Upper Arlington High School

CAS Guide

What Can You Be?

Sept. 2008
Aims

Why CAS? Because you are more than just an average student. CAS is intended to move you out of the academic arena and help you learn through life experiences. Yes, as an IB student, we know you are involved in many interesting activities. What we are asking you to do is consider how these activities help you to become a better person. CAS is about:

- reflective thinkers – you understand your own strengths and limitations, identify goals and devise strategies for personal growth
- the willingness to accept new challenges and new roles
- awareness of yourself as a member of communities
- being an active participant in sustained, collaborative projects
- balance - you enjoy and find significance in a range of activities involving intellectual, physical, creative and emotional experiences.

The nature of creativity, action and service

Creativity, action, service (CAS) is at the heart of the Diploma Programme. It is one of the three essential elements in every student’s Diploma Programme experience. It involves students in a range of activities alongside their academic studies throughout the Diploma Programme. The three strands of CAS, which are often interwoven with particular activities, are characterized as follows.

Creativity: arts, and other experiences that involve creative thinking.

Action: physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle, complementing academic work elsewhere in the Diploma Programme.

Service: an unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for the student. The rights, dignity and autonomy of all those involved are respected.

CAS enables you to enhance your personal and interpersonal development through experiential learning. At the same time, it provides an important counterbalance to academic pressures of the rest of the Diploma Programme. A good CAS programme should be both challenging and enjoyable, a personal journey of self-discovery. Each individual student has a different starting point, and therefore different goals and needs, but for many your CAS activities include experiences that are profound and life changing.

CAS should involve:

- real, purposeful activities, with significant outcomes
- personal challenge-tasks must extend you 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. CAS activities should continue on a regular basis for as long as possible throughout the programme, and certainly for at least 18 months.
Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are differentiated from assessment objectives because they are not rated on a scale. The completion decision for the school in relation to each student is, simply, “Have these outcomes been achieved?”

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

- **Increased their awareness of their own strengths and areas for growth**
  They are able to see themselves as individuals with various skills and abilities, some more developed than others, and understand that they can make choices about how they wish to move forward.

- **Undertaken new challenges**
  A new challenge may be an unfamiliar activity, or an extension to an existing one.

- **Planned and initiated activities**
  Planning and initiation will often be in collaboration with others. It can be shown in activities that are part of larger projects, for example, ongoing school activities in the local community, as well as in small student-led activities.

- **Worked collaboratively with others**
  Collaboration can be shown in many different activities, such as team sports, playing music in a band, or helping in a kindergarten. At least one project, involving collaboration and the integration of at least two of creativity, action and service, is required.

- **Shown perseverance and commitment in their activities**
  At a minimum, this implies attending regularly and accepting a share of the responsibility for dealing with problems that arise in the course of activities.

- **Engaged with issues of global importance**
  Students may be involved in international projects but there are many global issues that can be acted upon locally or nationally for example, environmental concerns, caring for the elderly).

- **Considered the ethical implication of their actions**
  Ethical decisions arise in almost any CAS activity (for example, on the sports field, in musical composition, in relationships with others involved in service activities). Evidence of thinking about ethical issues can be shown in various ways, including journal entries and conversations with CAS advisers.

- **Developed new skills**
  As with new challenges, new skills may be shown in activities that the student has not previously undertaken, or in increased expertise in an established area.

All eight 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.
Responsibilities of the student

The relevant section of the IB Programme standards and practices document states that students should have opportunities to choose their own CAS activities and to undertake activities in a local and international context as appropriate. This means that, as far as possible, students should “own” their personal CAS programmes. With guidance from their mentors/advisers, students should choose activities for themselves, initiating new ones where appropriate.

Students are **required** to:

- Self-review at the beginning of their 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)
- Undertake at least one interim review and a final review with their CAS adviser
- Take part in a range of activities, including at least one project, some of which they have initiated themselves
- Keep records of their activities and achievements, including a list of the principal activities undertaken
- Show evidence of achievement of the eight CAS learning outcomes

Experiential Learning

While different Diploma Programme subjects offer varying amounts of opportunity for experiential learning, it is at the very heart of CAS.

As the figure indicated, experiential learning involves much more than just the activity itself: planning, acting, observing and reflecting are all crucial in making the experience as valuable as possible.

The cycle of experiential learning

![Diagram of the cycle of experiential learning](image-url)
Reflection, recording and reporting

We understand that reflection is a skill that needs to be developed. Not everyone is comfortable with this process and we do not assume that it comes naturally. Just as kind of reflection that a critic applies to a work of art or literature is something that develops with time and experience, so the kind of reflection appropriate in CAS is something that requires guidance and practice.

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?

The difficulty lies in the complexity of the possible answers.

