

Creativity, Action, and Service Guide

The creativity, action, service (CAS) requirement takes seriously the importance of life outside the world of scholarship, providing a counterbalance to the academic self-absorption some students may feel within a demanding school curriculum. The creative, physical and social development of human beings can be shaped by their own experiences. Participation in CAS encourages students to share their energies and special talents while developing awareness, concern and the ability to work cooperatively with others. The IBO's goal of educating the whole person and fostering more caring and socially responsible attitudes comes alive in an immediate way when students reach beyond themselves and their books. The educational benefits of CAS apply in the school community, and in the local, national and international communities.

CAS should extend the students. It should challenge them to develop a value system by which they enhance their personal growth. It should develop a spirit of open-mindedness, lifelong learning, discovery and self-reliance. It should encourage the development of new skills on many levels: for example, creative skills, physical skills and social skills. It should inspire a sense of responsibility towards all members of the community. It should also encourage the development of attitudes and traits that will be respected by others, such as determination and commitment, initiative and empathy.

Although there are three elements to CAS, it is important not to consider them as mutually exclusive. CAS is about the education of the whole person, and the three elements are therefore interwoven. Together, they enable a student to recognize that there are many opportunities in life, away from formal academic study, to grow in knowledge of life, self and others. Creative and physical activities are particularly important for adolescents (probably more so than for any other age group) because popular culture informs and shapes their desires and values. There are also pursuits which offer much opportunity for fun and enjoyment at a time which is, for many young people, full of stress and uncertainty. The service element of CAS is, in itself, the most significant, but the two other elements are also very important, as they provide access, balance, and flexibility to meet individual students' interests and preferences. However, even more important in the model is that it is not just a matter of three individual parts: uniquely in the Diploma Program it is the interaction of them all that creates the richness of CAS. The whole of CAS is greater than the sum of its parts.

While it might be maintained that the Diploma Program hexagon model is currently the best available to develop academic skills and talents, it is more difficult to determine what the formula should be to develop a student's "informed heart". The development of an "informed heart" should be an integral part of a student's international education. But how it can happen is obviously the crux of the matter; at the very least we need to take into account vast individual differences.

The IBO recognizes that schools authorized to offer its programs worldwide operate in diverse geographical, cultural, economic and political environments. While acknowledging global diversity, each school's CAS activities must be central to the Diploma Program and reflect the school's understanding of the philosophy and spirit that inform the CAS requirement. Although the IBO does not officially recognize CAS activities undertaken by candidates for an IB Certificate, because of the educational benefits it is strongly recommended that all students participate.

What is CAS?

CAS is a framework for experiential learning, designed to involve students in new roles. The emphasis is on learning by doing real tasks that have real consequences and then reflecting on these experiences over time.

This process of doing and reflecting on the doing provides an excellent opportunity to extend what is learned in the classroom to a form of service, such as applying science (from, for example, biology or environmental systems) to the environment, or applying technology (from, for example, design technology) to the design of devices to help people who are disabled or to improve living conditions in a home or town or refugee camp.

The most meaningful CAS experience comes from spending time with others to build relationships and develop the self-worth of both server and served. In the design and construction of their CAS schedules, coordinators are strongly encouraged to emphasize these aspects as much as possible. Appropriate activities might include:

- physical assistance to the elderly
- a structured series of visits to a home for orphans
- helping with rehabilitation at the local hospital
- teaching basic literacy
- establishing and coaching a sports team for disadvantaged youngsters
- establishing and leading a musical ensemble for visually impaired people
- involvement in a theatrical production to which refugee children are invited
- teaching the use of computers
- environmental restoration and protection.

The activities should be undertaken gradually, be appropriately adapted to the circumstances, and take into account the students' aptitudes and preferences. The experience should never be a shock for students; this would be counter to the educational aims of CAS; rather it should reward and enrich all involved. When well carried out, CAS should build self-esteem, self-confidence, autonomy and self-reliance.

Creativity

This aspect of CAS is interpreted as imaginatively as possible to cover a wide range of arts and other activities outside the normal curriculum which include creative thinking in the design and carrying out of service projects. (See "Examples of Good Practice".)

