The British School of Milan
CAS Handbook 2023-2025

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Contents

BSM Mission Statement

To inspire learning within a caring, creative, and international community, to pursue excellence, and to challenge students to think critically as they prepare for the world beyond.

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate 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 programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

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¹ IBO CAS Guide, 2017, p. 7.

The nature of CAS

Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) is a mandatory core element of the IB Diploma Programme, alongside Theory of Knowledge (TOK) and the Extended Essay (EE).

The purpose of CAS is for the Diploma students to **learn through experience.** This type of learning encourages awareness and appreciation of life outside academic achievements; it also allows the students to develop as a whole person, enabling them to reflect on the impact of the experience.

Throughout the **18-month-programme[2]**, each student undertakes a set of **meaningful experiences**, based on their interests and values, and completes a **CAS project**. Each student is also involved in **community service,** a unique time for them to proactively research on an authentic need in society.

Figure 1: Diploma Programme Model[3]

At *The British School of Milan,* the CAS programme for the 2023-2025 cohort formally starts after the Year 11 Induction, on 12 June. Each student must then show a **continuous involvement** in CAS, until December 2025.

(!) Please note that:

- We strongly advise the students to take part in **at least one experience** over the summer 2023 to mark the start of their programme.

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[2] Please note that an explanation of the key terminology mentioned in this introduction will be provided in the next chapters.

[3] IBO CAS Guide, 2017, p. 2.

- If a student <u>does not</u> attend the Induction in June or <u>does not</u> complete worthwhile experiences over the summer, their CAS programme will start in September 2023 and will end in March 2025.

Each student produces a **portfolio** on ManageBac, as evidence of their engagement in CAS. This is regularly reviewed by the CAS Advisors and the CAS coordinator. Although it is *not* formally assessed by the IB, **successful completion of CAS** is a requirement for the award of the IB Diploma.

It is the student's responsibility to keep their portfolio up-to-date and demonstrate that, by deadline, they achieved the seven **CAS learning outcomes** at least once in their programme. They also show evidence that each experience fits within one or more of the three strands (C/A/S) and that the **CAS stages** are used for ongoing experiences and the project.

Reflection plays an important role in CAS, as it allows the students to reflect on the *significance* of the experience(s).

The CAS strands: what C, A and S stand for

CAS is organised 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'[4]

The experience can be about something new or something that the student is already doing but should lead to a new level of accomplishment. The aim is to explore their creative thinking.

Examples of creativity include:
- Acting or supporting a drama performance
- Playing or supporting a music performance
- Participating or supporting a dance performance
- Creating an artwork
- Creating a website/an app

A group of IB students taking part in a MUN conference in Katowice, Poland, in April 2023. (Creativity)

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[4] IBO CAS Guide, 2017, p. 8.

Activity

'Physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle'[5]

This is a great opportunity for the student to do something physical that will benefit their wellbeing. It can be a sport they already do or a new sport. What is important is that they are improving or learning a new skill.

Examples of activity include:
- Playing on a team
- Completing a training programme
- Undertaking an adventure sport or journey
- Learning a new martial art/yoga/pilates

IB students playing volleyball.
(Activity)

[5] Ibid, p. 6.

Service

'Collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need'[6]

In CAS, service is meant to be a **social act**, working with **people outside the family environment** and **not for profit**. The students collaborate with members of the community (other students or representatives of charity organisation) researching on an authentic need. The experience entails a mutual engagement in the planning and realisation of the experience.

Examples of service include:
- Organising fundraising events
- Organising awareness campaigns
- Helping at an animal shelter
- Volunteering at a retirement home or youth centre
- Helping in your school (e.g., student council/subject ambassador)

IB students selling azaleas plants to support the cancer research by AIRC Foundation. (Service)

IB students organised a Christmas card fundraising event for Fondazione Rava. (Service)

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[6] Ibid, p. 6.

CAS experiences

A CAS experience can be:

- **a series of events** (also referred to as **ongoing**), such as training with and being in a team or rehearsing for and performing a play

or

- **a single event** (**one-day event**), like running a marathon or helping at a charity event.

