
Creativity Action Service Handbook



Dr. Linda Eno, Principal

Dr. Linda Rogers, IB Coordinator

Mr. Justin Brown & Mrs. Teresa Siter, CAS Coordinators

Mrs. Robyn Rosner & Mrs. Vicki Warnock, CAS Advisors

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Section One: CAS Overview

International Baccalaureate Philosophy ***The IB Mission & Learner Profile***



IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate (IB) aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

IB Diploma Curriculum Program

The Diploma Program is a challenging, broad and balanced two-year program of international education for students aged 16 to 19. Students are required to study six subjects and a curriculum core concurrently. The program is designed to equip students with the basic academic skills needed for university study, further

education and their chosen profession, as well as developing the values and life skills needed to live a fulfilled and purposeful life. The driving force behind the Diploma Program is a philosophy about the nature of education that is expressed in the IB's mission statement and in the IB learner profile.

A distinguishing characteristic of the Diploma Program is a concern with the **whole educational experience of each student**. The curriculum framework and its supporting structures and principles are designed to ensure that each student is exposed to a broad and balanced curriculum.

IB Learner Profile

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.

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:

- Understand their strengths and limitations, identify goals and devise strategies for personal growth
- Accept new challenges and new roles
- Are aware of themselves as members of communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment
- Actively participate in sustained collaborative projects
- Enjoy and find significance in a range of activities involving intellectual, physical, creative and emotional experiences

CAS Essentials

An Overview of Need to Know Info

High School Graduation Requirement

Through the New Jersey Department of Education's Option Two Program, BTHS students satisfy high school graduation requirements by participating in experiential learning experiences outside of the traditional classroom.

As an Option Two Graduation Requirement, all BTHS students must successfully complete CAS in order to receive a High School Diploma.

- Completing 50 Action Hours contributes to satisfying the New Jersey graduation requirement for Physical Education.
- Completing 50 Creativity Hours contributes to satisfying the New Jersey graduation requirement for Visual & Performing Arts.



IB Diploma Requirement

Along with the Theory of Knowledge course & the Extended Essay, CAS is a core requirement of the IB Diploma. CAS does not contribute directly to the 24 required points to earn the IB Diploma; **however, failure to meet CAS requirements will automatically result in the forfeiture of the IB Diploma.**

Eight Learning Outcomes

The driving force of CAS is reaching the eight Learning Outcomes (as described on page 7 and 8). Progress towards all eight outcomes must be documented in a student's CAS Portfolio in order to satisfy the requirements of the program. **Successful completion of CAS requires that there is some evidence for every outcome.** In collaboration with their CAS Advisor, students reflect on their progress towards the Learning Outcomes through the duration of the program.

150 Hours

The requirement for CAS is completing at least 150 hours, with a balance of activities in each of the 3 components. Using the 150 hour minimum as a "rule of thumb," CAS hours should be divided into thirds as a **50-50-50** division (50 in Creativity, 50 in Action & 50 in Service).

Recording & Reflecting

Students must document and reflect on all CAS Experiences. The documentation of CAS activities includes providing evidence of completed activities, completing reflections and demonstrating progress towards achieving all eight of the Learning Outcomes. Complete details on documenting CAS activities are provided in the "Documentation Guidelines" section of the handbook.

Assessment & Evaluation

Many aspects of CAS are taught and assessed in our Leadership, Exercise & Personal Growth (LEAP) course. Meeting deadlines, completing reflections, maintaining their CAS Portfolio, as well as other in-class activities, are all major components of grading in both LEAP I for Juniors & LEAP II for Seniors.

CAS is assessed as a **Pass/Fail requirement** for the IB Diploma. Based on the contents of your Portfolio, the BTHS team of CAS Advisors makes the final determination as to whether or not the requirements of the program have been satisfied. The question is simply: "Has the student satisfied the requirements of CAS?" Decisions are reported to the IB Regional Office, as specified in the Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Program.

What is CAS?

A Framework for Experiential Learning & Personal Growth

CAS is a journey of personal growth and a counterbalance to the academic pressures of the rest of the Diploma Program. The emphasis of the program is **learning by doing** and reflecting on these experiences over time. CAS activities take students away from abstract academic work, immersing them in real world tasks that, combined with appropriate reflection, educate the “whole person.” The IB goal of educating the whole person and fostering a more compassionate citizenry comes alive in an immediate way when students reach beyond themselves and their books.

CAS encourages students to be involved in individual and group activities in local, national and international contexts. CAS activities should be both challenging and enjoyable, and for many students, their experiences are often profound and life-changing. CAS aims to challenge and extend the individual student, develop a spirit of discovery and self-reliance, encourage personal skills and interests, and inspire an awareness, concern and responsibility to serve the community.

For student development to occur, CAS should involve:

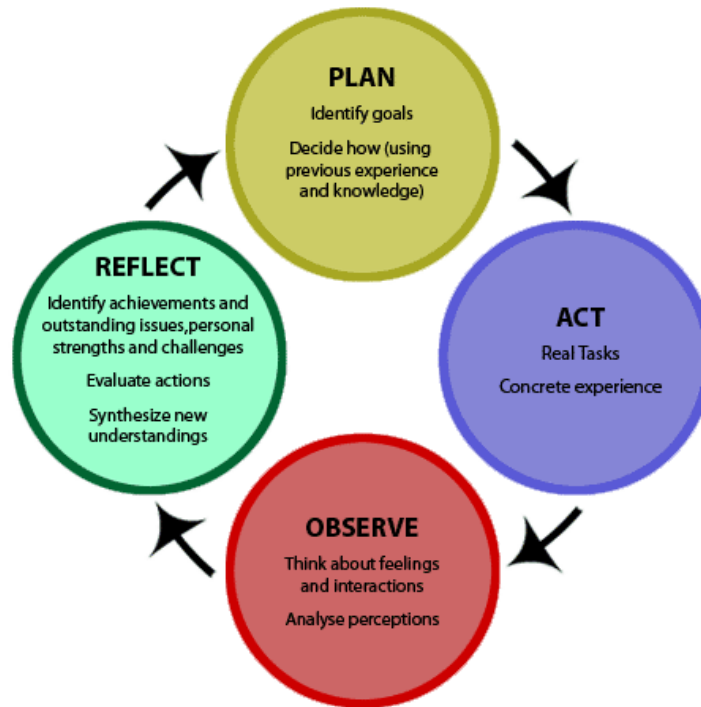
- Real, purposeful activities with significant outcomes
- Personal challenge - tasks must extend the student but be achievable in scope
- Experiential learning - planning, doing, observing and reflecting
- Reflection on outcomes and personal learning
- Goal-oriented activities with tangible outcomes
- Self-initiated activities, whenever possible
- A reasonable balance among Creativity, Action, and Service hours (50-50-50)

Defining C, A & S

The three strands of CAS are characterized as follows:

- **Creativity:** arts and other experiences that involve creative thinking or the creation of a tangible product. This could involve dance, theater and music.
- **Action:** physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle. It can include participation in expeditions, individual and team sports, and other physical activities.
- **Service:** an unpaid and voluntary exchange that benefits individuals in need and results in meaningful learning for the student. The rights, dignity and autonomy of all those involved are respected.

The Experiential Learning Cycle



Experiential learning is a process through which students develop knowledge, skills, and values from direct experiences outside a traditional academic setting. CAS provides a framework for experiential learning and reflection about that learning. This process of application and reflection extends what is learned in the classroom, further developing 21st century life and leadership skills such as communication, teamwork and decision making.