This could involve **doing** dance, theatre, music and art, for example. Students should be engaged in group activities, and especially in new roles, wherever possible. Nevertheless, individual commitment to learning an art form is allowed, where it respects the requirements for all CAS activities: that goals are set and the student reflects on progress.

Action

This aspect of CAS can include participation in expeditions, individual and team sports, and physical activities outside the normal curriculum; it also includes physical activity involved in carrying out creative and service projects. Action may involve participation in sport or other activities requiring physical exertion—such as expeditions and camping trips, or digging trenches

to lay water pipes to bring fresh water to a village. Students should be encouraged towards group and team activities, and undertaking new roles, but an individual commitment is acceptable where the general requirements of CAS are met: goals are set and the student reflects on progress.

Both creativity and action can be enhanced by incorporating the service element. Students involved in the arts and in physical activities might consider coaching young children, seniors in residential homes, street children and so on.

Service

Service projects and activities are often the most transforming element of the Diploma Program for the individual student; they have the potential to nurture and mould the global citizen. Service involves interaction, such as the building of links with individuals or groups in the community. The community may be the school, the local district, or it may exist on national and international levels (such as undertaking projects of assistance in a developing country). Service activities should not only involve doing things **for** others but also doing things **with** others and developing a real commitment with them. The relationship should therefore show respect for the dignity and self-respect of others.

What is not CAS?

What is, or what is not, CAS is a question which coordinators are frequently asked. The asking of the question may show an inappropriate attitude. If CAS becomes a points-scoring exercise, rather than an interesting variety of activities that the student finds intrinsically worthwhile and rewarding, and which is mutually beneficial to the student and to his or her community, then its purpose is lost. It is important that the **spirit** of CAS be considered at all times.

Generally, CAS is not taking place when the student is in a passive rather than an active role. There should be interaction. If the student is passive, nothing of real value, either for the student or for other people, results from what the student is doing, and no real reflection is possible. In such circumstances the student will be able to meet the objectives of CAS only to a very limited extent. Examples of activities which at first sight would appear to be inappropriate are listed below.

- Any class, activity or project which is already part of the student's Diploma Program.
- An activity for which a student is personally rewarded either financially or with some other benefit (unless this benefit is passed on in full to a worthy cause).
- Doing simple, tedious and repetitive work, like returning school library books to the shelves.
- Working in an old people's or children's home when the student:
 - has no idea of how the home operates
 - is just making sandwiches
 - has no contact at all with the old people or children
 - actually does no service for other people.

(The above example can be applied to many other activities purporting to be CAS.)

- A passive pursuit, such as a visit to a museum, the theatre, art exhibition, concert or sports event, unless it clearly inspires work in a related activity in which a student is already engaged.
- All forms of duty within the family.
- Religious devotion and any activity which can be interpreted as proselytizing.
- Work experience which only benefits the student.
- Fund-raising with no clearly defined end in sight.

- An activity where there is no leader or responsible adult on site to evaluate and confirm student performance.
- Activities which cause division amongst different groups in the community.

Guiding Questions

The following questions may help students determine whether or not an intended activity qualifies as CAS.

- Is the activity a new role for me?
- Is it a real task that I am going to undertake?
- Does it have real consequences for other people and for me?
- What do I hope to learn from getting involved?
- How can this activity benefit other people?
- What can I reflect on during this activity?

Concluding Comment

It is not too much to suggest (indeed many students have confirmed it) that CAS can assist in discovering the true meaning of life, and in finding one's own place in the world by transcending cultural and socio-economic barriers. This "own place in the world" has a number of dimensions including:

- within oneself
- through interaction with others
- within a community
- within a period of history.

CAS is a privileged way to build one's own place. It has transformed the lives of those who undertake a commitment to it. We trust that students will find deep rewards through their participation in CAS.

Aims

The aims of the CAS requirement are to enable students to develop:

- an appreciation of the potential of the human mind and spirit
- knowledge, skills and understanding
- an awareness of humanitarian issues across the world
- a recognition that education imposes lifelong ethical responsibilities
- a willingness to inquire and an enjoyment of discovery
- confidence in their ability to initiate change, both individually and collaboratively
- autonomy and self-reliance
- an appreciation of their own and others' talents.

