

**Creativity, Activity, Service:
CAS Student Handbook**

Diploma Programme
Irmo International High School for the Arts

CAS Handbook

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IB Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programmes 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.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

Inquirers – We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

Knowledgeable – We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

Thinkers – We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators – We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

Principled – We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

Open-Minded – We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring – We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

Risk-Takers – We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

Balanced – We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

Reflective – We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The Nature of CAS

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

Alec Peterson, 2003, describing the conviction of German philosopher Kurt Hahn

Creativity, activity, 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. The three strands of CAS, which are often interwoven with particular activities, 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

As a shining beacon of our values, CAS enables students to demonstrate attributes of the IB learner profile in real and practical ways, to grow as unique individuals and to recognize their role in relation to others. Students develop skills, attitudes and dispositions through a variety of individual and group experiences that provide students with opportunities to explore their interests and express their passions, personalities and perspectives. CAS complements a challenging academic programme in a holistic way, providing opportunities for **self-determination, collaboration, accomplishment and enjoyment**.

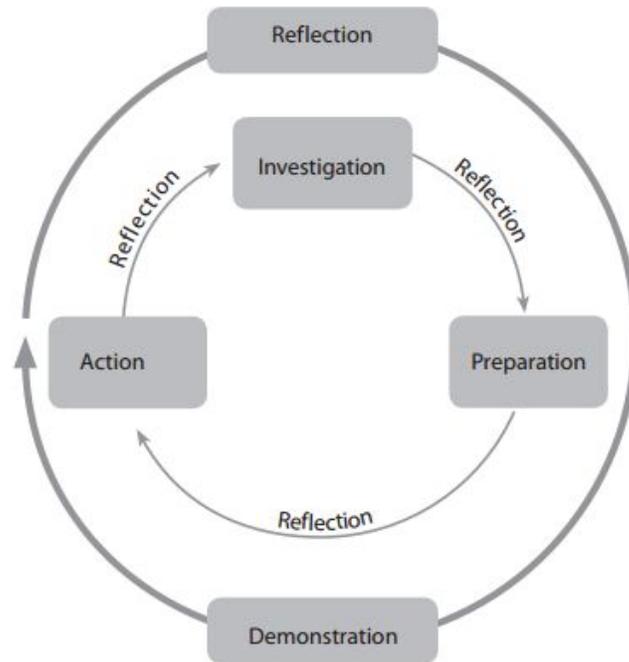
Aims

The CAS programme aims to develop students who:

- enjoy and find significance in a range of CAS experiences
- purposefully reflect upon their experiences
- identify goals, develop strategies and determine further actions for personal growth
- explore new possibilities, embrace new challenges and adapt to new roles
- actively participate in planned, sustained, and collaborative CAS projects
- understand they are members of local and global communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment.

CAS Stages

The CAS stages (adapted from Cathryn Berger Kaye’s “five stages of service learning”, 2010) offer a helpful and supportive framework and continuum of process for CAS students as they consider what they would like to do in CAS, make plans, and carry out their ideas. The CAS stages are applicable to the three strands of creativity, activity, service, and the CAS project.



There are two parts as noted in the diagram. The centre represents the process with four key parts: investigation, preparation, action, and reflection (occurring intermittently in response to significant experiences). The outer circle has two parts and guides students in summarizing their experience: reflection and demonstration.

The five CAS stages are as follows.

1. Investigation: Students identify their interests, skills and talents to be used in considering opportunities for CAS experiences, as well as areas for personal growth and development. Students investigate what they want to do and determine the purpose for their CAS experience. In the case of service, students identify a need they want to address.
2. Preparation: Students clarify roles and responsibilities, develop a plan of actions to be taken, identify specified resources and timelines, and acquire any skills as needed to engage in the CAS experience.

