DATE AND SIGNATURE OF CAS COORDINATOR:



CAS project planning form

Student document

Student Project Leader(s)			
Members			
Title of Project			
Focus of Project			
How we are following the CAS stages			
Investigation			
Preparation			
Action			
Reflection			
Demonstration			
Name of organization the project is organized with or for, if applicable			
Contact person at organization, contact phone and email, if applicable			
Teacher or other external supervisor, if applicable			
Anticipated dates of CAS project			
Risk assessment required?	Yes/No	Risk assessment completed?	Yes/No
Student signatures			
CAS supervisor/adviser signature/date			

5. Which of the following learning outcomes have you addressed with this activity? (choose all that apply)

- Increasing your awareness of your own strengths and areas for growth
- Undertaking new challenges
- Planning and initiating activities
- Working collaboratively with others
- Showing perseverance and commitment in your activities
- Engaging with issues of global importance
- Considering the ethical implications of your actions
- Developing new skills

6. Describe how one of the checked learning outcome was actualized in this activity.

Student's signature _____ date _____

Activity leader's name _____

Activity leader's contact phone or email address _____

Activity leader's signature and date _____

Name of agency/organization if applicable _____

CAS coordinator's signature and date _____

Teachers report some ways students have presented their reflections

“Some students organized an impromptu 'flash mob' to commemorate their attendance at an annual Youth Leaders symposium. One of the art students then followed this up with a cartoon depiction of the event, which included caricatures of each student who had participated accompanied by speech bubbles with their individual comments on the flash mob experience and the symposium.”

“A student created a magic show as his choice for expressive, meaningful reflection. Challenges and surprises were represented by objects appearing out of hats, from behind ears and magically out of thin air. Similarly, items disappeared within an instant, representing challenges successfully met along his CAS journey. The magic show demonstrated the student’s passion for magic—his distinct talent—as well as a compilation of numerous skills and knowledge acquired during his time in the DP.”

“Following his involvement in a CAS project focusing on improving social justice, a student wrote two songs that acted as a culminating reflection. The student performed these songs in the school cafeteria, with an accompanying visual presentation that gave further details on his reflections and overall experience.”

“One of my students decided to take one photograph a week throughout her CAS experience that captured what she was feeling, thinking, seeing or learning. She combed through her photographs to create a gallery without a single caption to present to the community. She wanted to see if what she saw through her camera lens would reflect the story accurately.”

“A student turned in a basketball to represent his reflection in Activity. All over the basketball he wrote phrases, attached photos, and adhered articles to repurpose the ball as a road map to his experience and represent his reflections.”

“Students who, as part of a CAS group project, were tutoring children within the Hmong community learned about the story quilts that are their traditional art form. They collaborated on a tapestry using learned skills from the Hmong artisans to tell about their collective journey.”

“A student decided to make a drawing on his growth process through CAS. Just with drawings we could understand how his experiences developed his self-identity.”

A series of written reflections by one student

17 February: I wouldn't say my football ability is terrible but I would like to improve on the skills I already have. During secondary school, I would occasionally play football, however, in my opinion, there was no real passion behind it. I played football just because I had to, however, over the given two year period, I've grown to the sport and began watching a lot more on television. This has driven me forward into building upon the skills I have into a better player overall. Also, this would help me keep fit and healthy while studying the IB. The first week, I filled in the midfield role to push for a 3-1 victory over the opposing team. Good start to a promising future I thought.

24 February: I decided I wanted to play the same role as I did during the first week. My reason for this was I knew some of the mistakes I had made during my debut match. For instance, in an attempt to pass the ball to one of the strikers as they were in on goal, I accidentally passed it off the pitch. This led to the opposing team getting a throw in and led to them getting a goal. Therefore, this time round, my aim for this week was to play the role I was 100% sure of and knew the limits to my abilities.

2 March: As I started the match on both first and second week, I did not want to be greedy and continue to be first pick. The main reason I believe I was first pick was purely based upon knowing friends that attended football on Friday. I took this time to stand on the side and observe those who

played in the role of a midfielder that I would normally be playing to see if they are doing anything different in comparison to me. I know that in any team sport it is essential to be cooperative and have good communication with the team. Saying this, I wanted to explore how important it was to be a communicative player in a team and therefore, at the beginning of next week, I shall be asking if I can play as a manager of the team rather than playing. This will allow me to see how the team interacts and how able to communicate good strategies I may have come across.

9 March: This week went successfully I think. I had the privilege to manage the team which I found interesting. My plan was to observe the game and, during the second half, have a quick team talk about the positives and negatives. I called for a change in formation as I believed it would be more beneficial to the team if we played 1 striker but 5 midfielders instead. Fortunately, the strategy worked and we came out from a 2-1 loss during the first half to a 2-3 win for the students! What an intense game.

16 March: Getting picked for a starting position felt good again. Although previously I had really enjoyed the manager role, I think a big part of playing football every Friday is to maintain a high level of fitness and try to extrapolate as much both physical and mental skills as I can from the sport. Therefore, going back to the midfielder role was fun and interesting as I could use the skills I had acquired from last session whilst playing in the game.

30 March: This week was not as exhausting as other weeks are for me as we ended up playing a five-a-side match due to a shortage of players. I could not gain much from the game and therefore once everyone decided to leave, me and friends stayed to play penalty shoot out. I found out during this week that there is a huge amount of pressure on one's shoulders.