Objectives

Having completed the CAS requirement, candidates should be able to demonstrate:

- self-confidence and modesty
- attitudes and values which respect human dignity and which transcend barriers of race, class, religion, gender and politics

- an awareness of humanitarian and environmental issues, and the development of an ethical position on them from a local, national and international perspective
- a willingness to interact meaningfully with others
- a sense of responsibility towards all members of the local, national and global communities, and a commitment to be of value to those communities
- personal qualities of curiosity, honesty and self-criticism
- an ability to reflect on and to learn from experiences
- a spirit of discovery, commitment, initiative, determination and perseverance
- the ability to meet challenges and an awareness of personal limitations
- practical skills which can be used in the service of others and in a future career.

Philosophy

- Counterbalance to academic self-absorption
- Education of the whole person
- Education beyond the classroom and examination hall
- Development of attitudes and values which transcend race, religion, gender and politics
- Promotion of international understanding
- Encouragement of new skills and interests
- Sharing energies and talents
- Encouragement of a sense of responsibility to all
- Development of awareness, concern for and ability to work with others
- Promotion of more informed and understanding attitudes
- Service to the community as a complement to intellectual development in the academic curriculum
- Establishment of links with local, national and international communities
- Challenge to the student
- Development of a spirit of discovery and self-reliance

Structure and Administration

A school's CAS provision should offer the widest possible range of activities, tailored to the particular environment in which the school is located and to the needs, interests and skills of the students.

Having a credible, comprehensive CAS provision at a school does not guarantee that all students will make completely appropriate choices of activities. Attitude, interest, time pressures and maturity affect a student's choices. Some students will need careful guidance and counseling to enable them to construct a meaningful set of activities which satisfies the CAS requirement.

For the service element, the project approach is being adopted increasingly by schools worldwide, because it is seen to be close to the spirit of CAS.

Examples of activities and projects incorporating creativity and action are to be found in the "Examples of Good Practice" section of this guide. CAS coordinators, other staff and students are also encouraged to read *IB World* which may contain accounts of worthwhile service projects from schools. They should also visit the IBO web site (<http://www.ibo.org>) and in particular the online curriculum centre, which provides a forum for exchanging ideas.

Similarly, many schools maintain their own web sites, including details of the kinds of CAS activities in which their students are engaged. The challenge to schools is to design activities that integrate the spirit of CAS with the uniqueness of the school and the local community. Ideally, schools' CAS schedules will largely consist of activities and projects which incorporate students' creativity and physical energy (action) into service. The creation of a school-specific CAS guide (as recommended in the section on the responsibilities of a CAS coordinator) is a very useful way of ensuring that the school integrates the spirit of CAS with its own particular needs.

Timing Students should undertake CAS throughout the two years of the Diploma Program. Each student is expected to devote the equivalent of one half-day (that is about three to four hours) each school week on CAS during the two years of the Diploma Program. A minimum of 150 hours during the two years is required, with time distributed evenly among the three areas: creativity, action and service. This time requirement is intended to indicate an acceptable minimum—schools can take this as a guideline when implementing their CAS schedule.

Many schools around the world substantially exceed the CAS time requirement because their CAS thoroughly engages and motivates students. The additional hours which the students devote to CAS are a consequence of their commitment, depth of involvement and enthusiasm.

Group or Individual Activities?

In general, CAS activities should involve the social dimension and group work as much as possible. At the completion of all CAS activities over the two years, a majority should have been spent in activities where the student works cooperatively with other people, such as in coaching team sports, group planning of a marketing strategy to raise funds, teaching immigrants the local language, performing in a band, or playing in a sports team for a season.

Guidelines for Heads of Schools

CAS is an integral part of the Diploma Program because it aims to contribute to the students' personal development by educating the whole person. Candidates must fulfill the CAS requirement to qualify for the IB Diploma. The relationship between the IBO and the schools is built on trust and loyalty. The IBO monitors CAS in schools but it is primarily the responsibility of the school to ensure that the students engage in meaningful activities and projects. The IBO expects the school administration to share its belief in the educational value of CAS, acknowledge the central role of CAS within the Diploma Program, and encourage staff support and participation as far as possible.

