

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHAT DO REAL CAS STUDENTS THINK???

“What you do is who you are.”

“I wouldn’t have done half of the things that I’ve done in high school if I wasn’t pushed by CAS.”

“I WAS SCARED AT FIRST, BUT WHEN I STARTED TO THINK ABOUT IT, I WAS ALREADY INVOLVED IN A LOT OF THE THINGS THAT WOULD WORK FOR CAS.”

“Go into CAS with an open mind and you’ll learn amazing things about yourself.”

“All of the little things add up to a big picture...and I like that picture.”

What is CAS?

Creativity, action, service (CAS) is at the heart of the Diploma Program. It is one of the three essential elements in every student's Diploma Program experience. It involves a range of activities alongside your academic studies throughout the Diploma Program. It takes seriously the importance of life outside the world of scholarship, requiring students to share their energies and special talents while developing awareness, concern and the ability to work cooperatively with others.

CAS extends students. It develops a spirit of open-mindedness, lifelong learning, discovery and self-reliance in a way that cannot be achieved through studies. It inspires a sense of responsibility towards all members of the community. It encourages the development of attitudes and traits that will be respected by others such as determination and commitment, initiative and empathy.

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.* Creative activities should have a definite goal or outcome. They should be planned and evaluated. Appropriate creative activities are not merely “more of the same”—more practice, more concerts with the school band, and so on. **Simple Rule: Creativity requires you to think how you do something.**

Action: *physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle, complementing academic work.* Setting goals, and planning and reflecting on their achievement, is vital. Some excellent “action” activities are not sporting or competitive but involve physical challenge by demanding endurance (such as long-distance trekking) or the conquest of personal fears (for example, rock climbing). Alternatively, your “action” may be physical exertion as part of a service activity. **Simple Rule: If it makes you sweat, it can be considered Action.**

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. It is essential that service activities have learning benefits. This rules out mundane, repetitive activities, as well as “service” without real responsibility. A learning benefit that enriches you personally is in no way inconsistent with the requirement that service be unpaid and voluntary. The identification of needs, towards which a service activity will be directed, has to involve prior communication and full consultation with the community or individual concerned. This approach, based on a collaborative exchange, maximizes both the potential benefits to the recipients and the learning opportunities for the students. **Simple Rule: If someone/organization can pay for the service, it is not Service.**

For student development to occur, CAS should involve:

- real, purposeful activities, with significant outcomes
- personal challenge—tasks must extend the student and be achievable in scope
- thoughtful consideration, such as planning, reviewing progress, reporting
- reflection on outcomes and personal learning

CAS activities should continue on a regular basis for as long as possible throughout the program, and one project for at least 12 months. Students should be involved in at least one project involving teamwork that integrates two or more of creativity, action and service, and is of significant duration.

Successful completion of CAS is a requirement for the award of the IB diploma. CAS is not formally assessed but students need to document their activities and provide evidence that they have achieved eight key learning outcomes.

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

International dimensions

The aim of all IB programs 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.

IB learner profile booklet (March 2006)

Creating “a better and more peaceful world” is a large aim. Working towards it should be seen as involving many small steps, which may be taken locally, nationally or internationally. It is important to see activities in a broader context, bearing in mind the maxim “Think globally, act locally”. Working with people from different social or cultural backgrounds in the vicinity of the school can do as much to increase mutual understanding as large international projects.

What are the Aims of CAS?

Within the Diploma Program, CAS provides the main opportunity to develop many of the attributes described in the IB learner profile. For this reason, the aims of CAS have been written in a form that highlights their connections with the IB learner profile.

The CAS program aims to develop students who are:

- reflective thinkers—they understand their own strengths and limitations, identify goals and devise strategies for personal growth
- willing to accept new challenges and new roles
- aware of themselves as members of communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment
- active participants in sustained, collaborative projects
- balanced—they enjoy and find significance in a range of activities involving intellectual, physical, creative and emotional experiences.

Expect to feel uncomfortable and uneasy at times. CAS is designed to push you outside of your comfort zone. Your teachers, mentors and CAS coordinator will always be there to help encourage and support you through your endeavors.

