

CAS projects

Chapter

6

How would you define the word ‘project’? Words that come to mind might include ‘a significant task’, ‘a major undertaking’, ‘a venture completed over time’ or ‘a task involving planning to fulfil a particular goal’. These terms provide us with a glimpse of what the topic of this chapter – the CAS project – is about.

It would be highly likely that ‘projects’ have been referred to by you or your teachers when talking about previous learning tasks. This chapter will explore the nature of projects in CAS. We will start by outlining the expectations surrounding your involvement in CAS projects. We will then focus on CAS project methodology, looking at how the CAS stages are to be used, and provide some resources to help you in finding, planning and implementing your CAS projects. Examples of CAS projects in the different strands of CAS will also be presented.

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 Guide (2015), page 24, IBO

Have you previously been given an assignment that your teacher called a ‘project’? If so, how did it differ from other tasks? What school projects have you been involved in?

6.01 What is involved in a CAS project?

You are expected to become involved in at least one CAS project during your CAS programme. Let us now explore the definition of a CAS project from the *CAS Guide*, as this will help you understand what you are expected to undertake in your CAS projects.

‘Collaborative’

You are required to work with others in the planning, delivery and evaluation of your projects. This can be with a partner or a larger group, and may involve collaborating with other students from your school or

another school, or with members of the wider community. Whatever the size of your group and where members are from, everyone should play an active role in all stages of the project. The roles that various members play should be clearly defined in your action plan, which is developed during the Preparation stage of your projects.

'Well-considered'

This refers to the thought and planning that is required in your project. All CAS projects should use the CAS stages as a framework, and as we have seen in Chapter 2, much work is required before you can go ahead and act. Because your project is expected to be a significant undertaking, the duration and complexity of the Investigation and Preparation stages are likely to be at a higher level than in a CAS experience. Planning (and implementing) a sustained CAS project provides opportunities to enhance and integrate your personal interests, skills and talents into your collaborative work, and to demonstrate a number of the CAS learning outcomes.

Key point: Words that should describe your CAS project include: significant, sustained, meaningful, important, ongoing, notable, well-planned, purposeful, committed.

'Series of sequential CAS experiences'

A CAS project can be based in any one of the three CAS strands, or be a combination of two or all three strands. Whichever area of CAS the project is based in, a minimum of one month's duration is recommended, although CAS projects of longer duration can provide greater opportunities for all participants. A project that lasts for four weeks, from the first involvement of investigation to the final action, generally means that your commitment and contributions are intense, something that can be quite stressful. Wherever possible, it is suggested that your project take place with regular commitment over a longer period of time. In addition to collaboration, it is the prolonged commitment that helps to differentiate between a CAS experience and a CAS project.

Take a look at the following CAS Snapshot and consider how the three elements of the CAS 'project' definition might be seen.

CAS SNAPSHOT

'My project began where another CAS experience finished. I was involved in delivering a reading comprehension programme at a local school, Santa Rosa de Llanavilla in Peru, where other CAS students and I read books and conducted activities for the children there. This included planning creative role-playing of the stories to develop comprehension skills in a more didactic way. It was when our lessons finished that I decided to build a small library in Llanavilla School; and luckily some of my friends decided to join me in this project.

'So we worked as a community, raising funds to purchase building supplies, then using our own hands to transform the bricks and mortar into a functioning library – an opportunity to take steps in improving literacy in this area of Peru. Raising the money to make this possible was, for us, something that we have never done before: we learnt how to be good at sales. Even with our lack of sales experience, our team succeeded in running two small 'businesses' for fund-raising. Then there was the construction. It is not until you face the reality of building, that you realise how hard it is. Activities included carrying half of my body weight in bags full of sand, learning how to build a wall and learning how to paint everything in both theory and practise.

'Having finished the project, I have some advice for CAS students on how to be involved in a successful CAS project: do something that makes you happy, that will make you learn, something that allows you to escape your comfort zone, and something where you show perseverance and personal commitment. Not just because CAS requires so, but for your own self-respect and because the people you are helping deserve it. Building the library was not easy at all. We worked for hours in the heat, building and painting after weeks and weeks of raising funds. It wasn't simple, but in the end that persistence becomes satisfaction and commitment becomes pride.'

Jorge, Colegio San Agustín, Lima.



Figure 6.1 Students from Colegio San Agustín pulling building materials up to the building site for the library.

This snapshot shows regular participation and collaboration over a significant period of time. You can see that innovation and initiative were also involved, and elements of the CAS stages are evident. On top of this, the snapshot also demonstrates passion, enjoyment and learning – points that can make CAS projects all the more beneficial.

Prolonged commitment to a project provides opportunities for you to show initiative, demonstrate perseverance and be a critical thinker. Your involvement can also help develop problem-solving, interpersonal and decision-making skills. This significant engagement provides scope for personal growth as well as evidence of achievement in the CAS learning outcomes. Being involved in a project team promotes experiential learning, with people working and learning together while sharing points of view, perspectives and awareness of each other's feelings. All participants in the project team need to contribute while encouraging and respecting the contributions of others. So as you can see, the CAS project offers you many benefits!

It is important to highlight that by its very nature, the CAS project largely depends on your motivation and commitment. Actively attending planning sessions, participating in regular meetings and turning up to each session when you are in the Action stage requires your dedication and perseverance. Though your CAS Coordinator, your parents or other members of your group may give encouragement, this really needs to come from you. You are the protagonist of your own learning!

What can help you and other members of the CAS project group to stay motivated in your work?

Key point: The principal objective of the CAS project is to see Diploma students involved in sustained collaboration.

Relevance plays a big role in the success of your project. It is much easier to commit to something when you can see its purpose. Extending this, regular participation in your project becomes something you look forward to when it is relevant, and you enjoy doing it! This is why it is very important that you thoroughly investigate your options when it comes to commencing a project – use this CAS stage to consider what you want to do, where your interests lie, what opportunities there are, and what talents you have. As the project must involve collaboration, it is wise to discuss these points with the people you know, so that you can explore opportunities you could jointly get involved in, keeping in mind that it is your choice; you get to decide what you want to do for your project!

Now let's do an exercise that can help you answer the question – what is the difference between a CAS experience and a CAS project?

ACTIVITY BOX

To help you distinguish between a CAS project and a CAS experience, pay attention to:

- 1 Who is involved: acting alone would mean that it is an experience. Joining with others could make it into a project.
- 2 The nature of the involvement: attendance without much influence on decision-making or the direction of the pursuit would mean that it is an experience. Being involved with others in making decisions and planning for your action could mean that it is a project.
- 3 The degree or length of your involvement: short-term engagement would probably make this an experience. Regular involvement over a number of weeks or months may mean that it is a project.

Table 6.1 provides CAS experiences in the middle column and CAS projects on the right-hand column, based on a particular pursuit or topic. Fill in the empty boxes, using the points above, and note the difference between a CAS experience and a CAS project. The first few rows are completed for you.

Topic/pursuit	A CAS experience	A CAS project
Basketball	Being a player in the school basketball team over an 8-week season.	Organizing a 3-on-3 basketball competition open to entries from all high schools in the district, held over two days in the school gym, with prize money for the winning team donated by sponsors.
Music	Learning the guitar, aiming to be able to play five songs within three months.	Writing original songs with your band, aiming to record them and produce an album.
Teaching	Support younger students in preparing for a Model UN conference in a month's time.	With support from an NGO working in the topic, plan and deliver a curriculum with your group for a literacy programme for local children.