To make CAS educationally worthwhile, coherent and meaningful for the students, the IBO has the following recommendations to heads of schools. The head should ensure that the following issues are satisfactorily managed.

- A CAS coordinator should be appointed to be in charge of the administration. The appointee should be an experienced teacher highly suited to this important task, and who has a strong belief in and a good understanding of the CAS philosophy as outlined in this guide.
- Sufficient release time should be allowed to the CAS coordinator for him/her to be able to implement the schedule according to the guidelines, that is setting up, monitoring, evaluating, counseling, documenting and constantly developing CAS in the school. The release time required will vary, depending on:
 - the number of students involved
 - the development of CAS in the school.

- Adequate funding should be allocated to ensure the smooth running of CAS.
 - Adequate funding should be allocated to the professional training of the CAS coordinator.
 - The school's faculty recruitment policy should reflect a commitment to CAS.
 - Parents should be well informed of the CAS philosophy and its central role within the Diploma Program. Parents should be involved in the activities where they may be useful.
 - Where appropriate, similar activities should be extended to younger students.
- The process of becoming a "whole person" through CAS is enhanced by an early start, such as that offered by community service in the Middle Years Programme.

Responsibilities of the CAS Coordinator

The coordinator is responsible for ensuring that students involved in CAS can meet the aims and objectives set out in this guide. It is a specific and demanding responsibility for an integral and important part of the Diploma Program.

Identifying possible projects and activities requires an appraisal of school and community resources as well as a survey of the needs of students, their community and the local environment.

The CAS coordinator should:

- have a good understanding of the nature and philosophy of CAS and its underlying aims and objectives
- strongly believe in the importance of CAS as a key element of the Diploma Program, with the objective of educating the whole person
- ensure that all students are clearly informed about the rationale for CAS in such a way that they fully understand its aims and objectives, and how they will benefit from it
- ensure that all students fulfill the CAS requirements according to IBO guidelines
- ensure that the school administration and all staff involved with the CAS provision have a clear understanding of the rationale for CAS and support it as an integral part of the Diploma Program
- ensure that parents are fully informed about the importance, rationale and requirements for CAS
- invite staff, parents and other individuals to take part in CAS by leading activities appropriate to their skills and interests
- with the students, identify worthwhile activities within and outside the school
- allow students to create their own activities appropriate to the overall objectives
- establish links with the local community, to give the students an insight into the society in which they live
- establish a broad CAS structure, giving the opportunity for each student to engage in varied, challenging and meaningful activities
- continually reappraise the relevance of the overall range of CAS activities to the needs and interests of the changing student body
- consider the creation of a school CAS guide that follows the key CAS guidelines but also meets the unique needs of the school and community
- maintain and keep CAS records on file and in a safe location
- assume the role of mentor for the students.

Monitoring of the School's CAS Provision by the Regional Office

The regional office is responsible for approving and monitoring CAS in schools. CAS coordinators must refer to the *Vade Mecum* for current administrative procedures, and for information about the forms listed in the following paragraphs.

CAS Provision Questionnaire (Form CAS/PQ)

Schools newly authorized to offer the Diploma Program must complete this questionnaire and submit it to the regional office during the first year of the Diploma Program.

May session schools: by 31 January (of the **first** year)

November session schools: by 31 July (of the **first** year)

Note that this completed questionnaire is required of newly authorized schools in their **first year only**. It is not required from other schools and it is not required from new schools after the first year (unless requested by the regional office, or when fundamental changes are made).

Student Records

Two forms are provided for completion by students. The CAS activity self-evaluation form (CAS/AEF) should be completed at the end of each activity/project, and the student final summary form (CAS/SFS) should be completed at the conclusion of the student's participation in CAS activities. Form CAS/SFS is a list of the activities/ projects and the student's critical reflection on the entire CAS experience. All forms completed by the students should be retained centrally by the CAS coordinator, so that they are available if requested by the regional office.

Form CAS/CP

Schools must submit form CAS/CP to the regional office. This form contains the names of any Diploma Program candidates who have not successfully completed the CAS requirement and whose Diploma will therefore be withheld. Such candidates have up to one year to complete the CAS requirement. The form must be submitted before the final examinations begin, in accordance with the following deadlines.

