

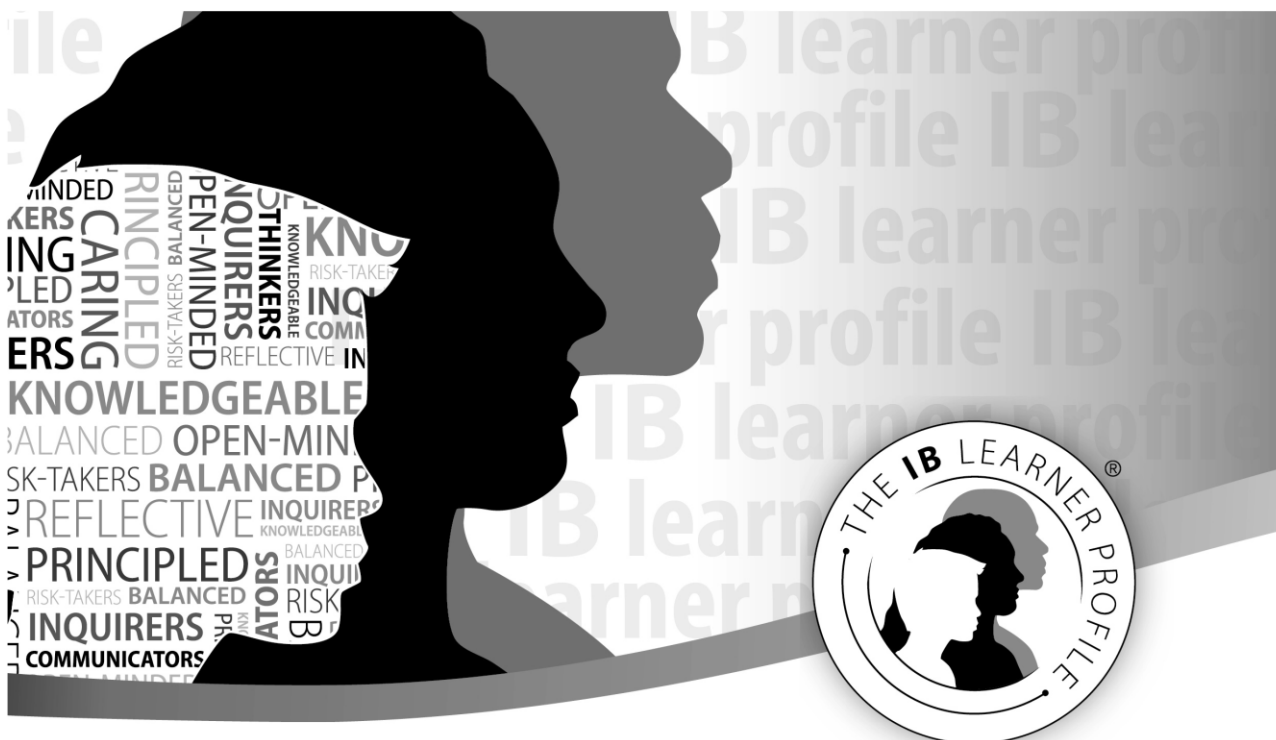
An IB Student's CAS Handbook

CREATIVITY

ACTIVITY

SERVICE

Name _____



IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes 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.

As IB learners we strive to be:

INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

REFLECTIVE

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.



The nature of CAS

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

(Peterson 2003)

CAS is at the heart of the Diploma Programme. With its holistic approach, CAS is designed to strengthen and extend students' personal and interpersonal learning from the PYP and MYP.

CAS is organized around the three strands of creativity, activity and service defined as follows.

- **Creativity**—exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance
- **Activity**—physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle
- **Service**—collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need

As a shining beacon of our values, CAS enables students to demonstrate attributes of the IB learner profile in real and practical ways, to grow as unique individuals and to recognize their role in relation to others. Students develop skills, attitudes and dispositions through a variety of individual and group experiences that provide students with opportunities to explore their interests and express their passions, personalities and perspectives. CAS complements a challenging academic programme in a holistic way, providing opportunities for self-determination, collaboration, accomplishment and enjoyment.