Handball		Recruit fellow students and friends to form a team to enter a local tournament. Work together to organise weekly skill and fitness training sessions over the 12-week season.
Environmental stewardship		Organise an awareness and fund-raising event for an organisation protecting local wildlife.
Film	Make a one-minute clip using flash animation.	
Writing	Write an article for a local monthly magazine.	
Supporting disadvantaged children		

Table 6.1

6.02 Project methodology – the CAS stages

The CAS stages are to be followed when you carry out your CAS project. Chapter 2 of this book contains ideas and resources that you could use to guide you in the various CAS stages to plan, implement and evaluate your CAS projects. This chapter will add to those activities and ideas.

CAS projects obviously involve project-based learning, an educational methodology that has been implemented all around the world. From the very start of your involvement, project-based learning encourages your ownership of the process, for you and other members of your CAS project.

Project-based learning: focused on real-life situations and challenges, and relies on investigation, decision-making and problem-solving skills.

As outlined above, CAS projects must involve collaboration. This in itself adds an additional dimension to the CAS stages – you need to approach the different tasks within each stage with other project members. Additionally, as

you progress through the CAS stages you need to ensure that your proposed ideas adhere to the expectations of a CAS project listed above – the project must be well-considered and allow for sustained collaboration.

Before looking at how the CAS stages can be applied in CAS projects, take a look at the following CAS Snapshot – can you spot tasks completed in the different CAS stages in this brief outline?

CAS SNAPSHOT

Kiva project

'Kiva is a non-profit organisation that aims to aid and alleviate poverty by providing microloans to aspiring entrepreneurs in underdeveloped countries. They focus on providing opportunities to people who are prepared to work hard to achieve their goals and beat poverty. To me, the most important aspect of the organisation and a key reason for getting involved with them is that we can help people in need by giving them the opportunity to fight for their economic stability in their own way.

'When I first started the Diploma Programme, I had an immediate interest in creating support for KIVA. After talking to some friends that also showed interest, I met the school's CAS Coordinator and presented our project idea. There were some initial concerns about setting up accounts and our beneficiaries being able to repay loans. After further investigation, we came up with more considered proposals that were then approved by the school.

'To commence the Kiva club, we gathered everyone involved and developed our goals. We separated into two groups, one focusing on the creation of the bank account in order to gather and distribute funds as well as increasing our profile as a school group, while the other group focused on an initial fund-raising project. We managed to raise some funds to start up the loans, and are currently in the process of working with benefactors and supporting their loan applications. We set up a data bank of companies, groups and individuals we will approach to support the project, and have developed some proposals that will be presented to possible donors.

'It is challenging but rewarding to be involved in this club. We are involved in complex issues such as developing our funds and then selecting the projects and people to support that we feel will best benefit the community. This requires much review and research, and discussion among our group. We review the reliability of the partners and also the social impact that each dollar will provide. It is a difficult task, but I am looking forward to seeing how the project evolves!'

Andres, International School Nido de Aguilas, Santiago de Chile.

Investigation

As your project could involve you joining an existing project, your investigation should explore what projects are currently being conducted that you may have access to. This includes clubs or groups in your school or local community. Consider also online projects you may get involved in. You do not need to establish a project, but your CAS project must offer you the chance to be involved in Investigation and Preparation, together with other members of the group. As CAS projects involve collaboration, you also need to investigate who you could work with.

Key point: You are not required to initiate a CAS project, but your CAS project should clearly offer the opportunity to engage in all of the CAS stages.

Once your ideas for the project are clear, the Investigation stage then involves collecting materials and information from people, newspapers, libraries, experts, external organisations and more. Also conduct an audit of your group, highlighting any special skills and knowledge that group members may have that could be used in planning and implementing your project. Useful tools in your investigation include interviews, observations and questionnaires. Refer to Chapter 2 section 2.01 and also Chapter 4 section 4.04 for more details on this.

If your project is service-based, the investigation must involve your group exploring the various opportunities for you to engage in your community and making connections with people in the community you wish to work with. Chapter 4 on service learning provides more details on this – when you look at the ideas and resources outlined there, do keep in mind that all members of your group need to be involved in conducting the various aspects of your project investigation.

The following CAS Snapshot provides an example of aspects of the Investigation stage conducted by students in Thailand. Conducting a needs analysis, an important part of the Investigation stage of service, can be seen in this example.

Needs analysis: a technique used to gather information about the needs of a community or group, focusing on the issues or problems faced in that group. The needs refer to gaps or areas of concern; things that are needed to help better support that community.

CAS CASE STUDY

Investigation – conducting a needs analysis

After hearing about the possibilities of establishing a CAS project in Maeramt village in Northern Thailand, students at NIST International School, Bangkok saw the importance of investigating and confirming the needs of this community first-hand.

The first NIST students to visit the village knew very little about it. Over a period of three nights in the village, the students completed a comprehensive needs analysis of the village and its surroundings. This included walking around the village, observing and making basic maps, and expanded into the creation of a calendar of village daily and seasonal life, an inventory of assets and a series of interviews with local people.

The next step was to have formal meetings with various groups of villagers such as children, women, and men to find out about their life and development needs. Staying in the village, experiencing the basic conditions with limited electricity and sanitation facilities, was an investigation itself into what it was like to live in Maeramt. This also helped to create a relationship with the local population and empathy towards them, which consequently became a strong motivator for driving the project.

The final stage was a community meeting where NIST students facilitated a session to determine the top five development needs of the village. These have become the focus of the development projects the students are working on as part of their CAS.



Figure 6.2 A NIST International School student involved in a needs analysis as a part of the Investigation stage.

Preparation

With collaboration being a key element of the CAS project, the Preparation stage for your project must involve your group working together to assign roles for each team member. All members of the project team should be involved in developing the plan, and tasks should be shared among all team members so that they are equal participants when taking action.

Together with your team you need to develop your aims and objectives, establish the scope and possible limitations of your plans, clarify roles and responsibilities, determine resources and timelines, and identify and acquire any skills needed to engage in the project.

ACTIVITY BOX

Use this table with your group to establish and develop your project ideas.

1. WHAT? Nature of the project	
2. WHY? Rationale	
3. WHAT FOR? Aims, objectives, purposes	
4. HOW LONG? Scope	
5. WHERE? Physical setting, location	
6. HOW? Activities, methodology	
7. WHEN? Schedule, timelines	
8. WITH WHOM? Group members, and in the case of a service project, target population	
9. WHO? Human resources	
10. WITH WHAT? Material resources	

Action

Your action plan should aim for all group members to be active contributors to your project. As such, each team member should have a clear idea of their role in addition to knowing where/how to access resources that may support them in fulfilling their responsibilities. Your Preparation stage should have involved your group members in ‘up-skilling’ themselves so that they are prepared to take action in completing their tasks.

SPOTLIGHT ON ... COLLABORATION

Like all CAS involvement, CAS projects allow for learning through experience. Participating in a project provides opportunities to increase self-awareness, promotes open-mindedness and interpersonal understanding and can facilitate decision-making and problem-solving skills. Additionally, as the CAS project requires collaboration, it also promotes communication skills, requiring you to be involved in negotiation, agreements and consensus. Involvement in a CAS project provides an opportunity for shared learning – for you and other group members to construct meaning from your CAS involvement. Working closely with others exposes you to other perspectives and points of view, to engage in discussion that can facilitate critical reflection, and develop conflict resolution and listening skills. You may also learn about commitment to group goals and respect for agreements, and gain first-hand experience of leadership skills.

Reflection

Reflection should be ongoing, occurring at all stages of your CAS project. As your project involves working with others, you should create opportunities where you can reflect together with other members of the group as this would best support your CAS project reflections. Whether it is led by the project supervisor, CAS Coordinator or even one of your fellow group members, group reflections allow you to hear and respond to the thoughts, feelings and ideas of others. This can guide you to reflecting at a deeper level. Chapter 3 provides some ideas for group reflection activities, and the activity below contains more suggestions.