May session schools: by 1 May

November session schools: by 1 November

If the CAS requirement **is** met within one year the school should resubmit the complete records of the candidate to the regional office with its recommendations. If the candidate does not complete the requirement within one year, the Diploma will not be awarded, even if all other requirements have been satisfactorily met.

Random Checks

Each year the regional office requests random samples from a number of schools, comprising three candidates' complete CAS records and a summary evaluation report on each student written by the CAS coordinator. The deadlines for receipt of these documents by regional offices are as follows.

May session schools: by 1 May

November session schools: by 1 November

The regional director or an authorized representative may visit a school as part of the monitoring process. This may be at the regional office's initiative or following a request by the school. Schools are required to keep CAS records centrally; these must be made available to the regional office on request, including at any time during the examination session.

Getting Started

This section is aimed particularly at new schools in the process of designing and implementing CAS. It may also be a useful reference for experienced schools wishing to develop further their existing provision. More advice, guidance and a recommended bibliography are available on the online curriculum center.

The success or failure of CAS depends heavily on a commitment by all members of the school community. The responsibility for CAS cannot be left to students; the school must provide administrative support and the necessary funding. Strong adult leadership and guidance, from staff, parents, or other members of the local community, should be given to each designated CAS activity.

Human Resources

Staff and partners: teachers are often viewed only in terms of their particular subject expertise. However, virtually all school staff have other talents they would be prepared to share and which could contribute to excellent CAS activities. Ancillary staff can be very useful in helping to identify and supervise community and environmental activities. Partners can also be encouraged to become involved in CAS.

Students: many students have already achieved considerable skills in pursuits such as music, art, drama and sports. These can make excellent activities with younger students in the school or off-campus in the local community.

Parents: parents can also be a very useful resource for CAS activities, thanks to a wide range of occupations and interests. Parents are often very keen to assist with a variety of CAS ventures, or even to lead them on a regular basis.

Ideas and Physical Resources

A school will often find that its existing activities provide a natural transition to CAS. It should be emphasized, however, that while CAS may be extramural, it is not extracurricular. Rather, it is an integral component of the Diploma Program requiring activities outside the classroom. If the school decides to modify an existing set of activities, the students may also need to modify their approaches to maintain an appropriate balance and to include the all-important phase of personal reflection.

All schools have a variety of places ideal for CAS activities: the swimming pool, the sports hall, gymnastics hall, auditorium, clinic, playing fields, art rooms, music studios, language laboratories, computer rooms and technology workshops. They can be particularly attractive as a means of bringing to the campus younger and older members of the local community who can then share the facilities the students use.

Classrooms, laboratories and workshops can also support CAS and integrate it into the curriculum and provide an intellectual stimulus for various activities. Some examples are given below.

- Some group 3 subjects, particularly history, aim to develop students' awareness of problems facing humanity, and possible solutions to those problems. Students can be encouraged to see themselves as responsible for the future.
- Biology, geography and environmental systems classes are ideal for analyzing local environmental problems and identifying possible solutions to be implemented by an environmental action group.
- Computer science classes can be used to design programs to help children who have mental disabilities.
- Design technology classes can offer the opportunity to design and make devices that will help people who have disabilities.
- Theory of Knowledge classes can provide an excellent opportunity for students to reflect on the nature and philosophy of CAS and to discuss the skills and values it encourages.

Helpful Organization

Schools should not confine their audit of CAS resources to the school community. It is possible to identify a variety of official organizations, both locally and elsewhere, which can provide support for weekly CAS activities and major projects. The school should maintain close contact with outside agencies through which students are completing part of their CAS requirement. Examples of such organizations are:

- social services, health services, government offices
- overseas embassies and consulates
- service organizations
- environmental groups
- youth groups, sports clubs, drama, music and art groups
- multinational and local commerce and industry (for financial support—banks and insurance companies may be prepared to fund service ventures)
- international organizations such as Amnesty International, the Red Crescent, Red Cross, Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Scheme, the YMCA and the YWCA
- Habitat for Humanity Project (www.habitat.org).