Through experiential learning, students are enabled to:

- See the application of academic learning, social and personal skills to real-life situations
- Bring real benefits to self and/or others
- Understand their own capacity to make a difference
- Make decisions that have real, not hypothetical, results
- Develop skills to solve problems
- Develop a sense of responsibility and accountability for their actions

CAS Learning Outcomes ***The Goals of The CAS Experience***

The driving force of CAS is reaching the eight Learning Outcomes. Students must demonstrate evidence for achieving all of the Learning Outcomes to successfully complete the CAS requirement. Some of the Learning Outcomes may be demonstrated many times, in a variety of activities. Completion requires that there is some evidence for every outcome.

As a result of their CAS experiences as a whole, including their reflections, students must be able to demonstrate achieving all eight Learning Outcomes:

(1) 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.

(2) Undertaken new challenges

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

(3) 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.

(4) 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 class. At least one project, involving collaboration and the integration of at least two of Creativity, Action and/or Service, is required.

(5) 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.

(6) 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).

(7) 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 reflections and conversations with CAS advisors.

(8) 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.

Creativity

Defining the Creativity Strand of CAS

Creativity - Arts, and other experiences that involve creative thinking or the creation of a tangible product. This could involve doing dance, theater and music.

The Creativity component of CAS focuses on the artistic and aesthetic skill development of the student. Creativity is interpreted imaginatively and broadly to cover a wide range of arts activities, as well as the creativity students demonstrate in designing and implementing service projects. Creative activities most often stem from student's curiosity, fascination and previous experience.



Because creativity is largely abstract, creative activities must have a definite goal or outcome to allow for observation and measurement. **In order for an activity to be considered creative, you must be making or creating something.** Creative activities must be actively participated in by the student and not merely involve them as a spectator. Whether it be drawing your own sketches or composing your own music or dance routine and performing it, you must be creating something tangible.

"This world is but a canvas to our imagination."

~ Henry David Thoreau

Examples of Creativity Activities

■ Opportunities Through BTHS Clubs / Organizations:

- Yearbook Club
- Arts/Drama Club
- Technology Student Association (TSA)
- Junior States of America (JSA)
- Science Competition Club
- Music Club
- School News Organization
- School Technology Organization

■ Additional Creativity Examples:

- Write a short story and submit it for publication
- Start your own website

- Learn a new musical instrument
- Participate in a non-credit summer writing college program
- Learn a new foreign language
- Perform music and dance in a new or especially challenging context (ex – large audience or competition)
- Take a calligraphy class
- Create a bulletin board at school
- Design an awareness campaign for an issue that's important to you
- Teach anything- this always involves design and creativity if done correctly
- Bake or cook food and donate it to a food pantry
- Learn HTML web design
- Write an article for the school newspaper
- Perform in the school play
- Help with yearbook creation and design
- Participate in Teen Arts Fest at Brookdale Community College

Action

Defining the Action Strand of CAS

Action - Physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle. It can include participation in expeditions, individual and team sports, and other physical activities.

Action activities are goal-oriented and movement based. The action should be physical and even vigorous—**increasing your heart rate and sweating are good indicators** of physical activity.



Action can include not only participation in individual and team sports, but also taking part in expeditions and in local or international projects. Action can also include physical activity involved in carrying out creative and service projects.

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).

“You miss 100 percent of the shots you never take.”

~ Wayne Gretzky

Examples of Action Activities

- BTHS Trips (10 hours), High Ropes Trip (2 hours)
- Participating in a swim-a-thon or walk-a-thon to raise money for a charitable organization
- Team sports through your home high school, such as baseball, basketball, soccer, swimming, football, track or tennis.
- Individual sports, learned either independently or with a certified trainer, such as fencing, gymnastics, or martial arts.
- Enroll in an activity-based class, such as Yoga or Zumba
- Learn new water activities – swimming, surfing, scuba-diving
- Action/Adventure sports: skateboarding, rock-climbing, mountain biking
- Learn to ice skate
- Join a local gym. Set a workout plan and stick to it.
- Commit to riding your bike to visit friends instead of being driven there
- Coach a little league team
- Become a Red Cross Certified Lifeguard
- Train for an upcoming race and set a goal for yourself
- Participate in a local NFL Punt, Pass & Kick Competition
- Do volunteer yard work
- Learn to jump rope
- Take the 30 Day Fitness Challenge

Service

Defining the Service Strand of CAS

Service - An unpaid and voluntary exchange that benefits individuals in need and results in meaningful learning for the student. The rights, dignity and autonomy of all those involved are respected.

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 mold the global citizen. Service involves interaction, such as the building of links with individuals or groups in the community. The “community” may be within 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. The general principle, sketched out in the IB's "The Nature of Creativity, Action, Service," that the "rights, dignity and autonomy of all those involved [in service activities] are respected," means, among other things, that 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.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

~ Margaret Mead

Examples of Service Activities

▪ **Opportunities Through BTHS Clubs / Organizations:**

- Students of Service (SOS)
- National Honor Society
- Student Government Association (SGA)
- Environmental Club
- Music Club

▪ **Additional Service Examples:**

- Present at BTHS Information Sessions
- Volunteer at Biotech Bootcamp
- Become a Big Brother / Big Sister
- Assist illiterate adults learn to read at a local library
- Become a tutor or mentor at a local elementary school
- Organize a beach clean-up with your friends
- Help cook, serve a meal or distribute food at a homeless shelter or food bank
- Create a local memorial for a fallen soldier
- Play bingo with seniors in a nursing home
- Bring toys to children in the cancer ward of a hospital
- Organize a carpooling campaign in your neighborhood to reduce air pollution
- Create a senior prom for a local senior home
- Fill a laundry basket with household items for a relocated homeless family
- Assemble and donate emergency preparedness kits
- Do yard work for a neighbor with a disability

Section Two: Student Guide

CAS Timeline

Important Dates & Progress Checkpoints

Documentation Deadline: Reflections and Verifications of activity are due the 15th of each month for any activities completed in the previous month.

<i>Sophomore Year</i>	
Marking Period 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Pre-Planning/Self-Review (Part of Health/Fitness II Final)▪ Introduction to CAS▪ Read the CAS Handbook▪ Set up your CAS Folder on Google Drive▪ Sign & return IB/CAS Contract
Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Review your CAS Plan▪ Seek out and plan additional CAS activities▪ Review the CAS Handbook
<i>Junior Year</i>	
Marking Period 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ CAS activities begin September 1st▪ Progress Checkpoint #1 - By the end of marking period 1, students should have completed and documented 20 CAS hours and shown progress towards achieving at least one Learning Outcome
Marking Period 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Progress Checkpoint #2 (LEAP Grade) - By the end of marking period 2, students should have completed and documented 40 CAS hours and shown progress towards achieving at least two Learning Outcomes