Key point: Reflecting with others can introduce you to different perspectives and enable you to reflect on a deeper level.

ACTIVITY BOX

Pass the reflection

This exercise can be done with any item belonging to somebody in the group. Start with a group member holding the item, and sharing a reflection with the group. They then pass the item to the next person. Continue until all members have shared their reflections.

News report

Working in smaller groups or pairs, group members take it in turns to role-play a news reporter reporting on the project that day or that month.

Pass the sentence

Somebody in the group starts with a sentence about the project. He or she then passes the story onto the next person, who continues with a sentence and then passes it on.

Word of the day

Each group member provides one or two words to describe his or her involvement in the project that day or up until that moment.

Four corners

A statement or question is presented to the group about the project and their thoughts or feelings about it. In response to the statement/question, group members move to a corner designated as Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Neutral could also be added in the middle of the areas. Request individual members to elaborate on why they chose where to stand.

Symbols

Ask members of the group to name something that symbolises how they are feeling or what they are thinking about the project.

Read all about it

Group members provide a headline to a newspaper article that represents something about their involvement in the project.

Somethings

Ask group members to finish these 'something' sentence stems:

Something I didn't know before is ...

Something I would like to tell others is ...

Something that challenged (or is challenging) me ...

Something I need to do is ...

What factors may determine which of these group reflection activities you might try with your project group? What are some other methods you might use to encourage your CAS project group to reflect together?

Demonstration

Though you can individually showcase your CAS project in your CAS portfolio, CAS projects can also involve your team sharing this task. Your group could present the project to a school assembly or class, hold an information booth in your school during lunchtime or create a video clip and post it online. Having your group participate in a final shared reflection is also recommended, and could also involve an evaluation of your project. This is best approached when led by your project supervisor, and in the case of service projects it should also involve the community you are working with.

This CAS Snapshot provides an example of sharing and celebrating a CAS project in a public forum.

CAS SNAPSHOT

Demonstrating CAS at a TEDx event

DC Labour Rights is a student-run organisation founded by students at Hong Kong's Discovery College in 2012. The group is committed to making a change within labour rights globally, focusing on two main campaigns: the Blacklist campaign, which aimed to educate people about widespread labour issues, and the VTech campaign, an ongoing project that aims to improve the working conditions within a VTech factory in Dongguan, China.

The DC Labour Rights group was approached by students from Chinese University Hong Kong to speak at their TEDxCUHK event. Francesca Phillips, who represented the group, said that speaking at the event was an incredible experience: 'The TEDx talk felt like a demonstration of the efforts of the group over the past few years and it was fantastic to be able to promote education regarding labour issues. It was great to present alongside accomplished individuals and share how working in the group has been a really good opportunity to learn more about global issues and to collaborate with knowledgeable individuals.'

Participating in the event allowed the group to spread awareness of their efforts and goals, to share their successes, and to increase understanding about labour issues in the region. It also provided Francesca with a personal challenge and an opportunity to develop her public-speaking skills.



Figure 6.3 Demonstrating CAS at TEDxCUHK.

How could you demonstrate your CAS in a public forum? What opportunities are there in your local community to share your CAS efforts?

Before we move on to looking at CAS projects based in the different strands of CAS, or based in more than one strand, let's look at a proposal form that can be used to inform others about your project ideas.

ACTIVITY BOX

This form can be used as a framework for developing your CAS project proposal, which your CAS Coordinator may request. It could also function as an element of a grant or funding/donor proposal form. Completing this form will also assist with aspects of the Investigation and Preparation stages of CAS.

Project title _____

CAS strand of the project – (for projects including more than one strand, provide the relevance of each strand):

Creativity _____

Activity _____

Service _____

Project team member _____

Project contact person _____

Project supervisor _____

Project dates _____

Project outline

Provide an overview of your project and what you hope to achieve

Project goal/s

Keep in mind the SMART goal format – refer to Chapter 2 section 2.01

Investigation

List key areas that will require investigation

Project action plan

List the key tasks required to complete the project. Attach your action plan at the end of the proposal.

Key resources

List people/organisations that might be helpful in achieving your goals. Consider local NGOs and community groups, experts, and so on.

Project monitoring and evaluation

Describe how you will monitor progress and evaluate outcomes

6.03 Creativity projects

When thinking of Creativity CAS projects, you should think about those creative endeavours that you want to get involved in, or an interest to learn more about. Consider those areas of the traditional Arts, like learning to play an instrument, forming or joining a band, learning about photography, becoming a member of a theatre group, painting, undertaking a pottery course, dancing, signing. Consider also other areas that rely on creative thought, originality and innovation as their basis, such as designing a house using CAD software, creating a range of infographics, designing a range of fashion. There is a wide range of possibilities!

In section 6.01 we explored the differences between a CAS project and a CAS experience. When you are considering a CAS project in Creativity, you need to ensure that it offers scope for sufficient application of the CAS stages, and that it will enable you and other group members to be involved in sustained collaboration.

In this CAS Snapshot we see how a student's passion for theatre was used as the basis for a Creativity CAS project. We can also see the impact which participating in this CAS project had on this student.

CAS SNAPSHOT

Legally Blonde

'*Legally Blonde* was our school's 2013 theatre production. Over a period of four months we rehearsed twice a week, and then we held additional rehearsals as the dates of the production approached. I chose to get involved in this activity because I love theatre and I have never been involved in a musical before. I thought that it would be a good way to expand my experience and try a new style of theatre. I also love this particular musical, and thought it would be fun to get involved and meet new people in other classes who share my passion for theatre.'

'Although this amazing project was time-consuming, I was really disappointed when it ended. It was a lot of fun to work on something that I am passionate about, and to do this with others who shared the same passion. One thing I realised from my involvement is that I am not very open with others when working in groups and cannot express my ideas clearly. I tried to develop this, working with different groups and offering my ideas and suggestions as much as I could, and trying to interact with people of different year levels to whom I had never spoken before.'

'I only ever missed a single rehearsal, because I had a theatre lesson in which I learned skills of voice and projection, which was useful later in this production as I had to project my voice and portray my character through the use of voice (tone, pitch, key and so on). This was a really good experience for me: I developed as a theatre student, gained a lot of new social and technical skills, and really enjoyed all three performances.'

Clara, Discovery College, Hong Kong.



Figure 6.4 The cast of the production *Legally Blonde*, Discovery College.

6.04 Activity projects

The holistic approach of the IB Diploma Programme encourages you to develop as a whole person. A part of this is achieving a healthy lifestyle, balancing your academic and social pursuits with regular physical activity.

The CAS project provides an opportunity for you to get involved in planned, sustained exercise on a regular basis. This may be a sport or recreation at a level that you have not pursued before, or a physical challenge that may require months of preparation. Examples may include joining a partner or group to develop rock-climbing skills so that you can complete a class 5 graded climb; preparing for a half or full marathon; training for a 5 km ocean swim; conducting a personal fitness training programme; working to achieve a blue belt in karate; being a regular in the starting line-up of your school basketball team; or regular yoga to increase the difficulty in poses.

Activity projects should offer you the scope to get involved in all of the CAS stages – there needs to be an opportunity for Investigation and Preparation. This may involve designing training sessions, improving your knowledge so that you can be involved in creating conditioning programmes, organising practise sessions or gaining qualifications so that you can be involved in coaching and administration.

Like all CAS projects, there should be an element of being challenged through participating in an Activity project. The project you choose should offer an opportunity for personal growth and the potential for change. An Activity project therefore must not be just your regular involvement but something that will test your limits and inspire you to reach new boundaries. And, of course, Activity projects offer much opportunity for fun and enjoyment!