CAS enables students to enhance their personal and interpersonal development. A meaningful CAS programme is a journey of discovery of self and others. For many, CAS is profound and life-changing. Each individual student has a different starting point and different needs and goals. A CAS programme is, therefore, individualized according to student interests, skills, values and background.

The school and students must give CAS as much importance as any other element of the Diploma Programme and ensure sufficient time is allocated for engagement in the CAS programme. The CAS stages offer a helpful and supportive framework and continuum of process for CAS students.

Successful completion of CAS is a requirement for the award of the IB Diploma. While not formally assessed, students reflect on their CAS experiences and provide evidence in their CAS portfolios of achieving the seven learning outcomes.

The CAS programme formally begins at the start of the Diploma Programme and continues regularly, ideally on a weekly basis, for at least **18 months** with a reasonable balance between creativity, activity, and service.

All CAS students are expected to maintain and complete a **CAS portfolio** as evidence of their engagement with CAS. The CAS portfolio is a collection of evidence that showcases CAS experiences and for student reflections; it is not formally assessed.

Completion of CAS is based on student achievement of the seven CAS learning outcomes. Through their CAS portfolio, students provide the school with evidence demonstrating achievement of **each learning outcome**.

Students engage in CAS experiences involving one or more of the three CAS strands. A CAS experience can be a single event or may be an extended series of events. Further, students undertake a CAS project of at least one month's duration that challenges students to show initiative, demonstrate perseverance, and develop skills such as collaboration, problem-solving, and decision-making. The CAS project can address any single strand of CAS, or combine two or all three strands.

Students use the CAS stages (investigation, preparation, action, reflection and demonstration) as a framework for CAS experiences and the CAS project.

There are three **formal documented interviews students** must have with their CAS coordinator/adviser. The **first interview is at the beginning** of the CAS programme, the **second at the end of the first year**, and the **third interview is at the end of the CAS programme**.

CAS emphasizes reflection which is central to building a deep and rich experience in CAS. Reflection informs students' learning and growth by allowing students to explore ideas, skills, strengths, limitations and areas for further development and consider how they may use prior learning in new contexts.

Aims

The CAS programme aims to develop students who:

- enjoy and find significance in a range of CAS experiences
- purposefully reflect upon their experiences
- identify goals, develop strategies and determine further actions for personal growth
- explore new possibilities, embrace new challenges and adapt to new roles
- actively participate in planned, sustained, and collaborative CAS projects
- understand they are members of local and global communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment.

CAS learning outcomes

These learning outcomes articulate what a CAS student is able to do at some point during his or her CAS programme. Through meaningful and purposeful CAS experiences, students develop the necessary skills, attributes and understandings to achieve **the seven CAS learning outcomes**.

Some learning outcomes may be achieved many times, while others may be achieved less frequently. Not all CAS experiences lead to a CAS learning outcome. Students provide the school with evidence in their CAS portfolio of having achieved each learning outcome at least once through their CAS programme. The CAS coordinator must reach agreement with the student as to what evidence is necessary to demonstrate achievement of each CAS learning outcome. Commonly, the evidence of achieving the seven CAS learning outcomes is found in students' reflections.

In CAS, there are seven learning outcomes:

LO 1 Identify own strengths and develop areas for growth

Students are able to see themselves as individuals with various abilities and skills, of which some are more developed than others.

LO 2 Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken, developing new skills

in the process. A new challenge may be an unfamiliar experience or an extension of an existing

one. The newly acquired or developed skills may be shown through experiences that the student has not previously undertaken or through increased expertise in an established area.

LO 3 Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience

Students can articulate the stages from conceiving an idea to executing a plan for a CAS experience or series of CAS experiences. This may be accomplished in collaboration with other participants. Students may show their knowledge and awareness by building on a previous experience, or by launching a new idea or process.

