

Georgetown District High School

International Baccalaureate Diploma Program



CAS Handbook

Creativity, Action, Service

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IB Learner Profile

The goal of all IB programme is to develop internationally minded people who all strive to be:

- ***Inquirers*** Students 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*** Students explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In doing so, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.
- ***Thinkers*** Students exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.
- ***Communicators*** Students understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a creativity of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.
- ***Principled*** Students 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*** Students 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*** Students show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.
- ***Risk-takers*** Students 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*** Students understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.
- ***Reflective*** Students give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strength and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

What is CAS?

Creativity, action, service (CAS) is at the heart of the Diploma Programme. It is one of the three essential elements in every student's IB experience. The three strands of CAS are characterized as follows:

Creativity: Exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance

Activity: physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle

Service: Collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need

...if you believe in something, you must not just think or talk or write, but must act.

Peterson (2003) – First Director of IBO

Why CAS? Because you are more than just a grade. CAS is intended to help you learn through life experiences. You are already involved in many activities; CAS asks you to consider how these activities help you to become a better person.

Think about this... While much of your academic life is determined by the curriculum, CAS provides a rare opportunity. In CAS, you get to choose what you're going to discover about yourself and the world around you. CAS is your chance to take charge of what you learn. You plan your CAS! CAS is also different because it is experiential learning. You have the chance to challenge yourself and learn in a completely different way than you would in the classroom. In addition, CAS gives you the opportunity to give back to and learn about your local or global community by getting involved.

Everybody can be great, because anybody can serve.

Martin Luther King Jr.

CAS should involve:

- real, purposeful activities, with significant outcomes
- personal challenge—tasks must extend the student and be achievable in scope
- thoughtful consideration, such as planning, reviewing progress, reporting
- reflection on outcomes and personal learning.

All proposed CAS activities need to meet these four criteria.

You must be the change you wish to see in the world

Mahatama Ghandi

Concurrency of learning is important in the Diploma Programme. Therefore, CAS activities should continue on a regular basis for as long as possible throughout the programme, and certainly for at least 18 months.

Successful completion of CAS is a requirement for the award of the IB diploma

CAS IS NOT INTENDED TO BE FORCED THROUGH, 'GOTTEN OUT OF THE WAY',
OR CAUGHT UP AT THE LAST MINUTE

Learning Outcomes

As a result of their CAS experience as a whole, including their reflections, there should be evidence that students have:

- 1. Identify own strengths and develop areas for growth**
Students are able to see themselves as individuals with various abilities and skills, of which some are more developed than others.
- 2. Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken, developing new skills in the process**
A new challenge may be an unfamiliar experience or an extension of an existing one. The newly acquired or developed skills may be shown through experiences that the student has not previously undertaken or through increased expertise in an established area.
- 3. Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience**
Students can articulate the stages from conceiving an idea to executing a plan for a CAS experience or series of CAS experiences. This may be accomplished in collaboration with other participants. Students may show their knowledge and awareness by building on a previous experience, or by launching a new idea or process.
- 4. Show commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences**
Students demonstrate regular involvement and active engagement in CAS.
- 5. Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively**
Students are able to identify, demonstrate and critically discuss the benefits and challenges of collaboration gained through CAS experiences.
- 6. Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance**
Students are able to identify and demonstrate their understanding of global issues, make responsible decisions, and take appropriate action in response to the issue either locally, nationally or internationally.
- 7. Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions**
Students show awareness of the consequences of choices and actions in planning and carrying out CAS experiences.

All seven outcomes must be present for a student to complete the CAS requirement. Some may be demonstrated many times, in a variety of activities, but completion requires only that there is **some** evidence for every outcome. This focus on learning outcomes emphasizes that it is the quality of a CAS activity (its contribution to the student's development) that is of most importance.

Responsibilities of the Student

The CAS programme is the student's responsibility. The CAS experience is personal and only the student can create a path of development and growth that meets their needs. Therefore each student should "own" their personal CAS programme.

The International Baccalaureate Organization outlines that the student is required to:

- **self-review** at the beginning of the CAS experience and set personal goals for what they hope to achieve through their CAS programme.
- **plan, do and reflect** (plan activities, carry them out and reflect on what they have learned).
- adhere to the meeting schedule set forth by the CAS Coordinator to plan, discuss, and reflect on activities
- **take part in a range of activities**, including at least one project that is initiated by themselves. At least one project must include two of the three CAS components (creativity, action, service)
- **keep accurate records** of their activities, achievements and reflections as well as note which CAS Learning Outcomes have been met on their ManageBac account.

So how much CAS do you have to do?

IB states that it is the... "quality of a CAS activity (its contribution to the student's development) that is of most importance." The guideline for the minimum amount of CAS activity is approximately the equivalent of half a day per school week (three to four hours per week) or **approximately 150 hours** in total, with a reasonable balance between creativity, action and service. The guideline of 150 hours is not so that hours are counted, but rather for students to understand the expected level of commitment expected.