The CAS program for each student will look different. What is difficult for one student may be easier for another. Therefore, all CAS students will be treated equally, but will not be treated the same. Different expectations will be set for each student depending on her/his own unique qualities.

CAS is the only part of IB program that is not grade based. Success solely depends on effort. Since you are in charge, you are in control of how enjoyable it is. What other aspect of school are you entirely in control?

Examples of CAS

Creativity	Action	Service
<p>Jazz Band Acapella Rock Band Guitar Club Dance Team Dance Company NAHS Drama Productions MUN Sound & Light Crew Variety Show Pep Club S2F2 Stu. Co. Film Club Coaching</p>	<p>Dance Swimming Volleyball Basketball Soccer Badminton Tennis Fitness Center Dance Company Tai Chi Ballet Yoga Kung Fu</p>	<p>Interact - Nursing Home Visits - Animal Shelter - Healing Home - W.I.L.L. Foundation - Y.E.S. Roots and Shoot - Organic Garden - Worm Farm - Composting - M.T.P. Migrant School SCIS Community - Stu. Co. - Event Planning - NAHS</p>

* Shanghai has ample opportunities to complete CAS outside of school organizations. A great place to start looking is the Community Center. (www.communitycenter.cn/)

What's Not CAS?

CAS is not taking place when you are in a passive rather than an active role. There should be interaction. If you are passive, nothing of real value, either for you or for other people, results from what you are doing, and no real reflection is possible. Examples of activities that would be inappropriate are listed:

- Any class, activity or project which is already part of the Diploma Program
- Any work or activity where you are personally rewarded, financially or otherwise
- Simple, tedious, mundane repetitive work (i.e. – filing, photocopying)
- Religious worship or family duties
- Any activity which is divisive amongst difference community groups
- Work experience that only benefits yourself
- An activity where there is no responsible adult on site to evaluate your performance
- A passive pursuit, eg. museum, theatre, exhibition, concert visits or watching sports events
- Fund-raising with no clearly defined end in sight or interaction w/ the benefactor(s)
- Unplanned/Unsupervised sport
- Any activity without predetermined goals

Eight Learning Outcomes

As part of the CAS experience, there should be evidence that students have shown growth in the following eight outcomes:

Increased their awareness of their own strengths and areas for growth

They are able to see themselves as individuals with various skills and abilities, some more developed than others, and understand that they can make choices about how they wish to move forward.

Undertaken new challenges

A new challenge may be an unfamiliar activity, or an extension to an existing one.

Planned and initiated activities

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

Worked collaboratively with others

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

Shown perseverance and commitment in their activities

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

Engaged with issues of global importance

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

Considered the ethical implications of their actions

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

Developed new skills

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

All eight outcomes must be present for a student to complete the CAS

requirement. Some may be demonstrated many times, in a variety of activities, but completion requires only that there is **some** evidence for every outcome.

This focus on learning outcomes emphasizes that it is the quality of a CAS activity that is of most importance. The guideline for the minimum amount of CAS activity is approximately the equivalent of half a day per school week (three to four hours per week), with a reasonable balance between creativity, action and service. "Hour counting", however, is not encouraged.

Your Responsibilities

You will choose your own CAS activities with the guidance of your CAS mentor and undertake activities in a local and international context as appropriate. This means that, as far as possible, you should “own” your personal CAS programs. This may mean initiating new ones where appropriate.

You are **required** to:

- self-review at the beginning of your CAS experience and set personal goals for what you hope to achieve through your CAS program
- plan, do, and reflect (plan activities, carry them out and reflect on what you have learned)
- review with your CAS coordinator before, during, and after your activity
- take part in a range of activities, including at least one project that covers two parts of CAS, some of which you have initiated yourself
- keep reflections of your activities and achievements
- show evidence of achievement
- focus 3 to 4 hours a week during the school year towards CAS
- participate in one service project that lasts the minimum of one year

Your CAS Coordinator's Responsibilities

It is the role of the CAS coordinator to monitor your progress and to give advice, *not to push you through CAS*.