The students are free to choose the best option(s) available but having more ongoing experiences than single events in their portfolio will help to maintain a **continuous engagement** in CAS. This can be easily tracked on ManageBac by looking at the student's **timeline** (see example below).
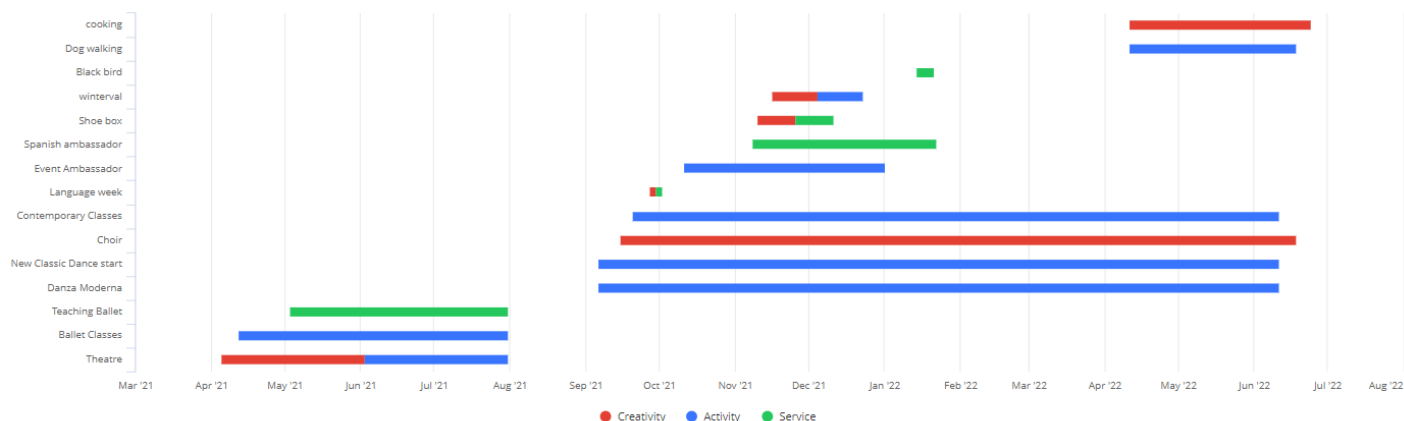
These are <u>some examples</u> of experiences available at BSM:

CREATIVITY	ACTIVITY	SERVICE
Art/Maths/Debate clubs	Football	Student ambassadors
Creative writing	Rugby	Duke of Edinburgh's Award
Learning a new instrument	Kayaking	Programme
Learning a new language	Canoeing	Tutoring
Writing for 'Henderson Heat'	Dance	Phonics superheroes
Model United Nations (MUN)	Badminton	Fundraising for a purpose
Choir	Gym sessions	Expeditions abroad (Peru &
Photography	Fitness programme	Guatemala)
Cooking	(monitored)	Italian Red Cross
Drama	Yoga	Awareness campaigns

CAS project

The project lasts approximately **one month** (from planning to completion) and follows the criteria below:

- ➢ can address **any single strand of CAS**, or combine two or all three strands
- ➢ must be defined with a **clear objective and purpose**
- ➢ meets at least **one learning outcome**
- ➢ involves **collaboration/teamwork**, with all members being contributors. (!) There should be evidence of the student taking a **leadership role**
- ➢ must be **initiated** (a part of or entirely) by the student
- ➢ must follow the five **CAS stages** – this should be documented on the CAS portfolio

Before starting the project, the student shares and agrees a plan with either the CAS Advisor or the CAS Coordinator. The student can write their own description of the project on a word document or use the '**CAS Project Form**' available on the next page.