Reflection

IB stresses that one of the most important aspects of personal development and growth is the ability to reflect. Students must be able to identify their achievements and outstanding issues, personal strengths and challenges, be able to evaluate their actions, and synthesize new understandings.

Students will document their CAS activities, reflect upon their experiences, and submit them to the CAS Coordinator via ManageBac. Reflection may take on many forms, including, but not limited to journal entries, illustrated displays or videos, sound bites, and blogs.

We understand that reflection is a skill that needs to be developed. The fundamentals are simple. Of any activity, it is appropriate to ask the following questions:

- What did I plan to do?, What did I do?, What were the outcomes, for me, the team I was working with, and others?

Reflection should then move into more developed reflection...

- How did I feel?
- What did I perceive?
- What did I think about the activity?
- What did the activity mean to me?
- What was the value of the activity?
- What did I learn from the activity and how might this learning (for example, a change in perspective) apply more widely.

If this activity was service, you might also want to consider ethical questions such as:

- Am I trying to help or empower people with a service?
- What obligation do I have to the person who is being served?
- How do I finish a service relationship?

Creativity Suggestions

- Learning to Paint
- Performing in a jazz band
- Teaching guitar to a younger person
- Serving on the executive of student government
- Teaching English as a Second Language
- Working with disadvantaged children on a community mural
- Organizing any school or community event
- Creating and managing a website
- Learning to play a musical instrument

Action Suggestions

- Teaching swimming to children who have developmental or physical concerns
- Coaching a softball team
- Leading a camping expedition
- Garbage collection in the community
- Joining a running club
- Learning to scuba-dive
- Gymnastics
- Working out at the GDHS Fitness Centre or other gym setting
- Playing on a sports team
- Leading an active activity at Integration Day

Service Suggestions

- Teaching basketball to a community youth group
- Designing noticeboards and posters for a charitable organization
- Exchanging artistic skills with other students in local schools
- Organizing a camp for children
- Habitat For Humanity – House building
- Assisting in an organized community search and rescue team
- Participating in Model Parliament
- Volunteering at many community organizations

CAS Timetable

CAS is to extend over 18 months, from September of your grade 11 year until March of your grade 12 year. Of course, you are encouraged to continue these activities, but completion of your file on *ManageBac* and all supporting material will be due no later than May 25.

September of grade 11 – Meet with CAS coordinator, start planning your activities, be sure your CAS coordinator has an up-to-date email address for you. You will receive log in information and then you can log onto *ManageBac*, complete an initial self-review, and begin recording your goals and activities.

Grade 11 and 1st semester Grade 12 – Meet individually with your CAS coordinator to review your plan and progress (once each semester). Keep *ManageBac* up-to-date by reflecting on your activities and experiences and showing evidence of your activities. Follow the plan of action (see next page).

March 1 of your Grade 12 year – *ManageBac* reporting must be complete. The CAS coordinator will schedule an exit interview. You will also submit a CAS Final Reflection (details later).

CAS project

A CAS project is a collaborative, well-considered series of sequential CAS experiences, engaging students in one or more of the CAS strands of creativity, activity, and service. **CAS students must be involved in at least one CAS project during their CAS programme.**

The primary purpose of the CAS project is to ensure participation in sustained collaboration. Through this level of engagement students may discover the benefits of teamwork and of achievements realized through an exchange of ideas and abilities. A CAS project challenges students to show initiative, demonstrate perseverance, and develop skills such as those of cooperation, problem-solving and decision-making.

A CAS project involves collaboration between a group of students or with members of the wider community. Students work as part of a team, with all members being contributors. A CAS project offers students the opportunity to be responsible for, or to initiate, a part of or the entire CAS project. Working collaboratively also provides opportunities for individual students to enhance and integrate their personal interests, skills and talents into the planning and implementation of CAS projects.

A CAS project can address any single strand of CAS, or combine two or all three strands. The following examples are provided to help generate further ideas without limiting the scope and direction of a CAS project.

Creativity: A student group plans, designs and creates a mural.

Activity: Students organize and participate in a sports team including training sessions and matches against other teams.

Service: Students set up and conduct tutoring for people in need.

Creativity and activity: Students choreograph a routine for their marching band.

Service and activity: Students plan and participate in the planting and maintenance of a garden with members of the local community.

Service and creativity: Students identify that children at a local school need backpacks and subsequently design and make the backpacks out of recycled materials.

Creativity, activity, and service: Students rehearse and perform a dance production for a community retirement home.

All CAS projects are designed with a defined purpose and goals. Individual students identify one or more learning outcomes to further guide their role and responsibilities in the CAS project. Students will likely identify more outcomes, or modify expected outcomes during the CAS project and/or at its completion.

A minimum of one month is recommended for a CAS project, from planning to completion. CAS projects of longer duration can provide even greater scope and opportunities for all participants and should be encouraged. Students should aim to undertake their CAS project locally and, if possible, engage in more than one CAS project over the duration of their CAS programme.