Your CAS mentor/coordinator will be involved in:

- helping to identify personal and social goals
- monitoring the range and balance of activities undertaken
- developing powers of reflection through discussion and consultation
- supporting you in your consideration of ethical concerns
- reading and responding to reflections
- issuing feedback to reflections and during interviews
- informing you of deadlines
- alerting the CAS coordinator of any problems
- reporting, as required by IB, on student performance

QUICK VOCABULARY

Supervisor – the person in who is on site as you complete your activity ensure your attendance and participation

CAS Coordinator – the watchdog of the entire CAS program; helps you decide on your activities and goals, develop your reflections skills, the person monitoring all students' CAS progress (Mr. Smeins)

What Steps Must I Take to Begin?

Not sure where to begin with the CAS program or what to do next? Just follow the easy steps below, and you'll be off and running.

1. Watch the CAS Presentation given by Mr. Smeins
2. Read thru your SCIS CAS Handbook ensuring that you first understand the intentions and goals of the CAS followed by the requirements. Complete the "Getting Started Checklist" (found under "files" on Managebac) for your own knowledge and reference
3. Begin brainstorming ideas that interest you. Create a yearlong plan to cover all creativity, action, and service. One activity must be a yearlong service project.
4. Refer to the "Pre-Activity Reflection/Guiding Questions" sheet (also under "files" in Managebac) for *each* activity. Be able to answer these questions thoroughly to assist you in making goals for each activity.
5. Meet with Mr. Smeins to discuss your first year plan if needed.
6. If you are participating in an activity that is taking place off campus, you must collect the name, email, and phone number of the supervisor and add this to Managebac. You must also provide them with the "Letter to the Activity Supervisor" found on Managebac. You may skip this step for school sponsored activities.
7. Enter your activity proposal into Managebac with at least two goals.
8. Begin attending the activity while frequently monitoring and attending to your goals and the eight learning outcomes of CAS. Collect evidence of your involvement.
9. Begin working on your CAS portfolio. Type all reflections on a Word or Pages document and save it on the school server as a back up. Minimum requirements for each entry can be found on the "Reflection Guidelines" sheet found in ManageBac. Then copy and paste it into Managebac. *Please do not upload the document.* Sample reflections can be found posted on ManageBac.
10. Add a minimum of one entry per month per activity.
11. Pay close attention to Mr. Smeins' monthly notes posted on your Managebac wall and follow all directives.
12. Enjoy the ride.

Evaluation

Evaluation of successful completion of the CAS program will be done through personal reflections. Without reflection there is no learning. The most important aspect of reflection is self-evaluation. The school will provide you with feedback on progress. The CAS coordinator also makes the final decision on completion, which is reported to the IB regional office. There is no other assessment of student performance in CAS.

Reflecting and Reporting in Your CAS Portfolio

You should document your CAS activities, noting in particular your reflection upon your experiences. This portfolio will be completed using an online program named Managebac. While it is important to make an early start on your CAS portfolio, there is no point in writing lengthy accounts about relatively routine experiences. Let an exceptionally positive or particularly negative experience guide you reflection.

Your Managebac Portfolio

The Managebac Portfolio is a very important part of the CAS experience. In addition to providing an excellent opportunity for reflection, it is an important record of activities, which will aid you in assessing your progress of achieving the **eight learning outcomes**. The portfolios will serve the dual purpose of providing a medium for reflection upon CAS activities and be utilized as a useful tool geared towards university entrance applications and scholarships. The CAS Portfolios must be backed up using Word or Pages and saved on the school server.

The first entry for a new activity must include a clear statement of your goals for participation in the activity. *Activities will not be accepted without clearly stated goals*. Your final Portfolio entry for the activity should include information about whether or not your goals were met, how, why or why not.

You must complete one reflection per activity each month.

Your reflections will be a major part of your Portfolio, but not constitute the entire thing. You must include in your entries, photographs, movies, programs, any other documentation related to your CAS work.

Questions that may be addressed in your journal:

- Describe the activity. What did you do at each stage?
- What difficulties did you encounter?
- How did this activity benefit others?
- Did your activity contribute to your skill in an area or introduce a new skill?
- Did your activity require initiative and/or responsibility as an individual or as part of a group?
- Did your activity require originality and/or creativity?
- Did your activity challenge you?
- Did your activity bring a sense of accomplishment and enjoyment to you?
- How did your activity give you a sense of contributing something of importance?
- What would you change if you did this same activity again?