These are some <u>examples of the projects</u> available at BSM:

- students plan, design and create a mural in the Primary School library (Creativity & Service)
- students set up and conduct tutoring for people in need within the wider community of Milan or for younger pupils of the school (Creativity & Service)
- students plan and participate in the planting and maintenance of a garden in the school grounds (Service)
- students plan and organise the 'Christmas Shoe Box Appeal' (Service)
- students design a dress out of recycled material (masks) and enter the 'Junk Kouture' sustainability competition in Milan (Creativity & Service)
- students plan and organise a collection of toiletries, clothes, and foods for people in need (Service)
- students organise a support group for younger pupils of the school. The focus of these weekly sessions will be on organisation skills, homework deadlines and keeping up with schoolwork. (Service & Creativity)

CAS project form

Student project leader(s)	
Members	
Title of project	
Focus of project	
How we are following the CAS stages	For each CAS stage, describe either what has been done or what you plan to do.
• Investigation	
• Preparation	
• Action	
• Reflection	
• Demonstration	
Name of organization the project is organized with or for, if applicable	
Contact person at organization, contact phone and email, if applicable	
Teacher or other external supervisor, if applicable	
Anticipated dates of CAS project	

Risk assessment required?	Yes/No	Risk assessment completed?	Yes/No

Student signatures	
CAS supervisor/adviser signature/date	

What CAS is and what is not

CAS is... Please consider the following questions when deciding if an experience meets the requirements and is CAS-worthy.

Does it fit within **one or more** of the C/A/S strands?

↓

Does it address **one or more** learning outcome(s)?

↓

Does it provide an opportunity for **growth**?

↓

Does it allow you to develop the **IB learner profile**?

↓

Is it based on a **personal interest** or **skill**?

↓

Will this experience **benefit** me or other people?
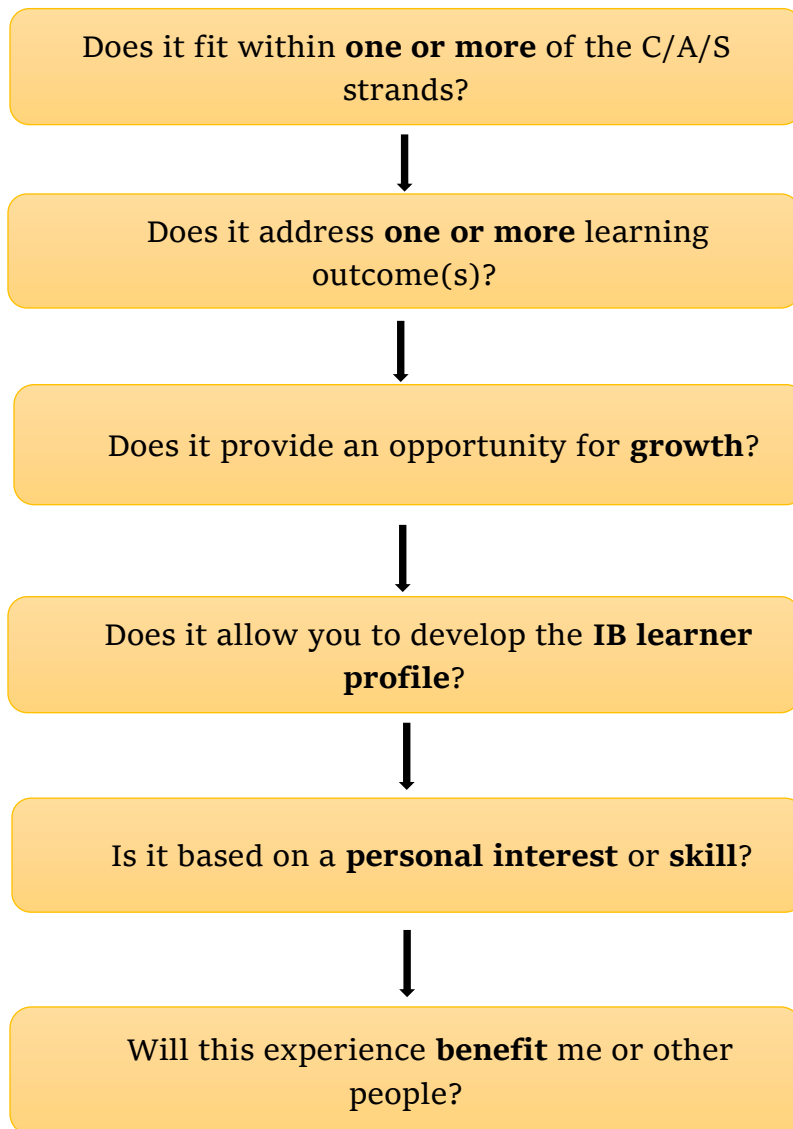
CAS does not take place when the student has a passive, rather than an active role in the learning process.