CAS SNAPSHOT

Project Adventure

'The IB programme has prepared me to go to university, taught me to follow my passions and question knowledge, and shown me that everyone can contribute something to society. However CAS has taught me to be brave, and my involvement in Project Adventure taught me to

take risks, trust other people and open my mind to new activities which, a year before, I would never thought possible.

'As a child, I never had a fear of trying new things; I took risks, and didn't think about them. My childhood was filled with canoe trips in the summer, skiing in the winter and Sunday hikes. But as I got older I lost interest in these activities, and as with many other aspects in life, I was scared to do it again after so many years. Project Adventure made me look back at my childhood and integrate those experiences into my adult life. I managed to overlook the fear of failing and looking stupid; I could finally look past my own pre-judgement.

'At my school we had a Project Adventure CAS club in which a group of students learnt about outdoor adventure experiences. It was an opportunity to gain skills and knowledge in order to plan and participate in activities such as climbing, ice climbing, skiing and hiking. It was fantastic to be in nature once again!

'My learning curve for the first couple of months of climbing was steep, but when I got more advanced, climbing suddenly became much more serious than the playful game I was used to. I started lead-climbing on bolts; it felt reasonably fine and I continued doing this for a long while before I tried lead-climbing with traditional gear. This stopped me, and suddenly all lead-climbing became too challenging and too terrifying. I was afraid of falling and hurting myself. The fear found a way in and became a self-fulfilling prophecy – I was scared of falling, and so fell. Then I was scared of trusting my own judgement. The fact that I was not used to being scared only made it worse and harder to overcome. Nonetheless, the more I climbed the better it felt. It took a long time to overcome this fear and it is still something I work on whenever I go climbing.

'But because I overcame this fear I could push myself to even greater heights! I can now ski steeper slopes, undertake harder climbs and take greater risks. I am stronger, not only physically but also mentally. This mental strength has helped me in my personal life too, and it is easier for me now to take on new challenges, whether it is a new job or the new country in which I live. These activities have given me new friends, a new hobby and most importantly a better quality of life.'

Anna, Skagerak, Norway.

6.05 Service projects

Service in CAS promotes a real commitment to human and social development, with the aim of helping ‘to create a better and more peaceful world’ (IB Mission Statement) for everybody. It refers to the learning process through community engagement and generates a social responsibility that can be put into action.

Service experiences allow you to push yourself to meet others in need and to do something concrete at improving their life conditions. In doing so it is essential that your attitudes and actions are respectful of those you are working with, and that you understand that everybody has something valuable to give and receive.

Our next CAS snapshot provides us with an example of a service-based CAS project. It clearly outlines activities completed in the CAS stages by the students involved.

CAS SNAPSHOT

Center of Adaptation of Youth CAS Project, Nazarbayev Intellectual School of Astana (NISA), Kazakhstan

This project involved students from Nazarbayev Intellectual School of Astana (NISA) working with the Center of Adaptation of Youth (CAY), a place that houses and cares for children whose parents are unable to look after them due to different social issues. Children from CAY visit NISA’s campus once a week to participate in various sporting competitions and games. In this way the students from the Center get the chance to have fun and enjoy some time in the company of other members of the community.

Investigation

Following connections and initial visits made by the school’s CAS Coordinators, students visited the Center a few times to meet some of the children and explore the kind of support they needed. After hearing the opinions and expectations of the CAY children and talking to the Center’s administrators, plans were developed about the kind of activities the students could organise for the children, and goals for the project were drawn up. The initial visits also provided an opportunity for NISA students to interact with the children and discover their own skills and abilities in relating to them.

Preparation

Initial preparation involved developing some skills in leading activities for the children, and the group divided into subgroups to plan activities targeted at different ages after it was identified that different age groups could attend each week without notice. Students returned to the Preparation stage to further develop their plans, adding ice-breaker activities as every week there would be a different set of children attending. A need to keep the balance of games suitable for both boys and girls was also identified, so the plans were revised again. There was also a need for some conflict resolution activities, and NISA students attended meetings with the school psychologist who helped them to develop techniques on conflict prevention and management.

Action

Weekly plans are developed by the NISA students and, following approval, are taught to the children on their weekly visits. The nature of the project means that clear evidence is produced for most of the CAS learning outcomes.

Reflection

Here is an excerpt from a student's reflection:

'After a while of being involved, I have become closer to the children and I truly fell in love with every child. After consulting with a psychologist, we began to work with more than one whole group, and in small groups according to their interests and age. Now it is easier to work with them and I look forward to our lessons. We have already played almost all the games and we have lots of fun. Now, after getting to know each child personally, I know how to behave around different children. At the moment, we are playing different games with them like small competitions in football, volleyball and other games that we created. The most important thing I have learnt on this project is to find a common language with people. I realised that if you show love to the child, then he will also love you.'

Sara

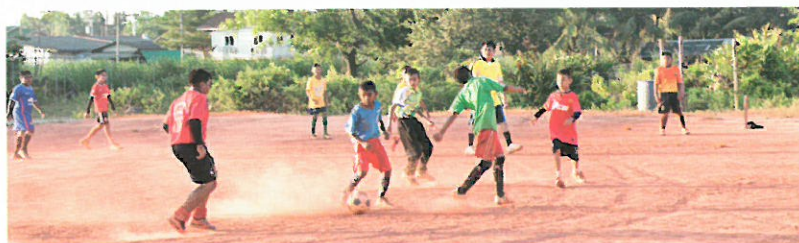


Figure 6.5 Planning and delivering a youth programme as a part of CAS.

6.06 Projects combining two or three of the CAS strands

It is important not to consider the CAS strands as mutually exclusive. Many times they are interwoven.

You can combine Creativity and Activity; Creativity and Service; Activity and Service or all three strands in a single project; the *CAS Guide* (2015, page 24) is clear on this point:

A CAS project can address any single strand of CAS, or combine two or all three strands.

You may find that this interaction of CAS strands will significantly contribute to getting the most out of a CAS project. As we always say: the whole of CAS is greater than the sum of its parts!

This next CAS Case Study highlights how Creativity can be combined with Action through choreographing and rehearsing a dance production.

CAS CASE STUDY

Dance project 'Reverie'

Reverie was a dance project conceived, choreographed and performed by students of the Dover campus at United World College of South East Asia. Students Phoebe Wang and Katrina Gunara led a student team working over a number of months on the project that culminated with three sold-out performance nights.

After developing some initial concepts, students undertook the planning of logistics such as dates for auditions and the shows, and budgets. Auditions for choreographers and dancers were held, which led to the selection of the team that would be choreographing and rehearsing over a number of months to prepare for the show. The project gave performers an opportunity to collaborate creatively, and required many hours of rehearsal to physically prepare for the production.

Putting the production together involved a number of different tasks. While the on-stage performances were being prepared for, promotional

material and stage design were required. Promotional flyers and banners were created, sets were designed and dress rehearsals were organised, with many obstacles overcome in the process! According to co-producer Phoebe Wang, there were times when the team found the project challenging. 'At times I felt as though I'd throw my hands up in the air and say "I honestly don't think I can do this anymore!"' said Phoebe, 'but these circumstances made me really step up to make professional decisions as a producer.'

The hard work was ultimately rewarding for all those involved. Co-producer Katrina Gunara commented that the project required a lot of patience, passion and determination, but was also very fulfilling: 'Seeing and hearing the audience roar, and getting positive, excited responses after the show made the efforts put in truly worth it.' Her co-producer Phoebe shared similar sentiments: 'No amount of challenges could outweigh the immeasurable feeling of personal achievement and satisfaction I got from producing this show. This position has not only helped me develop as a leader, choreographer and dancer, but has also given me the opportunity to mature as a person.'