LO 4 Show commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences

Students demonstrate regular involvement and active engagement in CAS.

LO 5 Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively

Students are able to identify, demonstrate and critically discuss the benefits and challenges of collaboration gained through CAS experiences.

LO 6 Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance

Students are able to identify and demonstrate their understanding of global issues, make responsible decisions, and take appropriate action in response to the issue either locally, nationally or internationally.

LO 7 Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions

Students show awareness of the consequences of choices and actions in planning and carrying out CAS experiences.

CAS strands

Exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance

Creativity in CAS provides students with the opportunity to explore their own sense of original thinking and expression. Creativity will come from the student's talents, interests, passions, emotional responses, and imagination; the form of expression is limitless. This may include visual and performing arts, digital design, writing, film, culinary arts, crafts and composition. Students are encouraged to engage in creative endeavours that move them beyond the familiar, broadening their scope from conventional to unconventional thinking.

If students are accomplished in a particular creative form, for example, music, painting or acting, they may choose to extend their involvement and deepen their skill level. Within their field, students can define new challenges and objectives to fulfill creativity in CAS. For example, a musician may compose and perform a guitar solo; an artist may create a new sculpture or photographic series; an actor may present an original dramatic piece. By striving for new possibilities, students may discover ways to meet challenges and identify strengths that carry them forward with curiosity and continued innovation. When demonstrating creative expression, students may showcase their product or performance in a variety of ways, for example, through a recording, a presentation, an exhibition, social media or shared discussion. Creativity in CAS is not met by the appreciation of the creative efforts of others, such as attending a concert or art exhibition.

Creativity can be inspired and informed by the student's Diploma courses. For example, students can meet new challenges and objectives in creativity using the skills developed in the visual arts course, or find new ways of expression utilizing elements in the design technology course. However, creativity experiences must be distinct from, and may not be included or used in, the student's Diploma course requirements.

As with all CAS experiences, students reflect meaningfully on their engagement with creativity, and may be guided to look for moments of personal significance or inspiration as a call for reflection. Creativity may provide inspiration for the ways in which students will reflect. For example, students may reflect through art, music, a brief narrative, a blog posting, photos, a skit, or other methods.

Approaches to creativity

There are many approaches to creativity, such as:

- **Ongoing creativity:** A student may already be engaged in creativity as part of a school group or club, or through some other form of sustained creativity. Students may continue in this as part of their creativity; however, students could also be encouraged to further extend and develop their participation if appropriate.
- **School-based creativity:** Students are encouraged to participate in meaningful creativity and to explore their own sense of original thinking and expression. In school, there may well be appropriate creativity opportunities in which the students can engage. These creativity experiences could be part of the school's service CAS projects, a school club, timetabled creativity sessions, or other opportunities.
- **Community-based creativity:** Participating in creativity within the local community advances student awareness and understanding of interpersonal relationships with others, particularly if the creativity experience involves the local community. Creativity experiences best occur with a regularity that builds and sustains relationships while allowing the growth of students' talents, interests, passions, emotional responses, and imagination. For example, students could be encouraged to join a community-based theatre group, contribute towards a community art gallery, create a sculpture for the community park, take cooking classes, or other opportunities.
- **Individual creativity:** Students may decide that they wish to engage in solitary creativity experiences such as composing music, developing a website, writing a compilation of short fiction stories, designing furniture, creating arts and crafts, or painting a series of portraits. Such creativity experiences are of most benefit when they take place over an extended duration of time. Students can be encouraged to set personal goals and work towards these in a sustained manner.

Activity

Physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle

The aim of the “Activity” strand is to promote lifelong healthy habits related to physical well-being. Pursuits may include individual and team sports, aerobic exercise, dance, outdoor recreation, fitness training, and any other form of physical exertion that purposefully contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Students are encouraged to participate at an appropriate level and on a regular basis to provide a genuine challenge and benefit.