Local and national press coverage of students' CAS activities can be very positive and gives excellent publicity to the community, reflecting well on the school. It can also encourage other organizations to propose new activities for the school's CAS provision.

Community Service

Students can often provide very valuable service to the community.

- Local institutions: hospitals, homes for the elderly and orphanages usually welcome regular contact with and visits from students.
- Local projects: examples of such projects are litter clearing campaigns for beaches and rivers, tree-planting and building an adventure playground. These activities are often publicized in local newspapers.
- Emergency services, such as lifeboat, cliff rescue and mountain rescue can be undertaken by CAS students.
- Non-academic support staff: the school's support staff and their local neighbourhoods can be helped; students are more likely to have access to and be accepted for work on community

projects in these areas if the support staff make contact. Students and staff members benefit from working together on projects.

- Local schools: the buddy system for help with schoolwork and cultural enrichment is frequently welcomed by local schools.
- Emergencies: crises occur in every community, usually as a result of natural hazards, sometimes from political unrest or war. Floods, hurricanes, earthquakes and influxes of refugees demand immediate relief work. Schools in areas where such events are not uncommon might include in their CAS provision training and preparation for emergency assistance.

Advice for Schools

Schools should be aware of the implications of their proposals for the local community. Initiatives for activities which may appear straightforward and uncontentious sometimes meet with significant difficulties when put into operation. CAS is primarily experiential education, not a social service club. All activities should therefore have an educational potential. Some possible areas of difficulty are given below.

Cultural Differences

Local communities can view with suspicion or even resentment the well-intentioned efforts of schools to become involved with community affairs, especially social services. An international school may have serious problems if it appears to be indifferent or insensitive to local values and cultural attitudes. At the same time, the school must remain sensitive to the cultural, social and economic diversity of its student body. Schools should make the effort necessary to overcome these problems, create a climate of trust and encourage the development of positive relationships.

Appropriate solutions will vary but effective strategies might include some of the ideas given below.

- Students could invite leaders of local service and neighborhood groups to meet staff and students at the school. The school can explain the objectives of the CAS requirement and thereby gain support and understanding. Prominent members of the public can be given invitations to concerts, sports and international celebrations in an effort to forge good relationships with the community.
- Pairing students with others from local schools to promote better understanding can be effective.
- Teachers might use local contacts to introduce students into the community and open doors to possible CAS activities. School employees from the community can be of assistance with this kind of activity.
- Teachers might arrange short courses on cultural awareness for all students early on in the Diploma Program. This can help avoid future problems.

Different Languages

The inability to communicate can be a barrier to effective CAS initiatives. Possible solutions are:

- arranging an intensive conversational course before students begin their CAS activities
- devising CAS scenarios in language B and *ab initio* classes
- arranging for bilingual students or members of the outside community to act as interpreters (a pairing system with local students is a good way to overcome a language barrier)
- designing activities where there is no need for a common spoken language, such as dance or sports.

Legal Requirements

Schools should be familiar with local laws to avoid unwittingly infringing them. The school also has a responsibility to insure itself against accidents and liabilities arising from activities on and off campus. The CAS coordinator should check with local government authorities to assess possible legal problems and consult the school's administration about third party liability coverage under existing insurance policies, which should be extended if necessary.

Parental Concern

The safety of young people participating in some CAS activities may be a source of parental concern; this should be anticipated, addressed and alleviated by the school whenever possible. The following strategies may help.

- The CAS coordinator should convene a meeting with students and parents to explain the aims of all activities which may have a risk factor. The coordinator should explain what arrangements have been made to reduce any risks as far as possible.
- Parents should be encouraged to participate in the activities themselves.
- The safety of students may be greater if they work alongside members of the local community. It may be advisable for students to work in pairs or groups even in less risky circumstances.
- Where possible, supervising adults should have basic training in first aid.

Motivation

There are various ways in which motivation can be encouraged. Some suggestions are listed below.