The answers to these questions are not a simple yes or no, but should provide points of reflection and elicit thoughtful response. Address only those that apply to a given activity. Your reflections are for you and will only be shared with your mentor and, on certain occasions, the CAS coordinator.

Successful Completion of CAS

Evaluation and determination of a successful CAS program will be based on the following:

- Your portfolio and the quality of your activity reflections
- A report by your adult supervisor for each activity
- Activity visits by the CAS Coordinator
- Your interviews and your completion of the eight CAS outcomes
- Maintaining an average of 3-4 hours of weekly commitment to a balance of CAS activities over the course of 18 months and completing one yearlong service project.

Incompletion of the CAS requirements is the number one reason IB students fail to receive their diploma.

Because CAS is at the center of the IB Diploma Program and a SCIS graduation requirement, unsuccessful completion of the CAS program will result in a forfeiting of your SCIS and IB diploma.

CAS Timeline

Diploma Year 1

- **September**
 - CAS Program begins
 - Induction lessons/CAS guide issued/Purposeful reflection
 - Managebac training/Log on to Managebac account
 - Parents informed about CAS
 - Set long term plan
- **October**
 - Complete first reflections in class. One per month per activity
- **November**
 - Begin working independently on monthly reflections.
- **December**
 - Pause CAS for exams and winter break
- **January**
 - Resume monthly reflections
- **May**
 - CAS Program meeting with entire cohort to discuss progress
- **Jun.-Aug.**
 - Students that have fallen behind in CAS should use this time to catch up on activities and reflections

Diploma Year 2

- **September**
 - Long term plan edited and set for remainder of the year
- **Oct. – Nov.**
 - Independently work on journal reflections
- **December**
 - Early release of students with Managebac status “Excellent”
- **January**
 - Resume reflections after break
- **April**
 - CAS wrap up and final meeting with mentor
 - SCIS submits names of students unsuccessful at completing the CAS program

Documents & Forms

IB CAS Getting Started - Checklist

This following checklist should help you to get started your CAS journey at SCIS. Check each box when you are sure that you have fully understood.

I acknowledge the following:

- I have carefully read through the information contained in the CAS handbook, and I have fully understood the CAS requirements.
- I know who is the CAS coordinator, and that I can always discuss CAS issues with him.
- I know that I am expected to self-initiate and self-direct a significant, enduring project that incorporates collaboration and at least two strands of creativity, action, and service.
- I am aware of the two-year CAS Timetable, and I will follow it.
- I need to submit an activity proposal with two goals on Managebac BEFORE beginning any CAS activities.
- I need to develop my own CAS plan that covers activities and projects for two years.
- I know that I must try and maintain a balance between Creativity, Action, and Service.
- My parents/guardians are informed of the CAS program, and its requirements.
- I will set goals for each activity, and I will reflect carefully on the activities I undertake.
- I have a responsible adult supervisor (not from my family) for each activity I undertake.
- I understand that supervisors who do not work at school must read *A Letter to the Supervisor* and agree to perform any responsibility required.
- I will keep all the written records, photos, rosters, programs, videos, and newspaper or magazine clippings when possible.
- I have copies, or know where to get copies, of all the necessary forms.
- I am aware that I must present my evidence that I met the learning outcomes in my portfolio.
- I clearly understand without the satisfactory and timely completion of the CAS program, the IB Diploma or the SCIS diploma will not be awarded.

Signature

Date

IB Students are:
• Inquirers • Knowledgeable • Thinkers • Communicators • Principled •
• Open-minded • Caring • Risk-takers • Balanced • Reflective •

Pre-Activity Reflection/Guiding Questions

Name of the Activity: _____

- How is this a new challenge? How does it address areas where I have weaknesses?
- How will I be involved in planning the activity?
- How will I work collaboratively with others?
- How much commitment does this activity require?
- How does the activity allow me to engage with issues of global importance (if at all)?
- What, if any, are the ethical implications to this activity?
- What new skills will I develop?
- What do I hope to learn from this activity?