Marking Period 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress Checkpoint #3 (LEAP Grade) - By the end of marking period 3, students should have completed and documented 65 CAS hours and have progress towards achieving at least three Learning Outcomes
Marking Period 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress Checkpoint #4 (LEAP Grade) - By the end of marking period 4, students should have completed and documented 90 CAS hours and have progress towards achieving at least four Learning Outcomes ▪ By the end of junior year, students will have met with their CAS Advisor at least 2 times ▪ Develop CAS Plan for summer and senior year
Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in at least 20 hours of CAS Activities, with all required documentation completed
<i>Senior Year</i>	
Marking Period 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress Checkpoint #5 (LEAP Grade) – <u>At the beginning of senior year</u>, students should have completed and documented 110 CAS hours and have progress towards achieving at least five Learning Outcomes ▪ Progress Checkpoint #6 (LEAP Grade) - <u>By the end of marking period 1</u>, students should have completed and documented 130 CAS hours and have progress towards achieving at least six Learning Outcomes ▪ Meeting #3 with CAS Advisor
Marking Period 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Final Progress Assessment (LEAP Grade) – By January 15th, students must have completed and documented at least 150 CAS Hours and achieved all eight Learning Outcomes ▪ Final Reflection ▪ Completion of all CAS Requirements

CAS Completion Checklist

Summary of Student Responsibilities

- Complete a self-assessment at the end of sophomore year in which you reflect on previous experiences and set personal goals for your CAS Program.
- Complete a minimum of **150 total hours**, with a reasonable balance between Creativity, Action, and Service (50-50-50).
- Achieve the **eight Learning Outcomes**, as evidenced by reflections, meetings with Advisor, and final Portfolio
- Maintain a CAS Portfolio (Folder) using Google Drive to document and reflect upon activities.
- Submit documentation (Reflection & Verification) for each completed activity
- Meet with your CAS Advisor at least 3 times over the course of the Program
- Maintain ongoing communication with your CAS Advisor
- Participate in one **Continuous Activity** that begins during junior year and extends into senior year.
- Participate in one **Integrated Activity** that incorporates two or more of Creativity, Action and/or Service and demonstrates collaborative work with others.
- Meet all of the deadlines outlined in the CAS Timeline
- Show evidence of planning and initiation in some of the activities you choose.
- Submit a completed CAS Portfolio, with all required documentation

Getting Started With CAS

End of Sophomore Year

Orientation/Introduction to CAS

In June of sophomore year, students are formally introduced to CAS in their Health/Fitness classes. Mrs. Siter & Mr. Brown provide students with an orientation to the program. Students should read the CAS Handbook in its entirety.

Self-Evaluation and Pre-Planning

You must self-review at the beginning of your CAS experience and set personal goals for what you hope to achieve through your CAS activities. This will involve identifying your interests, strengths, weaknesses and resources. The self-review is completed by filling out the "Pre-IB Inventory" as part of the final exam for sophomore Health/Fitness.

Creating Your CAS Plan

Also part of the final exam for sophomore Health/Fitness is completing the “CAS Planning Guide,” in which you will outline the activities that you want to participate in as part of your CAS Program. Your CAS plan includes a timeline of proposed activities and the Learning Outcomes that each activity will address. When creating your plan, pay careful attention to the activity considerations provided in this handbook to ensure that your intended activities meet CAS criteria. Note that your initial CAS plan is fluid and will likely change as you begin to carry out your plan, grow, reflect and meet with your CAS Advisor.

Activity Procedures

A Step by Step To Do List For Each CAS Activity

From September 1st of junior year, through January 15th of your senior year, you must be engaged in CAS activities on a continuous and sustained basis **(on average two to three hours per week)**. For each CAS activity, you must follow the four steps of the **Experiential Learning Cycle**, as outlined below.

(1) Plan

- Think carefully about how the activity fits into your overall CAS Program.
- Consider the Learning Outcomes that the activity will address.
- Find an adult to supervise you. Give them a copy of the Activity Supervisor Introduction Letter to acclimate them with CAS.
- If the activity is either (a) supervised by a relative or (b) not supervised by an adult, determine what physical evidence you will be able to produce to document your activities.
- **Optional Proposals:** For all CAS activities - it is your choice as to whether or not you submit a proposal
- If you choose to participate in an activity without submitting a proposal beforehand, you run the risk of the activity not fulfilling CAS requirements and subsequently you won't receive credit for it.
- If you have any doubt as to whether or not an activity will count for CAS, submit a proposal to your advisor.
- Proposals must be submitted at least 2 weeks prior to the date in which you plan to begin the activity.

(2) Act / Participate

- Carry out the activity.
- Be an engaged and active participant, not disengaged and passive.

(3) Observe

- While participating in the activity, pay attention to your own actions, interactions with others and what is going on around you.
- You should record your personal observations throughout your CAS Program. One of the keys to successful reflection is minimizing the amount of time between completing an activity and recording

your observations. By taking notes on your experiences as they happen, you will have an easier time recalling your experiences and developing your reflection at the end of the activity.

- Consider keeping your own personal “Mini-Journal” to record your ongoing observations.

(4) Reflect & Document

- For every activity you complete, you must submit a Reflection & Verification of activity.
- Use the CAS Reflection Form to reflect on your activity.
- **There are two ways to provide Verification of CAS Activities:**
 - Having an Adult Supervisor complete the Supervisor Evaluation Form
 - Submitting physical evidence of activity.
- **Documentation Deadline:**
 - Reflections and Verification (Activity Supervisor Evaluation/Evidence of Activity) are due the 15th of each month for any activities completed in the previous month.
 - For example, reflections for activities that ended in September are due October 15.
 - Failure to submit the documentation on time will result in the student not receiving credit for the activity.
- **Submitting Documentation:**
 - All Reflections are submitted through your Google Drive CAS Portfolio.
 - Supervisor Evaluation Forms / Physical Evidence can be scanned and uploaded to your online folder, or turned in to your CAS Advisor’s mailbox in the guidance suite.
- **See the handbook sections “Reflection Guidelines,” “Verification of Activities,” and “Documentation Guidelines” for a complete overview.**

Progress Checkpoints

Staying on Track With Outcomes & Hours

Concurrency of learning is a key aspect of the Diploma Program. Therefore, participation in CAS activities as an IB Student needs to be continuous and sustained throughout the duration of the program (on average 2 to 3 hours per week). Completing reflections, submitting documentation and maintaining an up to date activity log are just as important as participating in activities. In order to help ensure that students are staying on track, there are six Progress Checkpoints built into our CAS Program Timeline. With the exception of Checkpoint #1, each of the CAS Progress Checks count as a graded assessment for LEAP.

For each of the Checkpoints, you have to:

- Complete the required number of activity hours
- Submit the documentation for completed hours: Reflection & Verification (Supervisor Evaluation / Physical Evidence) for each activity.
- Update your Progress Tracking Log, including updating your Activity List & Progress Towards Learning Outcomes.



Note in the CAS Timeline that the requirement for all Checkpoints is to have your activities “completed **and** documented.” This means that in order to receive credit for hours at each of the Checkpoints, you must submit the Reflection and Verification for all of your completed activities. At the Progress Checkpoints, you will only be credited for hours in which you’ve submitted all of the documentation for.

Integrated & Continuous Activities

Two Required Types of CAS Activities

Integrated CAS Activity

CAS Requirement to complete at least one Integrated Activity

Although there are three distinct elements of CAS, they are not mutually exclusive. In line with the IB philosophy of educating the whole person, the three strands are interwoven with one another. **The whole of CAS is greater than the sum of its parts.**

As part of progressing towards the Learning Outcome of collaborating with others, students must complete at least one Integrated Activity by the end of their CAS Program. Integrated Activities frequently have Service as their base, with Creativity and/or Action become included in the execution of the project.