Here are some examples:

- ➤ any experience for which you are paid
- ➤ an activity which is part of the student's Diploma Programme assessment
- ➤ all sort of duties within the family
- ➤ babysitter / dog sitter
- ➤ learning to drive
- ➤ work experience which only benefits the student
- ➤ any activity which is not supervised by an adult
- ➤ doing simple and repetitive work, such as putting books back on shelves

The Learning Outcomes

In CAS, there are **seven learning outcomes**. Students show that they have achieved all of them **at least once** over the 18-month programme, although some may be demonstrated many times, in a variety of experiences.

	Learning Outcome	Managebac abbreviation
LO 1	Identify own strengths and develop areas for growth	Strength & growth
Descriptor	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	Challenge & skills
Descriptor	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	Initiative & planning
Descriptor	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	Commitment & perseverance
Descriptor	Students demonstrate regular involvement and active engagement in CAS.	
LO 5	Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively	Collaborative skills
Descriptor	Students are able to identify, demonstrate and critically discuss the benefits and challenges of collaboration gained through CAS experiences. CAS learning outcomes 12 Creativity, activity, service guide	
LO 6	Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance	Global engagement
Descriptor	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	Ethics of choices & actions
Descriptor	Students show awareness of the consequences of choices and actions in planning and carrying out CAS experiences	

The five CAS Stages

The CAS stages represents a useful framework which aims to support the student in the realisation of their portfolio. Students should use it when planning ongoing experiences, but especially the project.
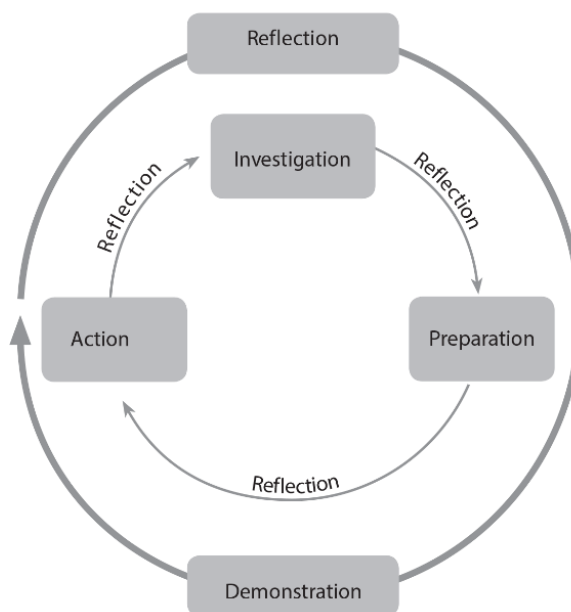

Figure 2: The five CAS stages,
IB CAS Guide, 2017, p. 16

The five CAS stages are as follows:

1. **Investigation:** Students identify their interests, skills, and talents to be used in considering opportunities for CAS experiences, as well as areas for personal growth and development. Students investigate what they want to do and determine the purpose for their CAS experiences. In the case of service, students identify a need they want to address.
2. **Preparation:** Students clarify roles and responsibilities, develop a plan of actions to be taken, identify specified resources and timelines, and acquire any skills as needed to engage in the CAS experience.
3. **Action:** Students implement their idea or plan. This often requires decision-making and problem-solving. Students may work individually, with partners, or in groups.
4. **Reflection:** Students describe what happened, express feelings, generate ideas, and raise questions. Reflection can occur at any time during CAS to

further understanding, to assist with revising plans, to learn from the experience, and to make explicit connections between their growth, accomplishments, and the learning outcomes for personal awareness. Reflection may lead to new action.