Schools must support students whose circumstances or culture may determine participation in physically active experiences. Similarly, students with disabilities must be given opportunities to take part in this strand. All CAS students must satisfy the basic requirement of physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle as is appropriate for each student.

Students who regularly participate in suitable activity experiences are encouraged to develop and extend their participation. Students could expand personal goals, explore different training models to enhance their existing sport or become involved in a new sport. For dedicated student athletes, maintenance of a planned rigorous training programme is appropriate. Some national curriculums require students to participate in a physical education course. Participation in such courses may be considered activity if it meets the CAS guidelines. As with all CAS experiences, students reflect purposefully on their engagement with activity and may be guided to look for moments of personal significance or inspiration as a call for reflection.

Approaches to activity

There are many approaches to activity, such as:

- **Ongoing activity:** A student may already be engaged in activity as part of a school team or club, or through some other form of sustained physical exercise. Students may continue in this as part of their activity; however, they should set personal goals in keeping with the principles of CAS. Students can also be encouraged to further extend and develop their participation if appropriate.

- **School-based activity:** Students are encouraged to participate in meaningful activity that benefits their physical well-being. In school there may well be appropriate activity opportunities in which the student can engage. These activity experiences could, for example, be part of the school curriculum, a school sports club, or timetabled sports sessions. Students may elect to initiate a school-based activity such as basketball or tennis and engage other CAS students or any student within the school.

Community-based activity: Participating in activity within the local community advances student awareness and understanding of interpersonal relationships, particularly if the activity experience involves members of the local community. However, single events of activity can lack depth and

meaning. When possible, activity experiences best occur with a regularity that builds and sustains relationships while allowing the growth of physical well-being of the students. For example, rather than a single activity experience at a community-based fun run, students

could be encouraged to join a community-based running club, a dance class, an aerobics class or an out-of-school sports group.

- **Individual activity:** Students may decide that they wish to engage in solitary activity experiences such as, for example, attending a gym, bicycling, roller-skating, swimming, or strength conditioning. Such activity experiences are of most benefit when they take place over an extended duration of time. Students can be encouraged to set personal goals and work towards these in a sustained and correctly applied manner. Risk assessment of such solitary activity experiences should be conducted with the student beforehand if applicable.

Service

Collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need

The aim of the “Service” strand is for students to understand their capacity to make a meaningful contribution to their community and society. Through service, students develop and apply personal and social skills in real-life situations involving decision-making, problem-solving, initiative, responsibility, and accountability for their actions. Service is often seen as one of the most transforming elements of CAS

by promoting students’ self-awareness, offering diverse occasions for interactions and experiences and opportunities for international-mindedness. Use of the CAS stages in developing a service experience is recommended for best practice.

Service within CAS benefits all involved: students learn as they identify and address authentic community needs, and the community benefits through reciprocal collaboration. Service fosters development of abilities, attitudes and values in accordance with the IB mission statement and the IB learner profile. As such, CAS service experiences are unpaid.

When defining “community”, consideration must be made to situation and culture. The community may be the school; however, it is recommended that service experiences extend beyond the school to local, national and/or international communities. Community involvement includes collaboration with others, as students investigate the need, plan and implement their idea for service.

CAS coordinators should always consider the advantage of students conducting service locally. Local interactions allow for developing relationships, observing and participating in sustained change, and meeting challenges through collaboration. From the local context, students can extend their thinking and knowledge to understanding global issues. Students can also extend local service to global impact through partnerships with CAS students in other cities and towns, countries and continents. Technology affords opportunities for networking, sharing of initiatives, partnerships and impact. As with all CAS experiences, students reflect purposefully on their engagement with service, and may be guided to look for moments of personal significance or inspiration as a call for reflection.