Criteria for Integrated CAS Activity:

- Must incorporate two or more of the CAS strands (Creativity, Action and/or Service)
- Set a separate goal for each strand included
- Demonstrate collaborative work with others (at least one other person)
- Provide opportunities for each member to plan and initiate some of the tasks
- Reflect a minimum of 10 hours of meaningful, active participation
- The maximum number of CAS hours that can be logged for an Integrated Activity is 30
- No “double hour counting,” you have to divide the hours as appropriate between the different strands
- Complete one reflection at the conclusion of the activity

Continuous Activity

CAS Requirement to complete at least one Continuous Activity

Rather than participating in a series of random activities, students should strive to engage in personally meaningful CAS activities that allow for sustained and ongoing involvement. As part of progressing towards the Learning Outcome of perseverance and commitment in activities, all students must complete at least one Continuous Activity that they remain committed to throughout the duration of their CAS Program.

Criteria for Continuous CAS Activity:

- Your participation must begin during junior year and extend into senior year.
- Involve a minimum of 20 hours of meaningful, active participation
- The maximum number of CAS hours that can be logged for a Continuous Activity is 30
- Complete a reflection on your Continuous Activity by the end of the program.
 - Note: Students should work on their reflection throughout their participation in their continuous activity, rather than wait until the end.

Activity Considerations: Is it CAS?

Determining If An Activity Meets CAS Criteria

All CAS activities must 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.

Guiding Questions

Students may find the following guiding questions helpful for determining whether or not an intended activity qualifies as CAS:

- **Involvement:** What specific tasks will you undertake? What is your role/responsibility within this activity?
- **Goals:** What are your goals for this activity? How will you know if you've achieved these goals?
- **Personal Challenge:** What is your previous experience with this activity? Is it a new role for you? How does the activity take you out of your comfort zone?
- **Opportunities for Service and Benefit to Others:** How will this activity benefit other people?
- **Developing Skills and Increasing Self-Awareness:** What do you hope to learn about yourself during this experience? What skills do you hope to develop during this activity?
- **Initiation and Planning:** Was this activity presented to you or did you actively seek it out? Is this activity being partially or fully planned by you or is it entirely planned by others? What are you going to do to organize and run this activity?
- **Collaboration/Links with the Community:** Are you working with anyone else in this activity? Does the activity take place at an organization in the community?

- **Nature of the Activity:** Which of the three strands (Creativity, Action, Service) are included in this activity? Explain how the activity meets the criteria of the strand(s).
- **Reflection:** What format/method of reflection do you want to use for this activity? Why?
- **Verification:** Do you have an adult (not related to you) to serve as your Activity Supervisor? If not, what physical evidence will you be able to produce to prove your participation and completion of this activity?

New Activities & Extension Activities

Valid CAS activities must fall into one of the following categories: New Activity or Extension Activity.

(1) New Activity: An activity that you have never participated in before that allows for your growth in one or more of the Learning Outcomes.

- Example: Participating in a new form of creative expression in which you have no prior experience, such as learning to play a new musical instrument, acting in a play, or learning a new art technique.

(2) Extension Activity: An activity that you have prior or current experience in, but have room to improve on your knowledge, experience or participation in one or more of the Learning Outcomes.

- Example: You have been a member of your high school volleyball team since freshman year, you can extend your role on the team by creating and implementing a new training regimen for your team to participate in.

Active Involvement

Valid CAS activities involve you in an active and engaged role, completing real tasks. CAS is not taking place when you are in a passive role, such as attending a meeting or visiting a museum. In every CAS activity, you are either doing something you have never done before, or expanding your current abilities, knowledge or practices to new areas or levels.



School-Based Activities

Students are encouraged to participate in CAS activities through BTHS clubs and organizations according to the following criteria:

- **All CAS activities must take place outside of school day hours.** Time spent on CAS-related activities during the school day can **NOT** be logged as CAS and do not count towards the 150 hour requirement.
- CAS activity can take place during after school hours at BTHS, provided that it meets CAS criteria.
- Any time spent outside of school completing a required class assignment or project cannot be counted towards CAS
- Required components of the BTHS Curriculum and course requirements do not count as CAS.

Service Learning

Authentic service-learning experiences are positive, meaningful and collaborative. Service activities provide tangible learning benefits to the student. That rules out mundane, repetitive and passive activities, as well as service without real responsibility. Volunteer activities that require the student to perform simple, repetitious and inconsequential tasks and/or have no meaningful learning impact for the student or benefit for the recipient cannot count for CAS.

Religious Activity

Activities within a religious community can be acceptable for CAS, provided that the following criteria are met:

- Refrain from proselytizing as any part of service to others.
- Avoid serving exclusively his/her religious community and instead reach out to people of different social, cultural, and religious backgrounds in the spirit of the IB mission statement.
- Count only hours that are clearly secular in nature for activities associated with his/her place of worship
 - Example: Catechism classes are considered an extension of personal worship, but a soup kitchen put on by a church would be secular.

Keep in mind that CAS activities should expand students' perspective and promote a greater understanding of people from different social or cultural backgrounds. According to the above criteria, work done by a religious group in the wider community, provided that the objectives are clearly secular, may qualify as CAS.

Political Activity

Political activism is acceptable for CAS provided that the student works carefully to meet the following criteria:

- Engage in activities that unify rather than cause or worsen social divisions.
- Work to create change with a tone of harmony, not disharmony.
- Specifically plan out the learning opportunities for personal growth and acknowledge, in a discussion with their advisor, any personal limitations and biases.
- Recognize that the goal is to provide a service for others, not to superimpose one's values on others.

A CAS activity cannot be something that inherently causes division between people. Activities that support a specific political party or candidate do not count for CAS (e.g., volunteering in the Republican or Democratic campaign offices).

However, activities that are nonpartisan and not candidate-specific may qualify as CAS. An example of a nonpartisan/non-candidate specific activity would be volunteering at your local Elections Office to promote a voter registration drive.



What is NOT CAS

- Any part of the BTHS curriculum, including work completed on the Extended Essay & TOK course
- Classes taken outside of BTHS for college credit
- Any activity for which a student receives payment, trade or other forms of compensation
- Activities of an isolated/non-social or tedious nature (letter-stuffing, for example)
- A passive pursuit, e.g. museum, theatre, exhibition, concert visits
- All forms of duty within the family
- Religious devotion or any activity that can be interpreted as proselytizing
- Fundraising with no clearly defined end in sight
- Activities that cause division amongst different groups in the community
- An activity where there is no means to prove your participation, either through the supervision of an adult leader or alternative forms of evidence.

Documentation Guidelines ***Recording & Reporting Your CAS Activities***

Documenting your CAS experiences and maintaining an up to date Portfolio is your evidence that you are engaged in continuous activities & satisfying the requirements of the program. CAS Portfolios are assessed internally by your Advisor to determine if you've met the requirements of the program, and may be assessed externally by the IB Regional Office.

All CAS Forms & Documents can be downloaded from the BTHS CAS Website. This section provides a complete overview of how to set up and maintain your CAS Portfolio.