Figure 6.6 Students performing in *Reverie* at United World College, Singapore.

Now let's look at how Creativity can be used in to provide a Service for a migrant school in China.

CAS SNAPSHOT

Peer-mentoring project in China

A group of students at the British International School Shanghai (BISS), Puxi Campus, initiated a peer-mentoring system in a local migrant school in Shanghai. The CAS project aimed to foster leadership, empowerment and cross-cultural understanding between children in the migrant school system and the international school system in Shanghai. Students were able to interact one-to-one with migrant children to help run the daily programme and establish meaningful connections with their migrant 'buddy'. After being involved in the programme, a group of students identified the need for an extra-curricular activities (ECA) club for the migrant school students. They investigated the needs and necessary resources to do this, and applied for a learning service grant. They were awarded 1 500 USD to start this project.

The following year the students raised awareness of this programme within the whole school and led ECA at the migrant school. The project involved 35 students in planning and leading activities including Arts and Crafts, Music, Science club, Eco club and Drama for the migrant school students. The students were able to lead younger students in planning sessions and delivering the ECA in the migrant school. The connection made between the schools has led to other new projects – BISS students are planning a film project where the local migrant schoolchildren will be taught how to use a camera and then given a camera to produce films about their own lives under the guidance of BISS film students.

Can you see any advantages of working in CAS projects that are based on more than one strand of CAS?

Is there a particular strand of CAS that you might find more interesting to base your CAS project on?

6.07 Review of Chapter 6

- 1 What are the key elements of a CAS project?
- 2 Are the CAS stages more important for CAS projects than for CAS experiences?
- 3 What current interests do you have that you could turn into ideas for a CAS project?
- 4 Explain the difference between a CAS project and a CAS experience.
- 5 In what ways do you see the attributes of the IB learner profile manifested in CAS projects?

6.08 A summary of this chapter

In this chapter we have:

- Described what will be expected of you when working on a CAS project
- Explored the nature of the CAS project
- Outlined how the CAS stages can be implemented in CAS projects
- Looked at CAS projects based on each of the three CAS strands, and projects that involve more than one strand
- Seen a number of different examples of CAS projects from different parts of the IB regions.

The CAS portfolio and student responsibilities

Chapter

7

‘Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.’

Thomas A. Edison

CAS provides a unique opportunity for you. It is the only area of your school where you can have total control. The choice is yours as to what experiences you undertake as part of your CAS programme. As such you have a great deal of freedom, but as always, freedom comes with responsibility.

The most important thing to have when approaching CAS is a positive and determined attitude. You need to take the initiative and take responsibility for yourself. The very fact that you are reading this shows that you care about your education and your CAS programme, so you are already on the right track. Well done, now read on!

The purpose of this chapter is to offer advice on creating a rewarding and enjoyable CAS. By the end of the chapter you should fully understand your responsibilities, and know how to organise your time and avoid common pitfalls. Following this advice will make your life much easier and take the pressure off your IB CAS programme.

7.01 An outline and explanation of student responsibilities

There is a great deal of detailed information throughout this book on what CAS is and how to make it work for you. Figure 7.1 provides a brief summary.

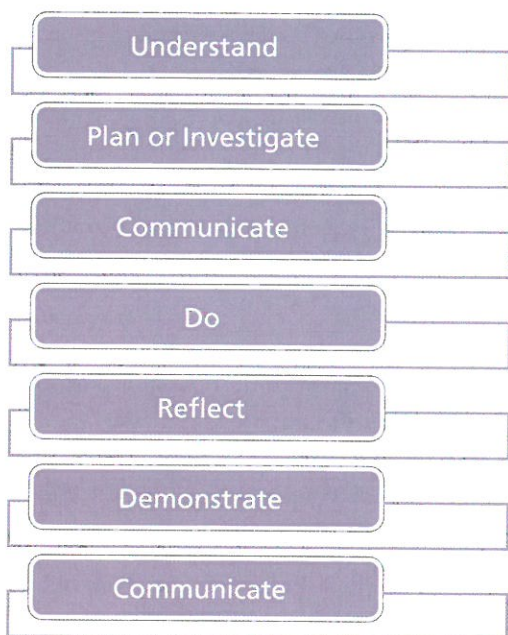


Figure 7.1 Summary of CAS.

Understanding

When embarking on your CAS programme, you need to understand the following points:

What CAS is about and for (see Chapter 1)

CAS is designed to make you a more rounded and balanced person. You may be a great scholar and be able to get top marks in all of your academic subjects, but if your only life experience is inside a library then you won't be a rounded and interesting individual. CAS is your chance to gain credit for all the other things you do in your life, or to give you the push to do different and interesting things that you always wanted to do. At the same time it can help you develop the attributes of the learner profile and other important life skills.

CAS requirements (see Chapter 2)

To complete the CAS programme you must be involved in a number of experiences, and at least one project, over a period of at least 18 months. These experiences should incorporate the three CAS strands.

CAS learning outcomes (LO)

The seven CAS learning outcomes are:

LO1. Identify your own strengths and develop areas for growth.

LO2. Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken, developing new skills in the process.

LO3. Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience.

LO4. Show commitment and perseverance in CAS experiences.

LO5. Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively.

LO6. Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance.

LO7. Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions.

CAS Guide (2015)

In your 18 months on the CAS programme you must show each LO at least once, although you may well demonstrate one or more of them many times!

The CAS stages (Chapter 2)

As highlighted in Chapter 2, the CAS stages are Investigation, Preparation, Action, Reflection and Demonstration. You should use the stage framework to plan for the majority of your CAS experiences. The amount of time and effort you spend on each stage will vary depending on the experience.

Plan and investigate

You need to plan a series of CAS experiences and a CAS project. Chapter 1 contains suggestions for how to undertake a proposal for a CAS activity, and Chapter 3 explains how to use the CAS framework for more in-depth experiences. Remember that you may already have experience of activities that you could use as part of your CAS programme, or some that may fit with a little adaptation.

Communication

You need to communicate regularly with your CAS Advisor or Coordinator. Keep in touch throughout your programme so that they can support you in staying on track. In addition, there are three specific meetings (see section 7.07), in which you will need to explain:

- Your plans for your CAS experiences and why they are suitable CAS experiences
- What LOs you have progressed towards during those experiences
- How you have reflected on your experiences
- How you will demonstrate your achievements.

Many schools use an electronic or online system for this communication, while others use paper-based methods. Whatever the method, use it regularly and often. Remember that your CAS Advisor is trying to help you to be successful in CAS. In many ways they are also your CAS examiner. So make their life easier and you will be rewarded by a supportive friend.

Reflection

As covered in earlier chapters (and particularly Chapter 3), reflecting on your CAS programme should help you to understand the impact of your experiences on you and the learning you have gained from them. It may also help you develop in other areas of your life, like your academic studies. This is a continuous process so make some time and space for purposeful reflection in your life.

Key point: Reflection is what helps us learn and make sense of our experiences.

Demonstration

You have to demonstrate what you have achieved in your CAS experiences by putting together a CAS portfolio. A sensible approach is to put this together as you go along so that you have a record of all of your CAS experiences.

CAS portfolio: 'A CAS Portfolio is used by students to plan their CAS programme, reflect on their CAS experiences and gather evidence of involvement in CAS'.

CAS Guide (2015), page 30

7.02 First steps – planning or preparation

To put together a successful CAS programme you need a variety of activities. It is up to you and your school to decide how many activities exactly; remember that this is your programme so you need to take responsibility for it.

Completing the following activity will help you to see the many and varied opportunities for CAS which exist in your community, and identify experiences you already undertake that could contribute to your CAS programme. This could be included as part of your CAS personal profile in your CAS portfolio.