IB Students are:
• Inquirers • Knowledgeable • Thinkers • Communicators • Principled •
• Open-minded • Caring • Risk-takers • Balanced • Reflective •

Letter to the Activity Supervisor

Dear Activity Supervisor:

The International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma is a program of education held at upper-secondary schools throughout the world. As a part of the IB diploma, students must complete a program called CAS, which stands for Creativity, Action, Service.

The CAS program aims to provide the student with challenges in three areas:

- *Creativity*. This covers a wide range of creative activities, including the arts, and creative thinking in carrying out projects.
- *Action*. This includes sports and other physical activities outside the normal curriculum.
- *Service*. This entails doing things for others and with others, in a relationship of mutual respect.

The students should undertake each task with clear goals and with a responsible adult supervisor. The students cannot receive payment for these activities and cannot be assisting family members or relatives.

Your cooperation as an activity supervisor would be greatly appreciated. Your understanding, support and guidance are important for the overall success of the young person in the activity. As a supervisor, you will be asked to evaluate the student's performance. In particular, you will be asked to monitor the student's attendance, provide guidance and support relating to the activity, alert the CAS coordinator of any problems, and report on the student's performance. Should you have any enquires regarding the CAS program, please contact me, the CAS coordinator. Thank you for your support.

With regards,



Ty Smeins
CAS Coordinator
Shanghai Community International School
tsmeins@scischina.org

IB Students are:

- Inquirers • Knowledgeable • Thinkers • Communicators • Principled •
- Open-minded • Caring • Risk-takers • Balanced • Reflective •

Getting Started on Your Portfolio

This document is a guide to help you get started on your CAS Portfolio entries. The following information is required in your portfolio. The minimum requirement is one entry per school month per activity (summer and winter vacation time is exempt).

Activity Name:

Month:

Creativity

Action

Service

DETAILED SUMMARY & GOALS (AT LEAST 2):

Please explain the purpose/goal(s) behind your activity. What were your direct responsibilities? How have you progressed with your goals?

REFLECTION ON CAS LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Explain how your activity may have had an affect on any of the eight learning outcomes. Each outcome will not be significant to every activity in which you participate. Only respond to those you feel are relevant. This portion of your reflection needs not be extensive.

1. Increased your awareness of your own strengths and areas for growth

How were you able to see yourself as an individual with various skills and abilities, some more developed than others, and understand that you can make choices about how you wish to move forward?

2. Undertaken new challenges

A new challenge may be an unfamiliar activity, or an extension to an existing one. How was this particular activity a challenge to you?

3. Planned and initiated activities

What role did you play in the planning of the activity?

4. Worked collaboratively with others

In which ways did you have to work as a member of a team?

5. Showed perseverance and commitment to the 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. What role did you play considering these implications?

6. Engaged with issues of global importance

You 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). What type of global issue did your activity address? How did you have an

IB Students are:

- Inquirers • Knowledgeable • Thinkers • Communicators • Principled •
- Open-minded • Caring • Risk-takers • Balanced • Reflective •

impact on a great global population by participating in the activity?

7. 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). What sort of ethical decisions did you have to make? Did you see/experience anything that affected your established ideals?

8. Developed new skills

As with new challenges, new skills may be shown in activities that you have not previously undertaken, or in increased expertise in an established area. What new skills did you develop through participation of the activity?

PERSONAL REFLECTION: (This is the most important part of your portfolio)

Add any additional thoughts about your activity. If you have difficulty writing a reflection,, you may try considering the following questions:

- How did your participation make you feel?
- What was the value of your activity to you and those you were serving?
- What are your feelings on the activity's effectiveness?
- Did the activity have any ethical dilemmas? Did you face any directly?
- Was the activity valuable? How so?
- What did you learn from the activity? How will it more widely affect your thoughts/perceptions & actions?

EVIDENCE: (Not required for each monthly, only when it applies)

Add and pictures, brochures, corresponding websites, etc. that show the activity in which you participated and represent the impact you had on the activity. Upon completion of the school year, each of your activities must have a minimum of one piece of evidence.

IB Students are:

- Inquirers • Knowledgeable • Thinkers • Communicators • Principled •
- Open-minded • Caring • Risk-takers • Balanced • Reflective •

For more information, please check out:

www.ibo.org