Contents of Your CAS Portfolio

Your completed CAS Portfolio will consist of the following:

(1) Getting Started Forms

- Pre IB Inventory
- CAS Planning Guide

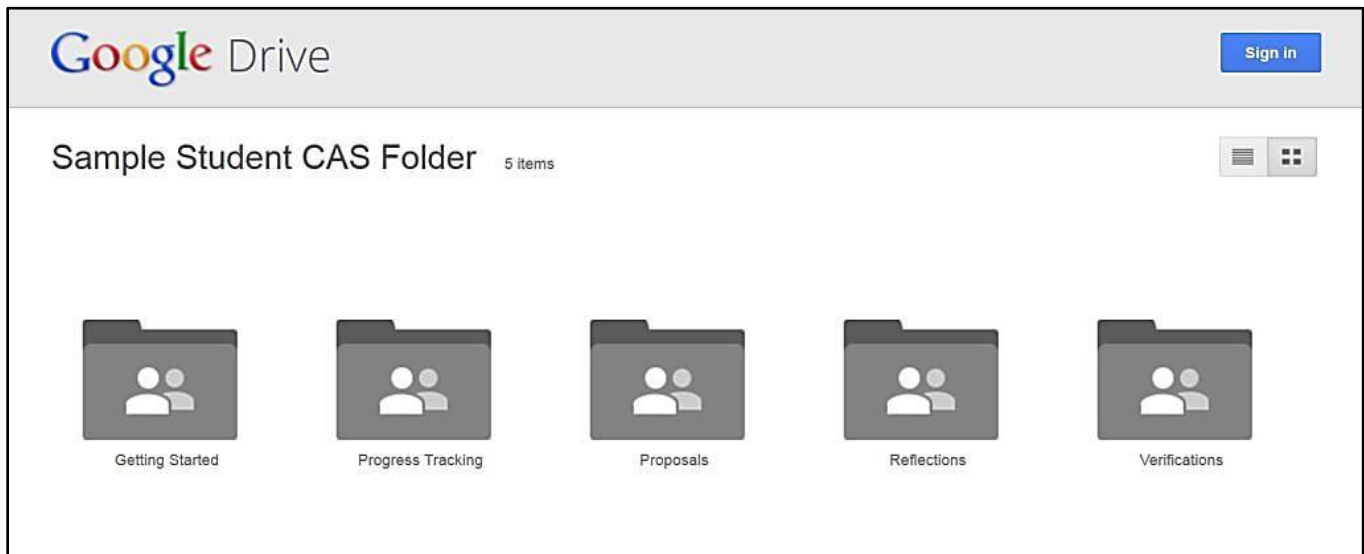
(2) Activity Documentation

- For each CAS activity that you complete:
 - Reflection
 - Verification (Supervisor Evaluation or Physical Evidence of Activity)
- Photographs - at least 5 photos of you participating in CAS Activities

(3) Tracking Forms

- Progress Tracking Log
- CAS Program Completion Form

Setting Up Your CAS Portfolio Using Google Drive




(1) Create your CAS Portfolio Folder

- Click the red “Create” button at the top left of your Google Drive homepage
- Select “Folder” from the drop-down menu
- Enter the following name into the text box: “Last Name, First Name CAS”
 - Example - “Brown, Justin CAS”

(2) Create Sub-Folders within your CAS Portfolio Folder

- Using the same directions in step #1, create the following folders:
 - Verifications
 - Getting Started
 - Progress Tracking
 - Reflections
 - Proposals
- Organize: move these sub-folders into your main CAS Portfolio Folder
 - Check the box next to the 5 sub-folders you just created
 - Click the folder icon above your list items
 - Select your CAS Portfolio Folder
 - Click Move

(3) Share Your Folder

- Check the box next to your CAS Portfolio Folder
- Click the  Share icon.
- In the “Invite People” text box, type in the following email address: bthscas@gmail.com
- Click Share & save
- You will get a message saying: “Are you sure? You are sharing to bthscas@gmail.com who is not in the Google Apps organization that this item belongs to” Answer YES

Downloading CAS Forms

(1) Accessing CAS Documents

- From the BTHS Homepage:
 - Click on “Guidance Department “
 - Click on “CAS” (on the left, underneath “Guidance Info”)
 - Click on “Forms & Documents”
 - To make your own copy of these documents:
 - Open the document
 - Click on File → “Make a copy”
 - Rename the document (see directions below on naming documents)
 - Move the document to the appropriate CAS folder

(2) Naming CAS Documents

- For “Getting Started” & “Progress Tracking” documents use the following format:
 - (Your Initials) (Name of Document)
 - Example: “JB Pre-IB Student Inventory”
- For “Supervisor Documents” & “Activity Forms” use the following the format:
 - (Your Initials) (Name of Activity) (Name of Document)
 - Example: “JB Homeless Shelter Reflection”

Submitting Reflections & Proposals

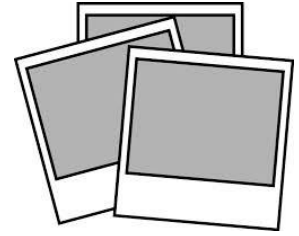
- You must complete a reflection for each activity that you participate in. Reflections are due the 15th of each month for any activities completed in the previous month. Failure to submit the documentation on time will result in the student not receiving credit for the activity
- If you choose to submit a proposal, it is due at least 2 weeks prior to the start date of the activity.
- When you are finished with a reflection or proposal and ready for your advisor to review, make sure that the document is shared in your CAS Folder, then rename the document by putting “Done” in parenthesis (Done).
 - Example: “JB Homeless Shelter Reflection (Done)”

Receiving Feedback on Reflections & Proposals

- After reviewing your reflection or proposal, your CAS Advisor will replace “Done” in the name of the document with either “Approved” or “Denied.”
- Possible issues that could be identified by your CAS Advisor and cause them to deny your reflection or proposal include:
 - Activity does not fulfill CAS requirements
 - Insufficient reflection on the activity, which will be categorized as a “Level 1 Reflection.”
 - Lack of proper evidence or Supervisor Evaluation
 - Inadequate description of the activity

Submitting Activity Evaluations & Evidence

- For each completed activity, scan and upload your completed Supervisor Evaluation Form and/or physical evidence of activity.
- Photographs: Over the duration of your CAS Program, you must add at least 5 photographs of you participating in activities to your Google Drive Folder.
- **Note:** Our preference is for all CAS documentation to be uploaded into your Google Drive Folder. However, we realize that this will not always be possible. Physical evidence of CAS Activities can be submitted to your CAS Advisor's mailbox, which is located outside of Mrs. Rosner's office in the guidance suite.



Tracking Your Progress

- The Progress Tracking Log must be updated on an ongoing basis throughout the duration of your CAS Program, at a minimum of once per marking period.
- The CAS Program Completion Form is completed in collaboration with your CAS Advisor at the conclusion of your CAS Program.

Verification of Activities

Activity Supervisor Evaluation & Evidence of Activity

There are two ways to provide Verification of CAS Activities:

- Having an Adult Supervisor complete the Activity Supervisor Evaluation Form
- Submitting physical evidence of your activity

Determining the type of Verification needed for each activity:

- If your Adult Supervisor is not related to you, the completed Activity Supervisor Evaluation Form is sufficient evidence to prove your participation in the activity. No additional evidence is required.
- If your Adult Supervisor is related to you, submit the completed Activity Supervisor Evaluation Form AND physical evidence. In other words, having a relative sign off that you completed a particular activity is not, by itself, sufficient evidence that you did in fact participate in the activity.
- If you participate in a student-led or independent activity, it is required that you submit physical evidence of completing the activity in order for it to count towards CAS.

Providing physical evidence of activity:

- Potential forms of physical evidence of activity include: picture/video, blogs, webpages, certificates of completion, awards, meeting notes and emails.
- Keep in mind that most Creativity activities should result in a tangible product or outcome. Final products can be submitted as evidence, such as a link to a website, copies of drawings or mp3 files of created songs.

