



INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE ORGANIZATION

CLASS OF _____

CREATIVITY, ACTION, SERVICE

Name

If found please contact the above at

**Or send to
Diana Wold
IB CAS Coordinator
North Star Charter High School
839 Linder Rd.
Eagle, ID 83616**

dwold@northstarcharter.org



Aims

Why CAS? Because you are more than just a grade average. CAS is intended to move you out of the academic arena and help you learn through life experiences. Yes, as an IB student, we know you are involved in many interesting activities. What we are asking you to do is consider how these activities help you to become a better person. CAS is about:

- reflective thinkers—you understand your own strengths and limitations, identify goals and devise strategies for personal growth
- the willingness to accept new challenges and new roles
- awareness of yourself as a members of communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment
- being an active participant in sustained, collaborative projects
- balance—you enjoy and find significance in a range of activities involving intellectual, physical, creative and emotional experiences.

The nature of creativity, action, service

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

Peterson (2003)

Creativity, action, service (CAS) is at the heart of the Diploma Programme. It is one of the three essential elements in every student's Diploma Programme experience. It involves students in a range of activities alongside their academic studies throughout the Diploma Programme. The three strands of CAS, which are often interwoven with particular activities, are characterized as follows.

Creativity: arts, and other experiences that involve creative thinking.

Action: physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle, complementing academic work elsewhere in the Diploma Programme.

Service: an unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for the student. The rights, dignity and autonomy of all those involved are respected.

CAS enables you 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 Programme. A good CAS programme 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 your CAS activities include experiences that are profound and life-changing.

CAS should involve:

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

All proposed CAS activities need to meet these four criteria. CAS activities should continue on a regular basis for as long as possible throughout the programme, and certainly for **at least 18 months**.

Learning outcomes

As a result of your CAS experience as a whole, including your reflections, there should be evidence that you have:

- **increased your awareness of your own strengths and areas for growth**
You are able to see yourselves as individuals with various skills and abilities, some more developed than others, and understand that you can make choices about how you 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**
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).

- **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 you have not previously undertaken, or in increased expertise in an established area.

All eight outcomes must be present for you to complete the CAS requirement. Some may be demonstrated many times, in a variety of activities, but completion requires only that there is **some** evidence for every outcome.

This focus on learning outcomes emphasizes that it is the quality of a CAS activity (its contribution to your development) 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), or approximately 150 hours in total, with a reasonable balance between creativity, action and service. It is the experience and reflection upon the experience that counts; this is not merely a logging of hours exercise.**

Responsibilities of the student

The CAS programme is your responsibility. You should “own” your personal CAS programmes. Yes, we will provide you guidance; however, the CAS experience is personal and only you can build a program that meets your needs. There are, of course, requirements that must be met.

You are **required** to:

- self-review at the beginning of your CAS experience and set personal goals for what you hope to achieve through their CAS programme
- plan, do and reflect (plan activities, carry them out and reflect on what they have learned)
- communicate with your CAS advisor at the beginning, the mid- point and end of the 18 month program to discuss plans and progress.
- take part in a range of activities, including at least one project, some of which you have initiated. One project must include two of the three CAS components (creativity, action, service).
- keep records of their activities and achievements, including a list of the principal activities undertaken
- show evidence of achievement of the eight CAS learning outcomes.

Reflection, Recording and Reporting

We understand that reflection is a skill that needs to be developed. Not everyone is comfortable with this process and we do not assume that it comes naturally. Just as the kind of reflection that a critic applies to a work of art or literature is something that develops with time and experience, so the kind of reflection appropriate in CAS is something that requires guidance and practice.

The fundamentals are simple. Of any activity, it is appropriate to ask the following questions.

- What did I plan to do?
- What did I do?
- What were the outcomes, for me, the team I was working with, and others?

The difficulty lies in the complexity of the possible answers.

Kinds of reflection

Different kinds of reflection work for different people. Reflection can be:

- public or private
- individual or shared
- objective or subjective.

For example, in a CAS group project, the planning stages are largely public, so reflection on them can be largely public, shared and objective. The term “largely” is used because there may be individual views that arise independently, in terms of how satisfactory the process was for a particular student (who may enter and leave the activity with different personal experiences from others).

Carrying out the project is likely to be both public and private, both individual and shared, and both objective and subjective.

Outcomes of a project or other activity are similar: there may be objective successes and limitations of the activity as a whole, but what it has meant for the team and for individuals within it may be more varied.

For some students and some kinds of reflection (such as private, individual, subjective), writing is the best tool for reflection. However, for many, reflective writing does not come naturally. It can, to some extent, be “modelled” in oral discussion of more public, less sensitive matters, either as an end in itself or as a prelude to writing.

But writing is by no means the only possible outcome of reflection. You can present your activities orally to peers, parents or outsiders. You can make scrapbooks, photo essays, videos/DVDs or web logs. You can use journals or make up varied portfolios. You may decide to build an e-mail relationship with your CAS advisor. All of these are valid reflective forms.

Developing reflection

Moving on from the “What ...?” questions outlined earlier, experiential learners might consider, where appropriate, for themselves and others, and for each stage of an activity (before, during and after):

- how did I feel?
- what did I perceive?
- what did I think about the activity?
- what did the activity mean to me?
- what was the value of the activity?
- what did I learned from the activity and how did this learning (for example, a change of perspective) might apply more widely.

If the activity is service, you might also want to consider ethical questions such as:

- What is a service?
- Why is service to the family not considered as a service?
- Am I trying to help or empower people with a service?
- What obligation do I have to the person who is being served?
- How do I finish a service relationship?
- What do I do if the person does not want my service?

Recording and Reporting

You should document your CAS activities, noting in particular your reflections upon the experiences. As previously indicated, this documentation may take many forms, including web logs, illustrated displays and videos, and written notes. Its extent should match the significance of the particular activity to you. There is no point in writing lengthy accounts about relatively routine experiences.

To help you keep track of your hours, there is a log form at the end of this booklet. Please remember, the log does not take the place of reflections. However, a log is required as a part of your documentation.

A Final Word

The beauty of the CAS programme is that it is an individual experience designed by you, for you. Yes, CAS is about reaching out to your local, national and global community, but it is also about reflecting upon your activities and actions. It's about becoming an active member of life and learning who you are. We hope you enjoy the journey and are here to help guide and advise you through the CAS adventure.

We look forward to the conversations, photographs, art, song, dance, laughter and tears of your next two years and are privileged to be a part of your CAS experience.

Your CAS Coordinator and Advisors