- Participants should be fully aware of the aims and objectives of CAS. Outside speakers can be invited to present their views to strengthen students' understanding of the role of CAS in the curriculum. These speakers may be former students who may emphasize how important and enjoyable their CAS experience was, or they may be representatives of local organizations and communities, which have benefited from service activities.
- Adequate training for staff and students must be provided for those areas of CAS which require the development of new skills.
- Activity leaders should lead by example, rather than by adopting a passive, solely supervisory role.
- Parents need to be informed of the importance the school places on CAS. Wherever possible, they should be encouraged to participate in CAS, either as leaders or by making occasional visits to see activities in progress.
- Activities involving the participation of students from different schools should be included in the schedule.

Students and their parents should be told at an early stage that the school might organize annual CAS fairs to display the work and initiatives of CAS activities. This is an effective way for new schools to introduce parents to the potential of CAS. They should also be told that students' CAS records will be consulted for university references, transcripts and other testimonials. Schools may wish to recognize outstanding achievement and service in CAS with an appropriate award. Articles in school publications and local newspapers can also help to motivate students. Every effort should be made to give CAS a high profile. Occasional visits to various activities by the school's senior

administrators will emphasize the importance of CAS. A strong, fully supportive role played by senior staff is one of the best ways to motivate students and encourage activity leaders.

Professional Development of CAS Coordinators

Experiential education is a recognized area of professional education. Some of the considerations for professional development are:

- the recruitment of staff who have training in the area of experiential learning
- the encouragement of and funding for teachers to attend CAS conferences where professionals share ideas and problems
- the portability of a professional profile within schools authorized to offer IB programs
- making use of professional forums such as
 - the American National Youth Leadership Council
 - the Association for Experiential Education
 - National Helpers Network Inc, 245 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1705, New York, NY 10016-8728
 - the European Council of International Schools (ECIS)
 - the ECIS community service listserv (community@listserv.ecis.org).

Examples of Good Practice

Good practice in CAS should involve a new role for the student, a real task for him or her to do, real consequences and opportunities for inward reflection. A new role will often be a new activity, but may also be the student taking a fresh approach towards, or setting different goals in, an activity which he or she has already experienced.

In addition to the questions provided in the “Nature of CAS” section, students may find it useful to ask the following guiding questions before they start an activity or project. The questions can also be referred to during the activity and afterwards.

- What did I/we do and where did I/we do it?
- What did I/we hope to learn?
- How successful have I/we been?
- What difficulties were encountered and how did I/we overcome them?
- What did I learn about myself? What did I learn about other people?
- What abilities, attitudes and values have I developed?
- Did anyone help me? With whom have I interacted?
- How did this activity benefit other people or institutions?
- What would I change if I were to do this again?
- How can I apply what I have learned to other situations?

Community Service Projects Incorporating Two or Three of the CAS Elements

In the School Community

Teaching children who have a disability to swim (action, service)

New role: Swimming instructor

Real task: To pass on knowledge and skills to others

Real consequence(s): The children have fun, exercise and learn to swim

Reflection: Responses to the guiding questions above

Coaching the softball team (action, service)

New role: Softball coach

Real task: To pass on knowledge and skills to others

Real consequence(s): The children have fun, exercise and learn to play softball

Reflection: Responses to the guiding questions

Evaluation

The IBO recommends that a range of evaluation methods be used whenever possible. These may be formal or informal.

Formal evaluation is based primarily on the school evaluations and self-evaluations of each activity.

One method of **informal evaluation** is direct observation of students at the time of an activity by the adult leader and the CAS coordinator. Group and individual discussions with the leader and the CAS coordinator are also helpful. Regular meetings of students to share their experiences can help them develop a deeper understanding of what CAS means for their personal development.

CAS has parity of esteem with all the other requirements for the award of the International Baccalaureate diploma. For a candidate to meet the CAS requirement fully, his or her records, along with the self-evaluations and school evaluations, must clearly demonstrate quality, balanced content and genuine commitment. On its own, proof of time spent on CAS is **not** sufficient.

Evaluation by the Student

The evaluation should focus on the following:

- a CAS diary, file or portfolio containing written, and perhaps visual, evidence of the candidate's involvement
- evidence of planning and organization
- evidence of commitment and effort
- the candidate's personal achievement and development, taking into account skills, attitudes and values at the start of the activity
- evidence of reflection throughout their CAS activities.

