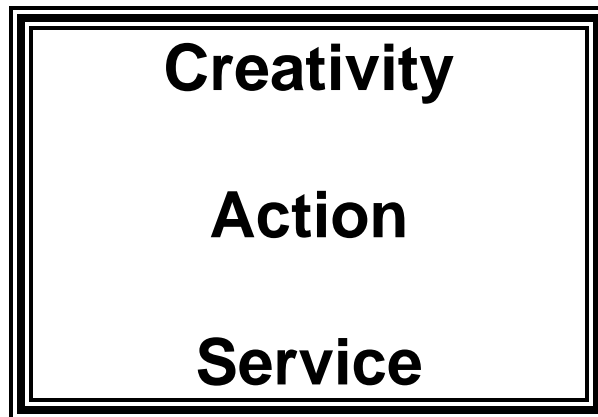


# **GLENFOREST SECONDARY SCHOOL**

## **International Baccalaureate Program**

### **CAS Requirements**



# NATURE OF CREATIVITY, ACTION, SERVICE

**CAS** is the quality difference of the IBO – Maria Piaggio, member of the CAS committee

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 3 elements to CAS, it is important not to consider them as mutually exclusive. CAS is about the education of the whole person, and the 3 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.

The service element of CAS is, in itself, the most significant, but the 2 other elements are also very important, as they provide access, balance, and flexibility to meet individual students' interests and preferences. It is not just a matter of 3 individual parts: 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.

## 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 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 the server and served. Appropriate activities might include:

- Physical assistance to the elderly
- A structured series of visits to a home for orphans
- Teaching basic literacy
- Helping with rehabilitation at the local hospital
- Establishing and coaching a sports team for disadvantaged youngsters
- Involvement in a theatrical production to which refugee children are invited
- Teaching the use of computers
- Environmental restoration and protection

## **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. 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 individual commitment is acceptable where general requirements of CAS are met: goals are set and the student reflects on progress.

## **Service**

Service projects and activities are often the most transforming element of CAS 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?**

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 the student doing, and no real reflection is possible. Examples of activities that are inappropriate:

- Any class, activity or project which is already part of the student's Diploma Programme
- An activity for which a student is personally rewarded either financially or with some other benefit
- Doing simple, tedious and repetitive work, like returning school library books to the shelves
- Working in a seniors' or children's home when the student has no idea of how the home operates, is just making sandwiches, has no contact with the seniors or children, or actually does no service for other people
- A passive pursuit, such as a visit to a museum, theatre, art exhibition, concert, sports event
- 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
- Fundraising 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

Students may ask themselves the following questions to help them decide if their proposed activity/project 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?

CAS can assist in discovering the true meaning of life, and in finding ones' 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' own place. It has transformed the lives of those who undertake a commitment to it.

## GETTING STARTED ON CAS

Students must complete 150 hours of CAS activities, evenly divided between creativity, action and service, during their grade 11 and 12 years. These activities can be started in the summer at the end of their grade 10 year. No CAS activity/project should be started before completing a CAS form and getting approval from one's CAS mentor or the CAS coordinator. Activities/projects must have clear objectives, timelines, and leaders/adult supervisors. There are CAS activity/project reporting dates to which students will be required to adhere (see schedule). Failure to complete the required CAS activity/project hours prior to graduation will result in one's Diploma being withheld until they are completed (within an allotted amount of time).

## Evaluation of CAS

Students are evaluated via records of activities/projects, self-evaluation, and final, summary report with final self-evaluation. The school also evaluates students. Supervising adults include comments on each activity/project. CAS mentors/coordinator evaluate students including guidance given during the course of any CAS activity/project. Each student will have a CAS folder in the CAS coordinator's office wherein CAS records are kept and reviewed at regular intervals.

## CAS deadlines

- summer at end of grade 10 year – CAS activities/projects can be planned and undertaken
- September 15 (grade 11 year) – report CAS activities/projects completed over summer  
- plan CAS activities/projects for grade 11 year
- December 15 (grade 11 year) – submit CAS log to CAS coordinator/mentor
- June 1 - submit CAS log to CAS coordinator/mentor
- July/August – work on CAS hours
- September 15 (grade 12 year)- submit CAS log to CAS coordinator/mentor  
- plan CAS activities/projects for grade 12 year
- December 15 (grade 12 year)- submit CAS log to CAS coordinator/mentor
- April 15 (grade 12 year)- submit **final** CAS log to CAS coordinator/mentor

At any time during grades 11 and 12, students can (in fact, are encouraged to) contact/conference with their CAS mentor/coordinator about activities/projects, concerns, time management issues, new ideas, possible changes to current/future plans, etc. Communication is important to accomplishment of one's goals.