Kinds of reflection

Different kinds of reflection work for different people. Reflection can be:

- Public or private
- Individual or shared
- Objective or subjective

For example, in a CAS group project, the planning stages are largely public, so reflection on them can be largely public, shared and objective. The term “largely” is used because there may be individual views that arise independently, in terms of how satisfactory the process was for a particular student (who may enter and leave the activity with different personal experiences from others).

Carrying out the project is likely to be both public and private, both individual and shared, and both objective and subjective.

Outcomes of a project or other activity are similar: there may be objective successes and limitations of the activity as a whole, but what it has meant for the team and for individual within it may be more varied.

For some students and some kinds of reflection (such as private, individual, subjective), writing is the best tool for reflection. However, for many, reflective writing does not come naturally. It can, to some extent, be “modeled” in oral discussion of more public, less sensitive matters, either as an end in itself or as a prelude to writing.

But writing is by no means the only possible outcome of reflection. You can present your activities orally to peers, parents or outsiders. You can make scrapbooks, photo essays, videos/DVDs or web logs. You can use journals or make up varied portfolios. You may decide to build an e-mail relationship with your CAS advisor. All of these are valid reflective forms.
Developing reflection

Moving on from the “What?” questions outlined earlier, experiential learners might consider, where appropriate, for themselves and others, and of each stage of an activity (before, during and after):

- 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 did this learning (for example, a change of perspective) apply more widely?

If the activity is service, you might also want to consider ethical questions such as:

- What is a service?
- Why is service to the family not considered as a service?
- 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?
- What do I do if the person does not want my service?

Recording and reporting

You should document your CAS activities, noting in particular your reflections upon experiences. As previously indicated, this documentation may take many forms, including journals, written papers, web logs, illustrated displays, videos, scrapbooks, and/or portfolios. (Many other possibilities exist for reflection pieces so please do not limit yourself.) Its extent should match the significance of the particular activity to you. There is no point in writing lengthy accounts about relatively routine experiences.

To help you keep track of your hours, there is a log form in this booklet. Please remember, the log does not take the place of the reflections. However, a log is required as a part of your documentation.
What do I need for CAS?

• An initial self-review must be completed.
• Students must meet with their CAS advisor a minimum of once a quarter to discuss and show progress.
• Hours must be a substantial amount. They must contain action, creative and service activities.
• A record sheet must be keep by students keeping track of activities completed and the learning outcomes that have been meet.
• A reflection piece needs to be completed at the end of every activity and shown to the CAS advisor.
• Reflection pieces must show a variety. Students cannot complete the exact same reflection piece over and over again.
• A CAS project must be completed. A project must involve at least two of the three areas creative, action and service. A project is made up of many activities and extends over a long period of time (a minimum of four months) of showing commitment.
• All eight learning outcomes must be demonstrated.
• Students must keep all work in a container of some sort. This could be a notebook, a scrapbook, a folder on a desktop or another type of container.
• During the third quarter of the students senior year they will need to create a final summary that showcases ten reflection pieces. Three of these pieces must come from a project showing the beginning, middle and end of the project. The other seven pieces should showcase the students CAS experience. Students will then present their CAS project during the third quarter to a panel consisting of IB students, teachers and parents.

A Final Word

The beauty of the CAS programme is that it is an individual experience designed by you, for you. Yes, CAS is about reaching out to your local, national and global community, but it is also about reflecting upon your activities and actins. It is about becoming an active member of life and learning who you are.
IB Forms
Initial Self-Review
CAS

I am good at.....

__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

I am not very good at.......

__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

I have always wanted to try......

__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
What I would like to improve……..

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

Compared to what I was like at the beginning of High School, I am now much better at………

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

Someone I have always admired is ………..
# CAS Individual Student Completion Form

Name: _______________________________

| Activity Name                                      |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Learning Outcomes**                             |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increased their awareness of their own strengths  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| and areas for growth                              |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Undertaken new challenges                         |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Planned and initiated activities                  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Worked collaboratively with others                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Shown perseverance and commitment in their        |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| activities                                        |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Engaged with issues of global importance          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Considered the ethical implication of their       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| actions                                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Developed new skills                              |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reflection Piece                                  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Creativity, Action or Service                     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Name of CAS adviser: ____________________________ CAS adviser’s signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________
**Progress Form**

Name of Student: ___________________________________________

Name of CAS Advisor: ______________________________                Year 1

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<td>First consultation between CAS adviser and student</td>
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<td>Second consultation between CAS adviser and student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third consultation between CAS adviser and student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fourth consultation between CAS adviser and student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student has submitted reflective work</td>
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**Progress Form**

Name of Student: ________________________________________________

Name of CAS Advisor: ______________________________             Year 2

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<td>First consultation between CAS adviser and student</td>
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<td>Second consultation between CAS adviser and student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third consultation between CAS adviser and student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fourth consultation between CAS adviser and student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student has submitted final reflections</td>
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