CAS personal profile: this is a summary of your interests, skills, talents and areas that you would like to develop. It can help you to think about your CAS programme as a coherent activity that fits together, perhaps with your career or university goals.

You do not necessarily need to stop your current activities outside of your academic studies to take up something else. You may need to adapt it slightly, but if you want to continue with an activity, you can work out a way, with your CAS Advisor, of continuing it and counting it as a CAS experience. Fill in the first column of Table 7.1 to list the things you already do. Some may be obvious, such as playing in a school soccer team or an orchestra. You should even record activities that do not seem like potential CAS experiences, such as taking my sister to the park every Sunday, visiting my grandmother in the old people's home every month, playing on Playstation, watching Bollywood films.

You may have other things that you have always wanted to do or try. Now is your chance to find a way to undertake them as part of your CAS programme. Whatever is your heart's desire record it in the middle column of Table 7.1. It may be knitting a jumper, travelling to Nepal, taking part in a parachute jump or something that may help you prepare or decide on a future career or area of study.

Your school may already offer a choice of activities that you can participate in. This may be something that you can undertake with a

support structure already in place. Even if your school does not offer clubs, teams or activities there are probably organisations in your town that do so. Find out about anything that is already happening in your school or town and fill in the third column of Table 7.1; there may be far more than you ever realised.

CAS experience: an event that you will count as part of your CAS. It may be a series of events, such as training and being in a team, or practising and then taking part in a performance, or it may be a one-off event such as marshalling a sports event, or a weekend mountain-biking.

CAS project: a special type of CAS experience; see Chapter 5.

CAS programme: a number of combined experiences that you undertake throughout your time studying the IB Diploma Programme. Some are large, in-depth experiences combining many events, while others are smaller, one-off events. Some programmes have many experiences, some have few.



Figure 7.2 A CAS programme consists of many CAS experiences, one of which is a CAS project.

ACTIVITY BOX

Experiences you already have outside of schoolwork	Experiences you are interested in pursuing	Experiences offered by your school or community

Table 7.1 Brainstorming CAS experiences.

Some activities may fit into all three of the columns.

Once you have undertaken this exercise you should have a good idea of the experiences you want to have during your CAS programme. Remember that you don't have to do everything at once, all the time. You can spread out your experiences throughout the 18 months, including the holidays.

However, just because you have found something that you want to undertake as a CAS experience, this does not mean that you can use it as a valid CAS experience. There is no list of what is and what is not a CAS experience. It is your job to convince the person in your school that what you plan to do is a valid CAS experience. They may ask you some awkward questions, so if you are prepared and able to answer these questions then you can use these to communicate your plans to your CAS teacher.

Key point: Look back at Chapter 1 for ideas for more strategies, including how to propose a new CAS experience and how to convert an existing experience into a CAS experience.

7.03 The CAS experience: your responsibilities

Key point: What is valid CAS? The decision is up to your school CAS Coordinator. Just because another school accepts it does not mean that your school will, so communicate your plans early.

For each experience you plan to undertake, you must communicate with your school's CAS staff, who must agree that it is a valid experience. Communication is important as you would be very disappointed if you put a great deal of time and effort into an experience which is not accepted as valid CAS by your school.

If an adult is supervising your experience, make sure that they know you are undertaking this as a CAS experience. Some schools require forms to be signed by an adult supervisor for each experience. You may need to find a suitable time to explain to an adult what CAS is and what you are trying to achieve. The beginning of band practice or a nursing shift may not be the ideal time for that, so always make a suitable appointment. Prepare what you need to explain, and ask for help from your school if you think you need it.

Key point: CAS supervisors are adults that offer guidance during the students' CAS experience (*CAS Guide (2015)*). They generally help students to get the most out of an experience and can be coaches, charity workers or other teachers with an interest in the experience. It is not always necessary to have a CAS supervisor, but many schools require them. Some schools also require that CAS supervisors provide feedback, written or otherwise, to a school as part of the experience. This can be included in a CAS portfolio.

For the majority of your CAS experiences using the CAS stages framework should be a great deal of help. You must then undertake the experience. This may seem pretty obvious, but sometimes you plan things that don't happen. Then you must reflect on the experience.

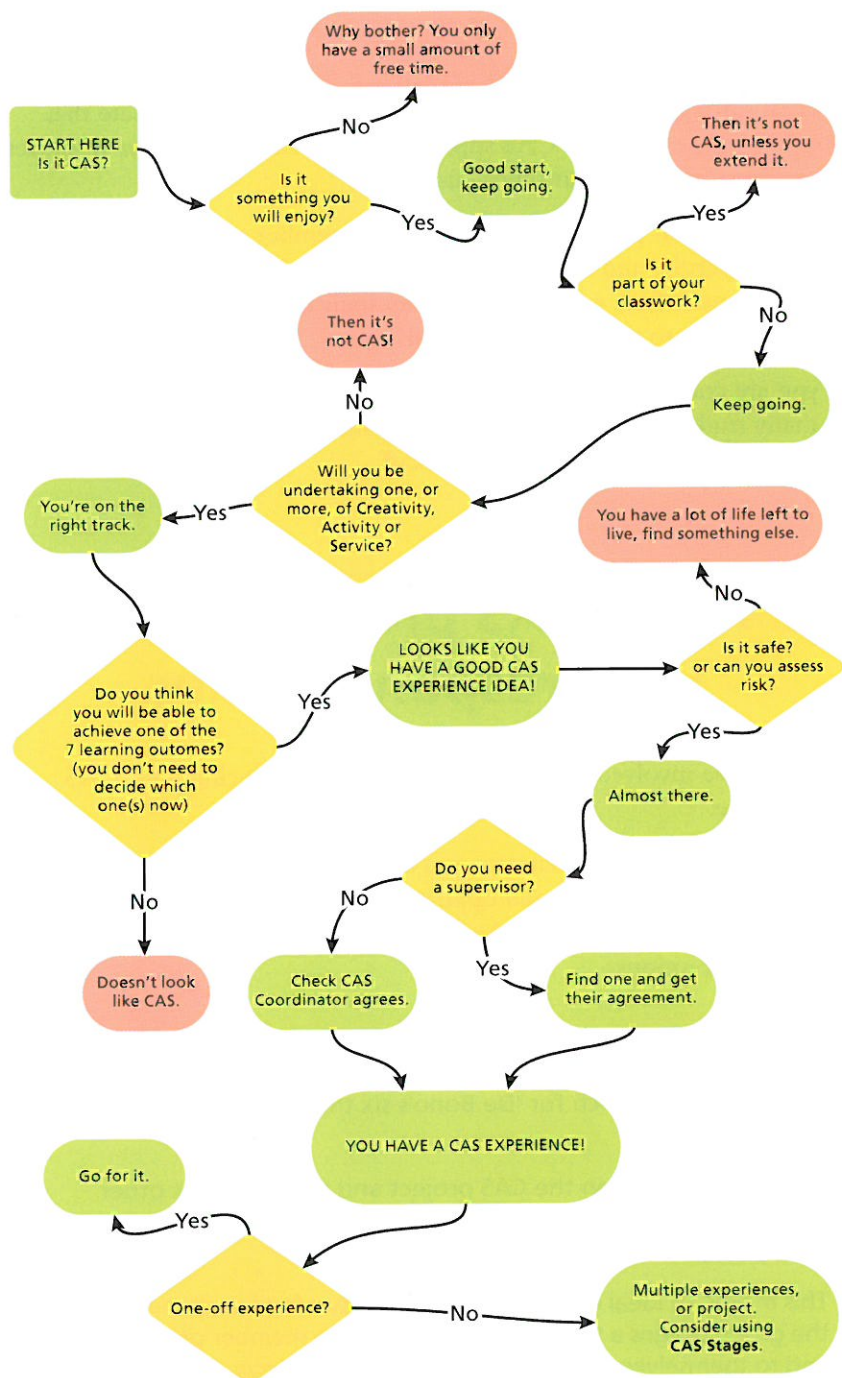


Figure 7.3 A flowchart to help decide if an activity can become a CAS experience.