- Activity evidence can also include demonstrating your new skills - for instance if you began learning German, record a conversation between yourself and someone else speaking the language.
- Your ultimate goal in submitting evidence is to prove to your CAS Advisor that you participated in the activity. Before participating in an activity, consider the type of evidence that you will be able to produce.

Reflection Guidelines

Directions On How To Reflect On Your CAS Activities

Reflection is the cornerstone of CAS and the bridge between your experience and learning. Through reflection comes increased self-awareness, including a better understanding of your strengths, weaknesses, goals and priorities. The Learning Outcomes of the CAS Program are not achieved simply by participating in activities. **It is your reflection upon CAS experiences that leads to real growth and meeting the outcomes.** Reflection is a learned skill, and you will improve as you progress through the CAS Program. This section will provide an overview of the CAS reflection process, including requirements, formats and criteria.

“A defining condition of being human is that we have to understand the meaning of our experience.”

~ Jack Mezirow

Required Reflections

Throughout your CAS experience, reflection is ongoing and takes on a wide range of formats, including written, speaking and artistic. The following are required reflections that all students will complete:

- **End of Activity Reflections** - After finishing each of your CAS activities, you must complete the CAS Reflection Form. Part I of the form is a summary of your activity. Part II is a self-assessment of your progress towards achieving the Learning Outcomes. Part III is a self-reflection, in which you can choose your own format to analyze your experience.
- **Meetings With CAS Advisors** – At minimum, you will have three meetings with your CAS Advisor over the course of your CAS Program. In these meetings, your progress with hours, outcomes and reflections will be assessed.
- **Final Reflection** – A comprehensive reflection on your CAS experience, summarizing your activities, highlighting how you achieved the Learning Outcomes, describing your favorite CAS experiences/memories, and emphasizing anything that truly stood out about your CAS Program. Format and requirements TBD.

Guidelines for Reflections

- Reflections are due the 15th of each month for any activities completed in the previous month. For example, reflections for activities that ended in September are due October 15.
- **You have the freedom to choose the type/format of self-reflection that works best for you.**
- If you are reflecting on an activity using a non-written/alternative format, provide a link and/or instructions on how to access your reflection in the last section of the CAS Reflection Form.
- The length of a reflection should match the significance of the activity, and will vary depending upon your chosen reflection format. **For written self-reflections, there is a required word count:**
 - For shorter experiences (1 to 9 hours), your self-reflection must be at least 150 words.
 - For longer experiences (10 or more hours), your self-reflection must be at least 300 words.
- Writing is by no means the only possible method for reflection. Here are some suggestions on possible reflection formats:
 - Create a blog, website or online journal
 - Visual representations – sketches by hand or digital creations (using a program such as Glogster.com or Storybird.com)
 - Video – interview, skit, role-play
 - Present to a meaningful, relevant audience (must provide audio or video)
 - Compose a song
 - Choreograph a dance
 - Write a poem or story
 - Make a scrapbook
- If you are interested in exploring additional formats/ideas for reflection, check out the ***“Reflection Toolkit”*** & ***“Concise Guide to Reflection”*** under the “Resources” section of our CAS website.
- **Regardless of your chosen reflection format, you should examine the following:**
 - Successes & setbacks
 - Your personal involvement, including roles and tasks
 - Skills and knowledge gained
 - Feelings about the experience – frustrations, joys, etc.
 - The meaning and significance of the activity
 - The benefits you are providing to others
 - How you handled any difficulties or ethical challenges
 - Changed perspectives and new insights resulting from the activity
 - The global relevance of your actions
 - Provide anecdotes – describe specific moments of your experience



- When developing your reflections, keep the eight Learning Outcomes at the forefront. Be direct when discussing the outcomes (Example - “This activity was a challenge for me because...”).
- The **reflection prompts** below are intended to be a springboard for your meaningful and unique personal reflections. You do not have to address all of the prompts in each response.
 - What did you perceive and notice during the activity?
 - How did you feel before, during, and upon completion of the activity?
 - What does the activity mean to you?
 - What was the value of the activity?
 - How did this activity impact you?
 - How did this activity impact others?
 - What did you learn about yourself and what did you learn about others through this activity?
 - How can you apply what you’ve learned through this activity in other life situations?
 - What abilities, attitudes, and values have you developed?
 - How did your perceptions of yourself or the world around you change as a result of this activity?
 - Did anyone help you to think about your learning during this activity? If so, who helped and how?
 - Did you feel at any stage that you were failing to achieve what you wanted from this activity?
 - What difficulties did you encounter and how did you overcome them?
 - What global issues were addressed? Explain.
 - What ethical implications arose as a result of this activity?
 - What would you change if you did this same activity again?
 - How will your involvement in this activity inform or influence future activity choices?
- Some **stem sentences** that may help you with your reflections...
 - One thing I learned about myself that was positive (or negative)...
 - If I were in charge of this activity I would...
 - One thing I liked (or disliked)...
 - This activity did (did not) leave an impression with me because...
 - I felt underprepared for this activity because...
 - The thing I enjoyed most was...
 - I can use the skills I learned through this activity in other situations such as...
 - The skills I need to continue improve on are...
 - What I found most challenging was...
 - I was nervous about...
 - I realized that...
 - My initial intentions were...
 - My perspective was broadened by...
 - I am looking forward to doing this activity again because...
 - Next time what I would do differently is...

Evaluating Reflections

Reflections will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Level 1 – Reflection on Action (Needs Improvement):

- Recording thoughts and feelings about the activity, typically well after the activity has concluded.
- Surface level analysis of experience – little insight is provided as to why the student feels the way they do.
- No conclusions are drawn.
- Progress towards learning outcomes not addressed.

Level 2 – Reflection in Action (Satisfactory):

- Thoughts and feelings about the activity are recorded almost immediately following the conclusion of an activity.
- Student identifies and examines critical incidents of his or her experience.
- Reflection leads to concrete conclusions.
- Progress towards learning outcomes are addressed.

Level 3 – Reflection in Action, Taken Further (Excellent):

- Same criteria as Level 2, plus the following:
 - Conclusions are tested by modifying actions or initiating new actions.
 - The student discovers and learns something new about his or her personal growth.
 - Changing actions, behaviors or decisions are the result of Level 3 reflections.

More on evaluating reflections:

- Reflections will be evaluated by your CAS Advisor and must be categorized as at least a Level 2 in order to receive credit for it.
- **If a non-written reflection is categorized as Level 1 by your CAS Advisor – it will not be accepted.**
 - In order to receive credit for the activity, you will have to complete a written reflection.
 - You will have 2 weeks to complete the written reflection and submit it your advisor.
- **If a written reflection is categorized as Level 1 by your CAS Advisor – it will not be accepted.**
 - In order to receive credit for the activity, you will have to revise the reflection, according to the feedback given by your CAS Advisor.
 - You will have 2 weeks to revise the reflection and re-submit it your advisor.

CAS Advisors

Supporting Your CAS Journey

The BTHS team of Leadership, Exercise & Personal Growth (LEAP) teacher serve as CAS Advisors. Every 11th & 12th grade student is assigned to an advisor. The advisor assignments are posted on the CAS website.

CAS Advisors ...

- Mentor students throughout the duration of their CAS Program.
- Help students to identify personal and social goals.
- Monitor the range and balance of activities undertaken by individual students.
- Develop students' powers of reflection through group discussion and individual consultation.
- Support students in their consideration of ethical concerns.
- Read and respond to reflections.
- Meet with students no fewer than three times during the two year program.
- Report major student issues or concerns to principal and parents.