3. Action: Students implement their idea or plan. This often requires decision-making and problem-solving. Students may work individually, with partners, or in groups.
4. Reflection: Students describe what happened, express feelings, generate ideas, and raise questions. Reflection can occur at any time during CAS to further understanding, to assist with revising plans, to learn from the experience, and to make explicit connections between their growth, accomplishments, and the learning outcomes for personal awareness. Reflection may lead to new action.
5. Demonstration: Students make explicit what and how they learned and what they have accomplished, for example, by sharing their CAS experience through their CAS portfolio or with others in an informal or formal manner. Through demonstration and communication, students solidify their understanding and evoke response from others.

The CAS stages provide a framework that enables students to:

- increase self-awareness
- learn about learning
- explore new and unfamiliar challenges
- employ different learning styles
- develop their ability to communicate and collaborate with others • experience and recognize personal development
- develop attributes of the IB learner profile.

For singular CAS experiences, students may begin with investigation, preparation, or action. For ongoing CAS experiences, beginning with investigation is advised. In these ongoing experiences, the action stage may lead students back to investigation or preparation as they further develop, expand and implement new or related ideas.

CAS Requirements

1. Students set personal goals for what they hope to achieve through their CAS programme and document those goals on ManageBac.
2. Students take part in, and initiate, a variety of creativity, activity, and service experiences over a minimum of **18 months throughout their IB experience**.
 - ✓ Activities should be reasonably balanced between creativity, activity, and service.
 - ✓ Each activity should be verified by an adult supervisor.
 - ✓ Emphasis is on the quality of experience and learning outcomes achieved; hour-counting is not the primary concern; ongoing significant experiences are.
3. Students maintain a **CAS Portfolio** in ManageBac in which they record, show evidence of, and reflect upon their CAS experiences.
4. Students complete a **CAS project**.
5. Students show evidence of achieving all **seven learning outcomes (LO 1 - 7)**.
6. Students complete at least three CAS interviews, documenting these interviews on ManageBac: an **initial review** (at the beginning of the junior year), an **interim review** (at the end of the junior year) and a **final review** (at the completion of CAS) with a CAS adviser.

Additional notes:

- No activity completed for credit towards the Diploma Programme may be counted as CAS. For example, performance as part of IB Dance may not be counted towards CAS.
- Successful completion of CAS is a requirement for the IB diploma.
- If you are unsure whether or not an activity may be counted as CAS, please contact the CAS coordinator.

Checklist

Creativity	Activity	Service
Exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance	Physical exertion and experiences contributing to an active and healthful lifestyle	Collaborative and reciprocal engagement in response to an authentic need

My CAS Programme	Y/N?	Notes/Date
Evidence of planning a CAS programme		
Regular commitment over at least 18 months		
Understanding and ability to use the CAS stages when planning CAS experiences		
Balance between creativity, activity, and service		
At least one planned project undertaken over at least one month		
Evidence of achieving all seven learning outcomes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of identification of strengths and areas for personal growth (LO1) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of undertaking new challenges and developing new skills in the process (LO2) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of initiating and planning a CAS experience (LO3) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of commitment and perseverance in CAS experiences (LO4) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of demonstrating the skills and recognizing the benefits of working collaboratively (LO5) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of engagement with issues of global significance (LO6) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of recognizing and considering the ethics of choices and actions (LO7) 		
Reflections completed on significant CAS experiences		
Verification of CAS experiences by supervisor		
CAS Interview 1 (Initial review) completed		
CAS Interview 2 (Interim review) completed		
CAS Interview 3 (Final review) completed		
CAS Portfolio completed		

Is it CAS?

To be considered CAS, an experience must:

- ✓ fit within one or more of the CAS strands
- ✓ be based on a personal interest, skill, talent or opportunity for growth
- ✓ provide opportunities to develop the attributes of the IB learner profile
- ✓ not be used or included in the student's Diploma course requirements

Additional notes:

- Successful completion of CAS is a requirement for the IB diploma.
- If you are unsure whether or not an activity may be counted as CAS, please contact the CAS coordinator *before* beginning the experience.

CAS is NOT: activities for pay, political activities which are divisive, a course for a grade, religious proselytizing, or a family responsibility.

Political activity

Activities that cause or worsen divisions between people may not count as CAS. However, political activity that is non-partisan and not candidate-specific often do count as CAS.