Service learning

Service experiences in CAS can be approached using a service learning model. Service learning is the development and application of knowledge and skills towards meeting an identified community need. In this research-based approach, students undertake service initiatives often related to topics studied previously in the curriculum, utilizing skills, understandings and values developed in these studies. Service learning builds upon students' prior knowledge and background, enabling them to make links between their academic disciplines and their service experiences.

Using the CAS stages for service learning

Using the CAS stages is the recommended approach for students engaging in service experiences. All forms of service should involve investigation, preparation and action that meets an identified need. Reflection on significant experiences throughout informs problem-solving and choices; demonstration allows for sharing of what has taken place. The CAS stages specific to service learning offer students a helpful and supportive approach. As students progress through each of these stages, they can draw upon the skills and knowledge gained from their academic subjects to support their experiences.

The service learning stages are:

1. Investigation: Students participate in social analysis of a selected issue, with identification and confirmation of a community need, often with the designated community partner. Having an inventory of interests, skills, talents and areas for personal growth, students are able to make choices based on their priorities and abilities and the designated need.
2. Preparation: Students design a service plan appropriate to the identified need, with clarification of roles and responsibilities, resource requirements, and timelines to successfully implement the plan. Any community partners are likely to be consulted. Students also acquire and develop the knowledge and skills needed for the experience.
3. Action: Students implement the plan through direct service, indirect service, advocacy, or research. Their service may be a combination of one
4. Reflection: Students examine their thoughts, feelings and actions applied to the context of self, community and the world. With service learning, reflection often occurs with greater frequency as students identify significant moments generated by new situations and insights.
5. Demonstration: Students make explicit what and how they learned and what they have accomplished, for example, by sharing their service experience through their CAS portfolio or with others in an informal or formal manner. Through demonstration and communication, students solidify their understanding and evoke response from others.

Four types of service action

It is recommended that students engage with different types of service within their CAS programme. These types of action are as follows.

- **Direct service:** Student interaction involves people, the environment or animals. For example, this can appear as one-on-one tutoring, developing a garden in partnership with refugees, or working in an animal shelter.
- **Indirect service:** Though students do not see the recipients of indirect service, they have verified their actions will benefit the community or environment. For example, this can appear as re-designing a non-profit organization's website, writing original picture books to teach a language, or nurturing tree seedlings for planting.
- **Advocacy:** Students speak on behalf of a cause or concern to promote action on an issue of public interest. For example, this may appear as initiating an awareness campaign on hunger, performing a play on replacing bullying with respect, or creating a video on sustainable water solutions.
- **Research:** Students collect information through varied sources, analyse data, and report on a topic of importance to influence policy or practice. For example, they may conduct environmental surveys to influence their school, contribute to a study of animal migration, compile effective means to reduce litter in public spaces, or conduct social research by interviewing people on topics such as homelessness, unemployment or isolation.

There are many approaches to service, such as:

- **Ongoing service:** When investigating a need that leads to a plan of action implemented over time, students develop perseverance and commitment. They observe how their ideas and actions build on the contributions of others to effect change. Their reflections may show deeper awareness and knowledge of social issues.
- **School-based service:** While students are encouraged to participate in meaningful service that benefits the community outside school, there may well be appropriate service opportunities within the school setting. In all cases an authentic need must be verified that will be met through student action. Service needs met at a school may prepare students for further action within the larger community; for example, by tutoring within the school, students may then be better prepared to tutor at a community centre.
- **Community-based service:** Participating in service within the local community advances student awareness and understanding of social issues and solutions. However, single incidents of engagement with individuals in a service context can lack depth and meaning. When possible, interactions involving people in a service context best occur with a regularity that builds and sustains relationships for the mutual benefit of all. For example, rather than a single service experience at a retirement facility, students can decide to establish regular visits when they realize their efforts are valued and have reciprocal impact.
- **Immediate need service:** In response to a disaster, students often want to move towards immediate action. Typically they quickly attempt to assess the need and devise a planned response. Later, the students can be reminded and encouraged to further

investigate the issue to better understand underlying causes. This provides greater context even if the service action has already taken place. With increased knowledge, students may commit to ongoing assistance, for example, such as joining with prevention or community resilience initiatives regarding an environmental issue.