Completing one of your CAS experiences

Once you have finished a CAS experience, you need to complete the process through reflection and demonstration, and communicate that you have done so to the CAS supervisor, your CAS Advisor or whatever supervisory method your school uses.

Don't forget this part of the experience: remember to make yourself easy to supervise and show that you are completing your CAS requirements. Many supervisors give up their time as volunteers so this is a good time to thank them for their help.

If you are continuing an activity after the end of your CAS programme, as many students do, then just choose an imaginary finishing point and inform your supervisors and school staff.

7.04 The CAS project: your responsibilities

You must be involved in at least one CAS project during your CAS programme.

As for all your CAS experiences you are expected to reflect on your CAS project(s). This is a good opportunity to have a group reflection with others that you have worked with on a project to understand other people's perceptions.

ACTIVITY BOX

Do an internet search for 'De Bono's six thinking hats' or 'Belbin's team roles'.

Consider your role in the CAS project and the roles that other participants undertook. Do any of these match a 'hat' or a team role? Fill in Tables 7.2 and 7.3 below.

This makes an ideal group reflection activity where each member of the group assigns a team role, or hat, to each member of the team and to themselves. They then explain why they have done so. Perhaps individuals wore different hats at different occasions, or performed

different team roles. Expand this activity by considering other times when you may have to wear different hats or perform different roles. Perhaps in your next group project, or in your lab experiments?

Table 7.2 Belbin's team roles

Team role	Participant	Reason
Plant		
Resource instigator		
Coordinator		
Shaper		
Monitor evaluator		
Team worker		
Implementer		
Completer or finisher		
Specialist		

Table 7.3 De Bono's hats

Hat colour	Description	Participant	Reason
Blue	Process		
White	Objective		
Yellow	Positive		
Green	Creative		
Black	Negative		
Red	Intuitive		

As for all experiences, a CAS project uses one or more of the CAS strands (Creativity, Activity or Service) and you will likely meet one, or several, of the CAS learning outcomes.

Key point: There is more detailed information on CAS projects in Chapter 6, including how to develop a project out of a CAS experience you have already undertaken and examples of the different CAS projects in the three CAS strands.

7.05 Completing your entire CAS programme

Your school will set a deadline for completing your CAS requirements. This should be a minimum of 18 months after you have started your CAS programme. Be aware of this deadline and create a schedule leading up to it in which you follow the steps in 7.03 above. Build in enough time for feedback.

See Table 7.4: check that you have completed all seven of the learning outcomes and demonstrated that you have done so. If you are missing any, brainstorm how you might have actually achieved it in one of your experiences without demonstrating it. If you are concerned, communicate with your school CAS staff and reach a solution with them.

As the deadline approaches, take time to complete and review your CAS portfolio. Inform your CAS Coordinator when you are finished. You are likely to have one CAS interview left to review your portfolio. Look at section 7.07 below for advice on preparing for that.

Provide evidence of	✓	Date	Note
Planning a CAS programme			
CAS programme lasting 18 months with regular activity			
Creativity, Activity and Service included			
CAS Stages used when appropriate			
Minimum of one CAS project			
LO1: Identified strengths and areas for growth			
LO2: Undertaking new challenges and developing new skills			
LO3: Initiated and planned experience			
LO4: Commitment and perseverance			
LO5: Working collaboratively			
LO6: Engaged with issues of global importance			
LO7: Recognized and considered ethics of choices and actions			
Reflection happened when appropriate			
Supervisor feedback if needed			
CAS interviews 1, 2 and 3 completed			

Table 7.4 A checklist for completing your CAS programme.

All of this evidence should be visible in your final CAS portfolio.

7.06 A suggested code of ethics in dealing with Service

Ethics are defined as the moral principles that govern a person's behaviour or the conducting of an activity (in this case, a CAS experience or project). See Chapter 5 for in-depth information on CAS and ethics.

The seventh CAS LO concerns ethics. CAS Service experiences deal with ethics in the decision-making process. Ethics may be considered doing the right thing, but also doing something for the right reasons.

Key point: Ethics is also a topic in the TOK course. Your TOK teacher may be able to help you with these questions, or you may be able to find more information in TOK resources in the library.

If you are providing a service for someone or something then you are entering an ethical dimension even if you do not realise it. You must ask yourself some very important ethical questions including:

- Why am I doing this?
- What do I want to achieve?
- Have I asked the people affected by my Service about their opinions?
- Can I keep my promises?

In addition you may wish to develop a code of practice for your project. The following activity will help you consider the ethics of your experience in more detail and bring ethical awareness to your CAS programme.

ACTIVITY BOX

Draw up a list of questions you need to ask before you begin a Service activity.

Does your school have an ethical code for CAS experiences? Could you write one? Perhaps you could undertake this activity within a TOK class. Here are some starting points:

- 1 Experiences/projects must respect the rights, interests and dignity of participants and related persons in the project.
- 2 Experiences/projects must be undertaken in accordance with any relevant law.
- 3 Freely informed consent should normally be obtained from participants.
- 4 The design of an experience and its conduct should ensure integrity.

What would you add or take away?

Many of the students studying an IB Diploma Programme are very lucky to have a high standard of food, shelter and education. However, it is vital to understand that being in this privileged position does not mean that you have all of the answers to life's problems, and in any case money is not always the solution. Groups we aim to serve must be treated with the utmost respect and consideration.

Key point: Want to know more about the different types of Service? Read Chapter 4.

7.07 Activities to prepare for the mandatory CAS interviews

CAS interviews should take place on three occasions during your CAS programme. They take place with a member of staff from your school who has responsibility for your CAS programme, such as the CAS Coordinator, a CAS Advisor, a homeroom teacher or a tutor.

The first interview happens at the beginning of your CAS programme. This to check that you understand what CAS is all about, including the requirements and learning outcomes, and to discuss your planned experiences and how you will demonstrate your CAS achievements.

The second interview is to check your progress in CAS towards the LOs, to see if you have a balanced programme and to offer advice and feedback on your Reflection and Demonstration. It happens partway through your CAS programme.

The third interview is generally done at the completion of your CAS programme. This interview should help you to reflect on your CAS programme, what you have enjoyed, how you have developed and how this experience may influence you in the future.

Use the following reminders to help you prepare for your CAS interviews at the various points in your CAS programme. These interviews should be enjoyable experiences to confirm that you are on the correct track to success. Below are some possible questions you may be asked, but the interviews depend on your experiences and how well you have communicated with your CAS staff member.

ACTIVITY BOX

Preparing for the first CAS interview

- Read this chapter!
- Complete the first activity in this chapter or create a CAS personal profile.
- Select some CAS experiences that you plan to do.
- Sample interview questions
 - 1 Do you have any questions about CAS?
 - 2 What are you excited about? What is challenging?
 - 3 How will CAS enable you to grow? Is that connected to the learner profile?
 - 4 How will you plan a CAS programme that includes Creativity, Activity and Service?
 - 5 How will you manage your time to include CAS in your Diploma Programme?
 - 6 What does your personal profile look like?
 - 7 What experiences are you planning to undertake?
 - 8 Is there anything you need help with?
 - 9 Do you understand the CAS learning outcomes? Which do you think is challenging?

- 10 Do you have a method for demonstrating your CAS achievements, evidence and reflection?

