

Creativity, Action, Service

The International Baccalaureate Program
Inglemoor High School

Introduction

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 has four central components:

- 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, and reporting
- Reflection on outcomes and personal learning

What is CAS?

It is also expected that all CAS projects involve one or more of the following learning objectives:

- * **Increase your awareness of your own strengths and areas for growth.** Students 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.
- * **Undertake new challenges.** A new challenge may be an unfamiliar activity, or an extension to an existing one.
- * **Plan and initiate 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.
- * **Work 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.
- * **Show perseverance and commitment in your 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.
- * **Engage 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).

* **Consider the ethical implications of your 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.

* **Develop 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.

Over the course of the next two years you should be involved in projects and activities that produce evidence of each of these learning objectives.

Creativity

Creative activities should have a definite goal or outcome. This can present something of a challenge where, for example, a student is a dedicated instrumental musician. How, though, can it help to fulfill CAS learning outcomes? It may be useful to refer back to the second objective: personal challenge—tasks must extend the student and be achievable in scope. Perhaps 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 give a talk to younger children about the instrument, with musical illustrations. Appropriate CAS activities are not merely “more of the same”—more practice, more concerts with the school band, and so on. This excludes, for example, routine practice performed by IB music or dance students (as noted earlier), but does not exclude music, dance or art activities that these students are involved with outside the Diploma Programme subject coursework.

Action

Similar considerations apply here. An outstanding athlete will not stop training and practicing in order to engage in some arbitrary, invented CAS physical activity. However, modern approaches to sports coaching emphasize the notion of the reflective practitioner, so it is possible for the athletics coach to incorporate relevant CAS principles and practice into training schedules for the benefit of the student. Setting goals, and planning and reflecting on their achievement, is vital.

Service

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. A learning benefit that enriches the student personally is in no way inconsistent with the requirement that service be unpaid and voluntary.

What is not CAS?

If the project or activity does not meet one or more of the learner objectives and all four of the central components, it is not CAS.

Can I get started now?

You can begin CAS once your sophomore year has been completed: (<http://inglemoor.managebac.com>). Students should submit proposals, reflections and evidence online. See the Managebac handout for further details.