Challenging Learning Outcomes

Guidance on Meeting The Global & Ethical Learning Outcomes

According to IB Diploma Graduates from across the world, including former Biotechnology High School students, Learning Outcomes six & seven, dealing with global and ethical issues, are the two most difficult outcomes to address:

- Engaged with issues of global importance.
- Considered the ethical implications of their actions.

Here is some additional guidance to help better understand and meet these Learning Outcomes.

Global Issues

A Global Citizen ...

- Is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen
- Respects and values diversity
- Has an understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically and environmentally
- Participates in and contributes to the community at a range of levels from local to global
- Is willing to act to make the world a more sustainable place
- Takes responsibility for their actions

(Source: Oxfam Education)

This learning outcome encourages students to research and take action on an issue of global concern. **Informed action is the basis of engaging with issues of global importance.** Successfully meeting this outcome entails identifying an issue of interest and understanding its impact on wider society. Students may be involved in international projects, but there are many global issues that can be acted upon locally or nationally.

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. Creating “a better and more peaceful world” is a big goal that involves many small steps. Steps towards creating a better and more peaceful world can be taken locally, nationally or internationally.

Students are encouraged to identify issues that are inherently global, such as assisting the less fortunate, expanding educational opportunity, protecting the environment or rebuilding after natural disasters. It is important to see these activities in a broader context, bearing in mind the maxim “**Think global, act local.**” Working with people from different social or cultural backgrounds in Monmouth County can do as much to increase mutual understanding as large international projects.



In considering how, or whether, you are engaging in issues of global importance you might find it useful to ask yourself:

- Do any of your activities relate to, or deal with, issues that are worldwide concerns? Explain what makes the issue global.
- Have you extended out of your comfort zone with regard to race, ethnicity or culture?
- Who might be impacted by this activity (other than yourself)?
- Do you see yourself as an agent of change?
- How is your involvement helping to address or resolve the issue?
- Have you conducted your own research to explore an issue? Are your assumptions, ideas and conclusions based on a solid conceptual framework?
- Does your service project consider an issue from multiple perspectives?
- Is this an issue that you chose due to personal interest and commitment? If so, explain. If not, how and why did you get involved?
- Do you plan to stay involved with this issue in the future (possibly beyond your CAS experience)? If so, why, and how? If not, why not?

Ethical Implications

Ethics – “the well-founded standards of right and wrong that prescribe what humans ought to do, usually in terms of rights, obligations, benefits to society, fairness, or specific virtues.”

(Source: Applied Ethics Center, Santa Clara University)

There are many definitions of ethical education. The more interesting ones acknowledge that it involves more than simply “learning about ethics.” Meaningful ethical education—the development of ethical beings—happens only when people’s feelings and behavior change, as well as their ideas.



Various ethical issues will arise naturally in the course of CAS activities, and may be experienced as challenges to a student’s ideas, instinctive responses or ways of behaving. Because it involves real activities with significant outcomes, CAS provides a major opportunity for ethical education, understood as involving principles, attitudes and behavior.

The emphasis in CAS is on helping students to develop their own identities, in accordance with the ethical principles embodied in the IB mission statement and Learner Profile. Ethical education involves an ongoing effort of examining your own moral beliefs and personal conduct to ensure that you are living up to well-reasoned standards.

This learning outcome encourages students to reflect on and understand the consequences of their actions to themselves, to others and to the wider community. **Critical reflection of CAS experiences is the key to meeting the ethical implications outcome.** Evidence of thinking about ethical issues is shown in written reflections and advisor interviews. CAS Advisors support students’ personal growth as they think, feel and act their way through ethical issues.

In considering the ethical implications of your actions, you might find it useful to ask yourself:

- In what ways did you act with integrity and honesty in this activity?
- In what ways did you find the activity required you to make reasoned, ethical decisions?
- How did this activity expose the attributes of a good team worker/leader?
- How did this activity expose the attributes of a good person?
- Did participating in the activity provoke any emotions in you or the participants? How did you deal with these emotions?
- Did the activity assist in introducing or reinforcing obligations that we have as a member of society?
- Where you are serving others, is the activity supporting or helping individuals in a way that makes them feel respected and treated as equals? How so? How do you know?
- What are some of the key personal attributes required to work fairly and justly with other people? How were they evident in this activity?
- Were you required to adhere to any rules/obligations in doing this activity? How well did you adhere to them?
- How did participating in the activity help you transcend cultural or socioeconomic barriers?

Tips for Students

Advice from CAS Advisors To Help Students Make the Most of CAS

Focus More on Outcomes, Less On Hours

CAS is not an hour counting exercise! Yes there is a requirement that you have to complete 150 total hours with a reasonable balance between each of the three components (50-50-50). The hour requirement exists in order to ensure that you dedicate enough time to CAS activities to meet the Learning Outcomes. Completing 150 hours is a vehicle for meeting the outcomes. At all points of your CAS experience, including planning, doing and reflecting, the Learning Outcomes need to be the center of your attention.

Choose Activities Wisely

There is an infinite amount of possible CAS activities. As a self-directed program, you have the freedom to choose the activities in which you participate in. Focus on activities that align with your interests, personality, aptitude, skills and preferences. Consider your past experiences – what do you enjoy doing? What do you not enjoy doing? Your CAS activities should be things that you want to do, not things that you have to do. Based on who you are, what you know about yourself and what you’ve done in the past, choose activities that you are likely to enjoy.

Plan Ahead

“Begin with the End in Mind” by creating a clear vision and goal plan for your CAS Program. Carefully consider the Learning Outcomes and make a detailed plan at the beginning, outlining the activities that you want to participate in over the course of the 18 months.



Build on Current Activities

The best place to start in planning for CAS is to consider your current activities, roles and organizations to which you belong. What do you already do that is CAS-related? There is probably more than you think. Extending on what you already do and setting new goals for yourself in your current roles is a great way to approach CAS.

Stay on Track

Participation in CAS needs to be continuous and sustained. On average, you should be participating in 2 to 3 hours per week of CAS activities. “Cramming” CAS into short periods of time will cause undue stress and is against the regulations of the program. Staying on track is more than doing CAS activities, it also includes planning for future projects, reflecting on a consistent basis and keeping your documentation up to date (Progress Logs, Reflections and Verifications).

Teamwork

CAS is a shared experience – talk with your classmates, other peers, friends, family members, teachers, advisors, coaches, etc. about potential CAS ideas and opportunities. Most of your CAS activities/projects should be completed in collaboration, not in isolation.

Networking

In addition to talking with people you already know, take advantage of the opportunity to reach out to organizations and individuals in the community. Participating in CAS activities through school and community-based organizations will ensure that you have a non-relative supervisor and will provide a more formal, supportive structure.

Synergize C, A & S

Don't view Creativity, Action & Service as entirely separate components. "Think outside of the box" and look for ways to incorporate 2 or more of the strands into your projects/activities. The whole of CAS is greater than the sum of its parts: **CAS > C + A + S**

Think Grassroots

In addition to assisting with current initiatives, you can also create your own opportunities. There is always room for improvement in your school and community. Look, listen and ask around you. Where can improvements be made? What can you do to help? "Grassroots" projects that spring from student initiative and creativity have the potential to be your most meaningful, significant CAS experiences.

Intentional Resume Development

In the world of highly competitive college admissions – applicants are more than their GPA & SAT. Meaningful participation and commitment to CAS activities can give you a significant edge in college admissions. Along with the Extended Essay & TOK, CAS is the one of the main distinguishing factors between IB & AP. Make the choice to challenge yourself with meaningful CAS experiences and your CAS Portfolio will have the potential to make the difference between a college acceptance vs. being rejected.