- **Fundraising:** The preferred approach is for students to initially develop their understanding of the organization they choose to support and the issues being addressed. Students can draw from their interests, skills and talents to plan the method and manner of fundraising. Ideally, students directly communicate with the organization and establish accountability for funds raised. Sharing the rationale for the fundraising educates others and advocates the chosen cause. Students can also be asked to consider other ways to augment their contribution through direct, advocacy, or research service.

- **International service:** Students are encouraged to participate locally in service before considering service opportunities outside their country. When participating in international service, students must understand the background and the circumstances of an identified and authenticated need to support their involvement. When direct communication with an overseas community is not possible, students could cooperate with an outside agency to provide an appropriate service. Students do benefit from serving in an international context when able to make clear links to parallel issues in their local environs and they understand the consequences of their service. Schools must ensure that commercial providers, if used, act in accordance with the aims of the IB mission statement and CAS requirements. Additionally, schools must undertake risk assessment to ensure the safety of students.

- **Volunteerism:** Students often volunteer in service experiences organized by other students, the school or an external group. In such cases, students benefit from prior knowledge of the context and the service need. Being informed and prepared increases the likelihood that the students' contribution will have personal meaning and value. Utilizing the CAS stages prior to volunteering is highly recommended.

- **Service arising from the curriculum:** Teachers plan units with service learning opportunities in mind, students may or may not respond and act. For example, while studying freshwater ecology in environmental systems and society, students decide to monitor and improve a local water system.

Reflection

Being reflective is one attribute of the IB learner profile: “We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.” Reflection is central to building a deep and rich experience in CAS. Developing a culture of reflection helps students recognize and understand how to be reflective as well as deciding the best methods and appropriate timing. Student learning is enhanced by reflection on choices and actions. This enables students to grow in their ability to explore skills, strengths, limitations and areas for further development. Through reflection students examine ideas and consider how they might use prior learning in new contexts. Reflection leads to improved problem-solving, higher cognitive processes and greater depth of understanding in addition to exploring how CAS experiences may influence future possibilities.

The thinking skills category of the approaches to learning in the Diploma Programme highlights the need to explicitly teach students to reflect in different situations. For reflection in CAS to be meaningful, schools must plan how to engage students in reflection as a learned process. The development of reflective skills is best when explicitly taught across the curriculum, leading students to reflect independently as a valued process.

The overarching intention of reflection in CAS includes the opportunity for students to:

- deepen learning
- consider relevance of experience
- explore personal and group values
- recognize the application of knowledge, skills, and attributes
- identify strengths and areas for development
- gain a greater understanding of self and others
- place experience in a larger context
- generate relevant ideas and questions
- consider improvements in individual and collective choices and actions
- transfer prior learning to new situations
- generate and receive constructive feedback
- develop the ongoing habit of thoughtful, reflective practice.

The CAS portfolio

The CAS portfolio provides students with opportunities to record their diverse CAS experiences and summarize and celebrate their achievements. The CAS portfolio is a collection of evidence and reflections (for example: photographs, visual and audio recordings, documents, posters, programmes of events or performances) that demonstrate participation in CAS and achievement of the seven CAS learning outcomes.

The CAS portfolio is to be discussed during the three formal CAS interviews. During an interview, students discuss their CAS experiences and progress. Students should be encouraged and assisted where necessary by the CAS coordinator/adviser to keep their CAS portfolio up-to-date. The CAS portfolio is valuable evidence of a student's CAS experiences and achievements.

CAS interviews

There must be a minimum **of three interviews** between a student and the CAS coordinator/adviser where student progress is discussed and appropriate encouragement and advice is given. The interviews should occur at **least twice** in the first year of the Diploma Programme and once in the second year.

USE YOUR INITIATIVE, BE CREATIVE, AND MOST OF ALL, ENJOY IT!