Religious activity

It is recognized that this is a sensitive and difficult area. Nevertheless, the general rule is that religious devotion, and any activity that can be interpreted as proselytizing, does not count as CAS. Work done by a religious group in the wider community, provided that the objectives are clearly secular, may qualify as CAS.

Qualifies as CAS	Does not qualify as CAS
Volunteering at a voter registration drive	Volunteering for a specific political candidate
Planning a food drive through your church	Planning a drive to bring new members to your church.
Developing a new skill in a sport	Playing a sport with no specific goal in mind
Choreographing a dance for a recital outside of school	Choreographing a dance for your IB Dance class
Babysitting for free for a neighbor	Babysitting for pay or for a family member
Organizing a fundraiser for a community group	Organizing a fundraiser for your own needs

Verifying Your CAS Experience

Students must verify their CAS experiences by recording each activity on ManageBac and including evidence that the experience was completed. Students should send the experience for review once it is completed, and have the supervisor complete the review form.

Supervision of CAS Activities

Each CAS activity should be supervised by an adult who is not the student's parent or family member. A supervisor may be a teacher, club sponsor, coach, or community leader. Please provide contact information for the activity supervisor on ManageBac.

In special circumstances, it may be infeasible for certain activities to be supervised. If you believe this is the case, please contact the CAS Coordinator ***before you begin the activity*** to develop a plan for verifying your hours.

The CAS Portfolio

All CAS students are expected to maintain and complete a CAS portfolio in ManageBac. The CAS Portfolio serves as evidence of their engagement with CAS and achievement of the seven CAS learning outcomes. The CAS portfolio can also reveal how students have developed the attributes of the IB learner profile.

The CAS portfolio is used by students to plan their CAS programme, reflect on their CAS experiences and gather evidence of involvement in CAS; it is a summation of their CAS programme.

A successful CAS Portfolio **must** contain:

- Evidence of planning for CAS experiences
- Meaningful reflections on CAS experiences
- Evidence that the student has completed all seven Learning Outcomes
- Documentation of the student's CAS Project

The CAS Portfolio should be an ongoing project, and students should update their CAS Portfolio continually with reflections and evidence. Students are cautioned against waiting until the end of their CAS journey to create a CAS portfolio. **Doing so is contrary to the ongoing nature of reflection.**

CAS Portfolios will be compiled in ManageBac. Training on how to use ManageBac will be provided throughout the school year.

The 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. A CAS project challenges students to show initiative, demonstrate perseverance, and develop skills such as those of cooperation, problem-solving and decision-making.

A successful CAS project **must**:

- use the CAS stages as a framework for completion;
- last at least one month from planning to completion;
- involve collaboration or teamwork;
- fall under at least one CAS strand (Creativity/Activity/Service)
- be designed with a defined purpose and goal;
- identify at least one desired learning outcome.

Examples of CAS projects:

- A student group plans, designs and creates a mural. (C)
- Students organize and participate in a sports team including training sessions and matches against other teams. (A)
- Students set up and conduct tutoring for people in need. (S)
- Students choreograph a routine for their marching band. (C/A)
- Students plan and participate in the planting and maintenance of a garden with members of the local community. (S/A)
- Students identify that children at a local school need backpacks and subsequently design and make the backpacks out of recycled materials. (S/C)
- Students rehearse and perform a dance production for a community retirement home. (C/A/S)

Students must record their CAS Projects on ManageBac.

Learning Outcomes

In your CAS Portfolio, there should be evidence that you have:

- LO1: 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.
- LO2: 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.
- LO3: 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.
- LO4: Show commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences:** Students demonstrate regular involvement and active engagement in CAS.
- LO5: 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.
- LO6: 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.
- LO7: 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 you to complete the CAS requirement. Some may be demonstrated many times, in a variety of activities, but completion requires that you have **SOME** evidence for each outcome.