Tips for Parents

Advice from CAS Advisors To Help Support Students With CAS

- Learn about the CAS Program, especially the contents of the "CAS Essentials" section of the handbook.
- Review the expectations of CAS with your child and sign the IB/CAS Contract.
- Get involved – attend games, plays, music performances, volunteer with your child, etc.
- Talk with your student about his or her interests and potential opportunities. Look for service and volunteer projects to do together.
- Help your student reflect on his or her experiences and consider the skills and self-awareness that they are developing through CAS.

- Share your own extracurricular experiences in high school.
- Reflect on what you have given and gained through volunteering.
- Stay up to date – we post CAS updates and information on the Guidance Blog.
- Encourage your child to share their CAS Activity Log with you so that you can monitor their progress and provide feedback/suggestions.

Please feel free to reach out to your child's CAS Advisor at any time with input, questions or concerns. We look forward to partnering with you in helping make your child's CAS experience a success.

Frequently Asked Questions

Answers to Your CAS Questions

Can I receive the IB Diploma without successfully completing CAS?

Failure to meet CAS requirements will automatically result in the forfeiture of the IB Diploma.

When does CAS begin?

Students officially begin their CAS Program on **September 1st of their junior year**. Activities participated in before September 1st of junior year cannot be logged for CAS.



When does CAS end?

Students must satisfy all CAS requirements, including the completion of 150 Hours, achieving all eight of the Learning Outcomes and submitting all activity documentation, **by January 15th of their senior year**.

How can I prepare for CAS during the summer between sophomore and junior year?

Prior to beginning IB, rising juniors are encouraged to prepare for their CAS Program over the summer through the following: reflecting on their interests, planning an activity timeline, setting goals and developing proposals. In planning their CAS Program, students should look to extend previous experiences, interests and skills and consider ways in which they can expand upon them in personally meaningful ways.

Can I do all of my hours in my junior year?

No! Activities must be completed in both junior and senior years. It is expected that students do at least one ongoing activity throughout their two years. Students should aim to complete 90 hours as a junior, 20 hours during the summer between junior/senior year and 40 hours as a senior (average of 2 to 3 hours per week).

Can I participate in CAS activities during the summer between junior and senior year?

Yes, students should complete 20 hours during the summer between junior and senior year.

How many hours can one activity count for?

A single activity may count for no more than 30 hours over the 18 month period.

Is there a minimum hour requirement for an activity to count?

No!

Do paid activities count towards CAS?

No - CAS activities must be unpaid and voluntary.

Where can I locate CAS Forms?

From the BTHS Guidance Department Homepage, the Creativity Action Service section of our website features all of the needed documents for the program.

Are proposals required?

Proposals are optional. However, if you choose to participate in an activity without submitting a proposal beforehand, you run the risk of the activity not fulfilling CAS requirements and not receiving credit for it.

Does practice count for CAS (athletic, dance/performance)?

Athletic and performing arts practices (band, dance, school play, etc.) may be counted towards CAS, provided that the activity meets all other requirements.

I have played the violin since the age of 5. What are some ways that I can extend on this activity so that it meets CAS Criteria?

Some possible ways include: (a) Learning a particularly difficult piece, or a different style of playing; (b) Performing at a fundraising activity; (c) Teaching younger children how to play.

Can CAS take place in school?

All CAS activities must take place outside of school day hours. Time spent on CAS-related activities during the school day can NOT be logged as CAS and do not count towards the 150 hour requirement. CAS activity can take place during after school hours at BTHS, provided that it meets CAS criteria.

Who can be an activity supervisor?

An activity supervisor must be at least 18 years old and cannot be a high school student. The individual must be able to ensure student's safety and impart knowledge and skills as the activity is being completed. Activity Supervisors are typically teachers, advisors, coaches or leaders of community organizations.

Do all activities need to be supervised?

Whenever possible, students should have an adult that is not related to them act as a supervisor for activities. If your Adult Supervisor is related to you or if you participate in a student-led or independent activity, you must submit physical evidence to verify that you've completed the activity.

For Integrated CAS Activities, how do I log my hours?

For integrated CAS activities (those that involve 2 or more of C, A and/or S), there is no “double hour counting.” You have to divide the hours as appropriate between the different strands. Example: you participate in a 15 hour project that involved Service & Creativity. You cannot apply these 15 hours to both strands, you would have to divide them accordingly, for instance 10 hours of Service & 5 hours of Creativity.

What are acceptable forms of physical evidence to verify my activities?

There are many ways to document your CAS experiences. Here are some suggestions:

- All Creative activities should result in a tangible product or outcome. Final products can be submitted as evidence, such as a link to a website, copies of drawings or mp3 files of created songs.
- Photos / videos of participation in the activity
- Certificates of Completion / Recognition
- Show off your new skills - for instance if you began learning German, record a conversation between yourself and someone else speaking the language.

When are CAS Reflections due?

For every CAS Activity you complete, you must submit a Reflection and Supervisor Evaluation/Physical Evidence. These are due the **15th of each month** for any activities completed in the previous month. For example, reflections for activities that ended in September are due October 15. Failure to submit the documentation on time will result in the student not receiving credit for the activity.

Can I receive credit for Progress Checkpoints without completing the documentation?

NO! In order to receive credit for an activity, you must submit a Reflection & Verification. At the Progress Checkpoints, you will only be credited for hours in which you’ve submitted all of the documentation for.

Can I count my Continuous Activity towards Progress Checkpoints?

The requirement for reflecting on your Continuous Activity is that you complete a reflection by the end of the 18 month program. If you want to count your continuous activity towards any of the Progress Checkpoints, you must submit a Reflection & Verification on the hours completed to date.

For activities that I recently completed, can I count them towards Progress Checkpoints?

Yes you can; however, the requirements of the Progress Checkpoint **supersede** the 15th of the month documentation deadline, as demonstrated in the following example:

- Progress Checkpoint #3 is scheduled for April 4th
- Your documentation for activities completed in March is not due until April 15th.
- However, if you want to count your activities completed in March towards the April checkpoint, you must submit the documentation by April 4th.
- If you can satisfy the requirements for CAS Checkpoint #3 without including your March activities, you can submit the documentation for them by April 15th to count towards Checkpoint #4.

Can the video game “Minecraft” count towards CAS?

Minecraft can be counted for a maximum of 10 Creativity hours, provided that the following criteria are met:

- Use the game in “Creative” mode in which you are building, exploring and collaborating with others.
- In your reflection, clearly link Minecraft to educational learning objectives, such as planning, teamwork, spatial reasoning, problem solving, hand-eye coordination, and memory development.
- Provide evidence of Minecraft products/creations

Additional suggestions for connecting Minecraft with CAS:

- Collaborate with game players from across the world
- Communicate with team members in a foreign language
- Generate new, real world applications for the game

Does the junior year Canoe Trip count towards CAS?

The junior year Canoe Trip can be counted for a total of 10 Action Hours, provided that students complete the pre-trip training activities, actively participate on the trip and submit a reflection on their experience. An Activity Supervisor Evaluation is not required.

Does the senior year High Ropes Trip count towards CAS?

The senior year High Ropes Trip can be counted for a total of 2 Action Hours, provided that students actively participate on the trip and submit a reflection on their experience. An Activity Supervisor Evaluation is not required.