

CAS Quick Start Guide

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What is CAS?

Creativity: Arts and other experiences that involve creative thinking.

Action: Physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle.

Service: an unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for the student.

For student development to occur, 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

Learning Outcomes

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

1. **Identify own strengths and 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 new 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. **Initiates and plans CAS experiences:** 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.
4. **Shows commitment and perseverance in their CAS experiences:** Students demonstrate regular involvement and active engagement in CAS experiences.
5. **Demonstrates the skills and benefits of working collaboratively with others:** Collaboration can be shown in many different activities, such as team sports, playing music in a band, peer tutoring, or INTERACT. At least one project, involving collaboration and the integration of at least two of creativity, action and service, is **required**
6. **Demonstrates engagement 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, INTERACT).
7. **Recognizes and considers the ethical implications 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 self-reflections.

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.

Responsibilities of the Student

- approach CAS with a proactive attitude
- develop a clear understanding of CAS expectations and the purpose of CAS
- explore personal values, attitudes and attributes with reference to the IB learner profile and the IB mission statement
- determine personal goals
- discuss plans for CAS experiences with the CAS coordinator and/or CAS adviser
- understand and apply the CAS stages where appropriate
- take part in a variety of experiences, some of which are self-initiated, and at least one CAS project
- become more aware of personal interests, skills and talents and observe how these evolve throughout the CAS programme
- maintain a CAS portfolio and keep records of CAS experiences including evidence of achievement of the seven CAS learning outcomes
- understand the reflection process and identify suitable opportunities to reflect on CAS experiences
- demonstrate accomplishments within their CAS programme
- communicate with the CAS coordinator/adviser and/or CAS supervisor in formal and informal meetings
- ensure a suitable balance between creativity, activity and service in their CAS programme
- behave appropriately and ethically in their choices and behaviours.
- show documented evidence of achievement of the seven CAS learning outcomes.

Reflection

Students might consider for each stage of an activity (before, during and after):

- How they felt
- Why they became engaged in the activity
- What they thought about the activity
- What was the value of the activity for you
- How did others benefit from your actions or participation in this activity
- What they learned from the activity and how this learning (for example, a change of perspective) might apply more widely.

Projects

Students should be involved in at least one project involving teamwork that integrates two or more of creativity, action and service, and is of significant duration.

Recording and Reporting

Students should frequently document their CAS activities noting in particular their **reflections** upon their experiences. This documentation may take many forms, including self-reflections, journals, and photography.

Students will maintain a list of the principal activities undertaken and evidence of both planning and reflection.

Students' CAS portfolio (records) must make it possible for the CAS Coordinator and the IBO evaluator to tell: **what happened, why it happened, how it happened, what its value was, and what the student learned from it.**

Creativity (Arts and other experiences that involve creative thinking)

Creative activities should have a definite goal or outcome. They should be planned and evaluated like all CAS activities so as to help to fulfill CAS learning outcomes.

For example, the instrumental musician can learn a particularly difficult piece, or a different style of playing, in order to perform for an audience. The context might be a fund-raising activity or the student might take a leadership position in the choir or band. Appropriate CAS activities are not merely "more of the same"—more practice, more concerts with the school band, and so on.

Activity (Physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle)

Setting goals, planning and reflecting on their achievement, is vital. "Extending" the student may go further, for example, to asking them to pass on some of their skills and knowledge to others, e.g., coaching a younger team. If their chosen sport is entirely individual, perhaps they should try a team game, in order to experience the different pleasures and rewards on offer.

Service (An unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for the student)

It is essential that service activities have learning benefits for the student. Otherwise, they are not experiential learning (hence not CAS) and have no particular claim on students' time. This rules out mundane, repetitive activities, as well as "service" without real responsibility.

It is essential that CAS activity is an extension to subject work. To attempt to count the **same** work for both a subject or extended essay and CAS would constitute malpractice.

Political and Religious Activity

The IB has no view on whether or not it is appropriate for students to be involved in political activities as part of their educational experience. Views on this vary considerably in different cultural contexts, so it is a matter for decision at local or school level. See the CAS Coordinator. However, where such activity is locally sanctioned, there is a question about whether or not it may qualify as CAS. It may be relevant to consider the following factors: is the activity safe, and will it cause or worsen social divisions? Concerning **religious activity**, the general rule is that religious devotion, and any activity that can be interpreted as proselytizing, does not count as CAS