Reflection and Self-evaluation by the Student

CAS coordinators should explain clearly to all students at the beginning of their involvement the importance of writing self-evaluation reports or reflective comments at the end of each series of regular activities or a project. Students should be reminded that:

- a record must be kept of each CAS activity undertaken

- reflective comments, in writing, should be made at the conclusion of each series of regular activities or at regular intervals in the course of a project
- records and reflective comments should contribute to a CAS diary, file or portfolio.

For both individual activities and projects, students may respond on the appropriate form (available from the Diploma Program coordinator) or they may choose to write a reflective piece using the questions on the form to structure their writing. The questions, based on the objectives of CAS, ask the students to consider:

- the extent to which they have developed personally as a result of the CAS activity
- the understanding, skills and values acquired through the experience
- how others may have benefited from the activity
- the extent to which they are aware of their own strengths and weaknesses.

Some students may wish to record aspects of their CAS activities with photographs, video tapes and audio tapes. These can provide a useful reference when completing the formal evaluation reports. At the end of their CAS activities, students must make a final self-evaluation by listing all their projects and activities and then writing a critical reflection on their entire CAS experience, addressing the questions below. A form (also available from the Diploma Program coordinator) is provided for this purpose. The guiding questions should be used to structure this final self-evaluation.

In approaching the self-evaluation task, students should use the following questions and statements.

1. Describe the activity. What did you do at each stage? Include dates where relevant.
2. What did you hope to accomplish by this activity? What did you actually accomplish?
3. What difficulties did you encounter?
4. Did you feel at any stage that you were failing to achieve what you wanted from this activity?
5. What did you hope to learn from this activity, about yourself, about others, or about academic subjects? (For example: self-confidence, modesty, respect, awareness, responsibility, curiosity, honesty, objectivity, commitment, initiative, determination, new skills and the ability to meet challenges.)
6. Did anyone help you during this activity? If so, describe the help given.
7. How did this activity benefit other people or institutions?
8. What would you change if you did this same activity again?
9. What would you like to do next if you could continue with this activity?

Evaluation by the School

Evaluation by Supervising Adults

Minimally, this requires a considered comment to be written on the student self-evaluation form at the conclusion of a series of regular activities or a project. Supervising adults are encouraged to write letters to be placed in the student's diary, file or portfolio. Where there is an activity involving many students, a letter or certificate of achievement can be presented to those who have successfully met the requirement.

The CAS Coordinator: Record Keeping and Evaluation

Schools are required to compile and keep full records of each Diploma Program candidate's CAS performance. These records will facilitate the writing of full evaluation comments for future transcripts, for transferring to another school and for giving to the regional office on request. The CAS coordinator should make a final, individual evaluation of the performance of each student. Evaluation should be based on more than the student's written report: oral reports, group presentations or a presentation at the site of the activity should be encouraged.

Use of the Performance Criteria

The following performance criteria describe a range of related qualities or attributes which candidates are expected to demonstrate during CAS. They correspond with the CAS objectives. It is recognized that the criteria are not discrete, and that there is a degree of overlap between them. They are designed to help CAS coordinators evaluate the performance of their students. It is recommended that these criteria are shared with students and their parents.

Personal Achievement Criterion A

The student demonstrates:
the ability to meet challenges, regular participation, awareness of personal limitations, progress in the new role, learning from experience, helping to solve community problems.

Personal Skills Criterion B:

The student demonstrates the abilities of:
thinking creatively, researching community needs, planning and organization, resource management, identifying success and failure.

Personal Qualities Criterion C:

The student demonstrates:
perseverance, self-confidence, a degree of humility, responsibility, punctuality, commitment, reliability, initiative.

Interpersonal Qualities Criterion D:

The student demonstrates:
adaptability, collaboration, empathy, respect, a sense of justice and fair play.

Awareness of Global Issues Criterion E

The student demonstrates:
an ethical appreciation of humanitarian and environmental issues to guide choices of action from a local, national and international perspective.

Breakdown of required involvement

IB Diploma IB

9th grade-35 hours community service

10th grade- 40 hours community service

11th grade- 75 hours creativity, action and service (CAS)

12th grade- 75 hours creativity, action and service (CAS)

Concentrated Studies

17.5 hours

20 hours

37.5 hours

37.5 hours