Adapted from CAS Teacher Support Material (2015) IBO

ACTIVITY BOX

Preparing for the second CAS interview

- Complete all the experiences, using the guidance in this chapter.
- Update your portfolio fully to demonstrate your achievements.
- Think about what connections you can make between your CAS experiences, between the CAS experiences and academic work, and between CAS experience and the rest of your life.

Sample interview questions

- 1 What have you achieved in your CAS experiences?
- 2 Which learning outcomes have you met or made progress in?
- 3 How has Reflection helped you in CAS?
- 4 Have you had ongoing participation in CAS experiences?
- 5 What has been most enjoyable/challenging/frustrating in your CAS experiences?
- 6 How have you used the CAS stages framework?
- 7 What development, personal or skills, have you made in a CAS project?
- 8 What have you learnt from CAS?
- 9 Have you been able to connect your experience in CAS to academic subjects or other areas of your life?
- 10 Have you undertaken Creativity, Activity and Service?

Adapted from CAS Teacher Support Material (2015) IBO

ACTIVITY BOX

Preparing for the third CAS interview

- Finalise all of your CAS experiences.
- Complete your portfolio, including Reflection and Demonstration.

- Think about how your CAS experiences have changed you, what you have learnt and how you can apply this in the future.

Sample interview questions

- 1 What did you enjoy most/least about your CAS programme?
- 2 Did you overcome a challenge that you are proud of?
- 3 What have you achieved through CAS?
- 4 What will you take from these experiences?
- 5 Describe your role in the CAS project(s); did you always have the same role?
- 6 What role has Reflection had in your CAS experiences?
- 7 How did the learning outcomes help you to develop as a person? Which one made the most impact on you?
- 8 How could CAS be improved in our school?

Adapted from CAS Teacher Support Material (2015) IBO

7.08 The structure of the CAS portfolio

Like many aspects of the IB Diploma Programme, it is imperative that to make your life easier you are organised from the very beginning of your Diploma.

Whichever method you choose, or your school uses, for creating a CAS portfolio, start creating it as soon as you begin your CAS programme. Record your evidence, categorise it by experiences, and keep an overview of different aspects completed. Remembering that you could easily complete each learning outcome more than once, but you must complete each outcome at least once.

Methods of recording CAS 1; paper file, developmental workbook or scrapbook

Believe it or not, CAS existed before computers were ubiquitous, and we all coped perfectly well! If you choose to use a paper method of evidencing your CAS, follow these steps:

- 1 Buy a large file, plastic wallets and file dividers.
- 2 Keep track of which learning outcomes and requirements you have completed (you could use the checklist Table 7.4 earlier in this chapter), and make a contents page.
- 3 Include your CAS personal profile, or the first activity in this chapter, if you have completed either of these.
- 4 Create a section for each of your experiences. In each section include:
 - Investigation, planning or proposal
 - Evidence of completing the activity, such as photos, tickets or anything else useful
 - Completed reflection activities
 - Supervisor feedback if necessary.
- 5 Consider having a section to record your interviews and overall thoughts on your CAS programme, not just your individual CAS experiences.

In order for your CAS portfolio to be monitored, you will need to bring it into school to allow the member of staff to look at it.

The scrapbook method is great for people who like to write, draw and include their reflections and evidence in this way. You can also keep and annotate other evidence such as tickets, souvenirs and photographs in this file. However, if you record a film, audio or other digital media, you can only place a link to this in the file.

When you have finished your scrapbook you can keep it as a memento of your CAS programme and the many memories it generated.

Key point: University and job applications are now increasingly competitive. Universities and employers want more from people than good qualifications or grades. CAS is a way of showing that you are a rounded, balanced person who has interests outside academic work, who can fit into a team and work well with a new group. Keep your CAS portfolio and use it to help write applications in the future.

Methods of recording CAS 2: ICT

Key point: There are several commercial and non-commercial options available for recording your CAS experiences.

ManageBac, myCAS and Gibbon have specific options for students to record their CAS experiences and reflections online, and keep track of completed learning outcomes. It is also possible to use a collaborative cloud service to share and organise your CAS reflections and evidence such as Moodle, Dropbox, Edmodo or Google Classroom or Drive. Whichever system your school uses, you will quickly need to become familiar with it.

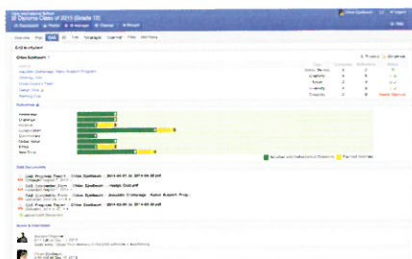


Figure 7.4 ManageBac



Figure 7.5 Gibbon

Whichever ICT or web-based solution you use to create a CAS portfolio, it is imperative that you realise that the system does not do the whole job for you.

Although the webpage may give you a space to record reflection, it does not ask pertinent questions and it does not know what you have been through. It is still up to you to take responsibility for considering your experiences, recording them and taking time out for meaningful reflection.

Key point: Struggling with Reflection? Check out Chapter 3 for lots of advice and ideas on ways and methods to reflect.

Some commercial programs keep everything well-organised in a space that is available to you, your supervisor, advisor and CAS Coordinator. This means that everyone can easily monitor what you are doing in real time. You will however have to complete your reflection and upload other forms of evidence.

If you are using a cloud service like Dropbox or Google Drive, you can follow the advice for paper file above, the only difference being that you do not need to bring it to school to have it checked; you just share it with your supervisor.

Links are easily added to YouTube videos, blogs or other websites that you may have used or created in your portfolio. However, if you have other souvenirs or non-digital work, you may need to take photographs and add these instead.

Table 7.5 considers the advantages and disadvantages of using digital and paper files.

Paper		Computer or web-based	
Advantages	Disadvantages	Advantages	Disadvantages
Good memento of CAS programme	Have to hand in to school to be checked	School staff can monitor your progress easily	Requires access to computer to complete
Cheap	Hard to record non-written methods in it	Can create links to video, photo, written, oral and other reflection	Can have cost implications
	If you lose it, you're in trouble!	Should be backed up	Still possible to lose everything!
Can record non-digital evidence (e.g. a play programme)		Could convert non-digital evidence using photography	Need to be digitally literate and have facilities available

Table 7.5 Advantages and disadvantages of paper and digital files.

7.09 The role of a student CAS committee

Several schools have an in-school Service option of joining or creating a CAS committee. If your school does not have one and you are interested in the role, then why not make a proposal to form one as one of your CAS experiences?

The role of the committee is to be responsible for communication about CAS to the school community and beyond. Examples of tasks may include setting up web pages or maintaining display boards. The committee may develop a CAS handbook for the use of the student body or guidance for non-school CAS supervisors, or support the CAS programme in other appropriate ways.

The CAS committee could undertake the majority of the research in the first activity in this chapter and find all the activities offered in the school and town. This would be a valuable resource for all the students in the Diploma Programme in your school, and would only need to be updated once a year.

7.10 Review of Chapter 7

- 1 What is the most important thing to have in CAS?
- 2 What are the learning outcomes?
- 3 What are, and when, should you use CAS stages?
- 4 How do you complete an experience?
- 5 What do you need to do to complete your entire CAS programme?
- 6 How many interviews should you have, and when do they occur?

7.11 A summary of this chapter

In this chapter we have considered:

- Your role as a student in your CAS programme
- What you need to understand to have a successful CAS programme
- How to begin planning a programme and reviewed what defines a CAS experience
- The logistics for an experience and a project
- How to complete an experience and your CAS programme
- The need to be organised, and looked at how to record your CAS portfolio, including the advantages and disadvantages of paper or ICT methods
- How to prepare for your three CAS interviews
- The idea of a CAS committee.