It is the quality of a CAS activity that is most important. The guideline for the minimum amount of CAS activity is approximately the equivalent of three to four hours per school week, with a reasonable balance between creativity, action and service. It is the *experience* and *reflection* upon the experience that counts. CAS is NOT a logging of hours exercise.

Reflection

Being reflective is one attribute of the IB learner profile: “We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.”

Reflection is central to building a deep and rich experience in CAS. Through reflection students examine ideas and consider how they might use prior learning in new contexts. Reflection leads to improved problem-solving, higher cognitive processes and greater depth of understanding in addition to exploring how CAS experiences may influence future possibilities.

The overarching intention of reflection in CAS includes the opportunity for students to:

- deepen learning
- consider relevance of experience
- explore personal and group values
- recognize the application of knowledge, skills, and attributes • identify strengths and areas for development
- gain a greater understanding of self and others
- place experience in a larger context
- generate relevant ideas and questions
- consider improvements in individual and collective choices and actions
- transfer prior learning to new situations
- generate and receive constructive feedback
- develop the ongoing habit of thoughtful, reflective practice.

Elements of reflection

Reflection is a dynamic means for self-knowing, learning and decision-making. Four elements assist in the CAS reflective process.

The first two elements form the foundation of reflection.

- 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.

The following two elements add greater depth and expand perspectives.

- 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.

Extending reflection

Students are encouraged to move forward through deeper questions. For example:

What did I do? could become:

- **Why did I make this particular choice?**
- **How did this experience reflect my personal ideas and values?**
- **In what ways am I being challenged to think differently about myself and others?**

How did I feel? could become:

- **How did I feel about the challenges?**
- **What happened that prompted particular feelings?**
- **What choices might have resulted in different feelings and outcomes?**

Following reflection, feedback from the CAS coordinator and/or adviser is beneficial and necessary as is peer feedback. Feedback provides acknowledgment, confirmation or clarification of students' understanding and insight, and opportunities for further development.

Time for reflection

Purposeful reflection is about quality rather than quantity. The appropriate occasion, amount and method is the student's decision. Students are not expected to reflect on every CAS experience; they should identify moments worthy of reflection. Reflection is most meaningful when recognized as a personal choice.

The preferred emphasis is for the student to determine key moments during CAS experiences that inspire reflection. The following approaches may be helpful.

- Students choose significant moments as the basis for reflection, for example when:
 - a moment of discovery is happening
 - a skill is mastered
 - a challenge is confronted
 - emotions are provoked
 - achievement deserves celebration.
- Students reflect during or at the end of a CAS experience or series of CAS experiences, to identify important moments, discuss a possible learning outcome, recognize personal growth and achievements, and plan for their next CAS experience.
- Students engage in group reflection with their peers to discover shared insights.
- Students reflect at the beginning, during, and at the end of a series of CAS experiences. This enables students to deliberate on such elements as planning, opportunities, expectations, challenges, progress, and personal growth.

Reflection offers students opportunities to understand the concept, process and value of CAS experiences. With experiences that add meaning and self-knowledge, students can adapt, adopt and integrate reflection into a lifelong practice.

Resources

Organizations – A list of some organizations with an ongoing need for volunteers.

Catholic Charities

City Roots

EdVenture Children’s Museum

Habitat for Humanity

Hannah House Women’s Shelter

Harvest Hope Food Bank

Humane Society

Light-House for Life against Human Trafficking

Pawmetto Lifeline

Richland County Library

Ronald McDonald House

SBP: Flood Damage Home Repair

Snack Packs for Students

Special Olympics

Transitions Homeless Shelter

Trinity Episcopal Homeless Outreach

UNICEF

Venture Crew 312

Wreaths Across America

Additional Resource

Coladaily.com: best local volunteer opportunities site

A Final Word

CAS enables students to enhance their personal and interpersonal development. A meaningful CAS programme is a journey of discovery of self and others. For many, CAS is profound and life-changing. Each individual student has a different starting point and different needs and goals. A CAS programme is, therefore, individualized according to student interests, skills, values and background.

We are here to support you in your journey through CAS. If you have questions at any point, please feel free to contact your CAS Coordinator.

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