Expressions of observations, thoughts and feelings by three different students

"I was just in town and standing in front of a store. A bearded man came by and politely asked another man who was passing by, 'Excuse me, can you help me?' This other man, much more affluent by the look of his clothes, replied in a very rude and abrupt tone, 'I don't have time for that right now!' and kept walking. I suppose he thought the bearded man was going to ask him for money. But that wasn't the case. After he stomped off this man turned to me and asked the same question. It turned out all he wanted was for someone to unclip a watch that was clipped to the back of his pack so he could go in and buy a battery for it. Not a huge request. I was glad to be able to help after the first man had treated him so rudely. This experience reminded me how important it is to stop, look, and listen.

"As one of my service experiences I wanted to help an elderly person as I realized that their problems are sometimes neglected or forgotten. That is why I turned to a nurse so that she could find a person in need of help and willing to be helped. I stayed in contact with the nurse and after a while she gave me the name and address of an old lady whom she described as lonely and having problems with walking. I was happy that I found the opportunity to offer my help to a person in need. On one day the nurse and I visited the elderly lady in her flat. Beforehand, the nurse informed me that the lady used to work physically and retired early (at the age of 45 due to health problems). I got acquainted with her and from that day on I started visiting her regularly once a week.

"I went for walks with the lady and every week we went shopping to the nearest supermarket. However, the most important task turned out to be far more difficult than I had expected. I made the greatest effort to make the woman cheerful, to create a friendly warm atmosphere, but I noticed how reserved and depressed she was. She mentioned the fact that she had been lonely for a long time and it stuck in my memory. It made me realize how loneliness affects human psyche.

"At the beginning I found it very difficult to make her smile, because she was only saying how miserable her life was and complained about the problems that she faced. I tried to show my

understanding and convince her that life is worth living regardless of the difficulties one faces, but it seemed to me that it did not speak to her.

“Sometimes I wondered if my visits and help were bringing her anything good. Surprisingly, as time was passing by and we came to know each other better, I noticed a change in her and a change in the character of our interaction. I was very happy when on one day she confessed to me how grateful she was for my help. The experience gave me fulfillment and made me conceive how serious is the problem of loneliness in life and I realized the importance of attention that needs to be paid to lonely people.

“I have seen first-hand the harshness of the aging process. People who were once vibrant, bustling human beings are now confined and subdued by their deteriorating health. Jane has Parkinson’s disease and is inhibited by her soft speech and inability to use her hands. I know from the time we have spent together that she has so much to say and many interests, but is slowed and sometimes stopped by her illness. Anne’s only disease is effects of time and how it has affected her memory and hearing. Although she always recognizes me, Anne does not remember my name or hear much of what people say to her.

“As time went by, I began to realize that they had wonderful lives. Both have successful and large families, with interesting experiences throughout their lives. Now they are slowed down, but maybe because it is time for them to rest. I have learned a lot from them, about many things, but mostly about how to live with what you are given ... I hope when I am their age and in their situation like theirs that I can have their attitude—life is what it is and the best thing to do is accept it and be happy.”

Student reflection through poetry

Let me not forget the memory of reunion.

Let me not forget the time, space, place, or the embrace.

The passing sound of suitcase wheels, interrupting announcements,

The ever growing feeling of relief, and love.

Let me not forget the moment when nothing else mattered,

Responsibilities, expectations, standards, pressure,

Slipping through my fingers as they wrap themselves in this reality.

Let me not forget the peaceful bliss as the tears glided down my cheeks;

Tears of joy, of content, of ecstatic happiness.

Let me not forget the fulfillment of those anticipating months.

Let me not forget that despite the previous distance, everything was renewed.

A friendship not worn by separation, but rather solidified in faith.

The faith that this moment would come, and would come many times again.

Let me not forget that some things can never be broken.

Let me not forget.



CAS Exit Presentation in Senior Year

The CAS Exit Presentation is an authentic assessment of each student's experience while fulfilling the CAS requirement. This interview will occur at the conclusion of the 18 months and will allow a student the opportunity to prepare a meaningful presentation of the experience. The presentation, at minimum, should be 10 minutes in length.

Preparing for the CAS Exit Presentation and Questions

- All exit interview question responses should be thoroughly elaborated upon using details and examples.
- Prepare your presentation and practice within the designated ten minute time frame.
- Preparation should be obvious; avoid reading responses and referring often to notes.
- Engage in positive presentation habits such as poise, articulation, and personal awareness.
- Below are ten potential questions you may be asked at your presentation.

CAS Exit Interview Questions

Diploma seniors will be interviewed at the end of the 18 month CAS experience. These examples are potential interview questions:

1. What abilities, attitudes, and values did you develop, change, or examine as a result of your CAS Project?
2. What difficulties did you encounter and how did you overcome them?
3. What types of knowledge did you gain through your CAS Project? How have you, or will you, pass on that knowledge to others?
4. Of the seven CAS learner outcomes, which one did you feel was the greatest challenge for you and why?
5. What advice do you have for younger students regarding their CAS Project?
6. In what way(s) was this project a new role for you?
7. Leadership is an integral part of the learner outcomes. How did you demonstrate leadership, what was your role, and how would you evaluate your success?
8. Reflecting back on your Project, what would you change and why?
9. In what ways did your CAS Project clarify or change your sense of what is important?
10. What volunteer opportunities do you see yourself doing in the future and why?

NOTES