5. **Demonstration:** Students make explicit what and how they learned and what they have accomplished, for example, by sharing their CAS 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. [7]
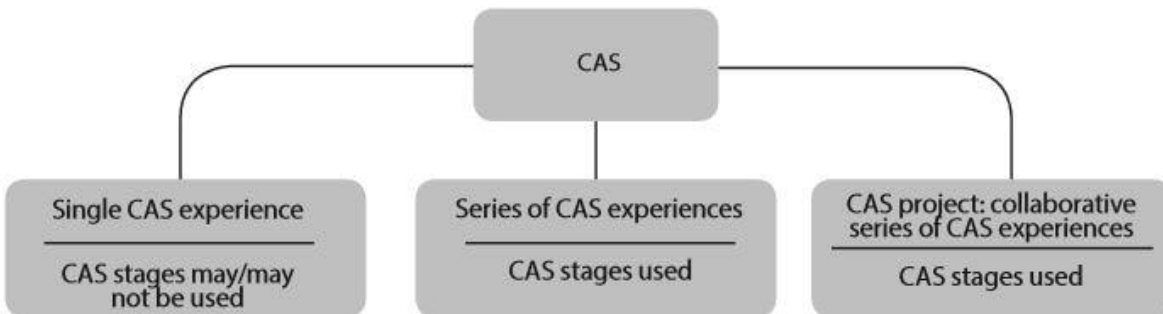

Figure 3
CAS experiences and stages

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[7] IB, CAS Guide, 2017, p. 17.

Reflection

Reflection is a key element of CAS as it allows to reflect on the *significance* of the experience or project, convert it into learning, identify and address challenges.

There are different ways to reflect: reflection can be **written** or, if the student is a good talker, can be recorded as an **audio** or **video** file and added to their CAS portfolio.

A general guideline if for the student to have *three reflections* for each ongoing experience – initial/middle/end – and *five* for the project. When reflecting on a single event, *one* reflection is enough.

WHEN should the student reflect?
- faced a challenge
- learned/improved a new skill
- achieved the learning outcome(s)
- dealt with emotions/feelings

HOW to reflect:
- **describe what happened**: what went well/what was challenging? what was the most memorable moment and why?
- **express feelings**: what is your emotional response to the event/ experience?
- **generate ideas**: look back and evaluate your choices – what would you do differently, if you were to undertake the experience again?
- make **links to the learning outcome(s)**: did you achieve it/them? in what way? if not, why?

Some examples of reflections (from BSM former students' portfolio)

November 17, 2020 2:52 PM Challenge & Skills Commitment & Perseverance Strength & Growth

Having completed 6 workouts, I noticed a clear improvement in my physical health. Not only did I achieve my main goals, such as that of reaching a healthy weight that I was comfortable with and gaining muscle tone, but I also saw an improvement in my sleeping and study patterns. I was able to complete more school work in a shorter period of time without feeling as exhausted, which is a benefit I hadn't consider before starting the workout. My mood had been affected significantly, and I felt less anxious about exams and the COVID-19 pandemic. However, I had difficulty completing two workouts simultaneously, so I progressively increased my exercise's intensity. Initially, I finished one workout and carried out some exercises from another. Subsequently, I started adding more exercises each time, until I was able to complete two entire workouts. Although I took a three week break from the 30-day challenges in preparation for my end-of-year exams, I still carried out at least two workouts every week so that I did not lose all of my progress. I also realised that I was more proficient at executing leg exercises, so I decided to set myself the goal of developing my arm strength.

October 07, 2021 6:17 PM Collaborative Skills Commitment & Perseverance Ethics of Choices & Actions Global Engagement Initiative & Planning

We delivered our first house assembly of the school year today on the topic of the deep-rooted art and culture in Afghanistan. During the process of making the presentation, all 6 of us originally wanted to cover the recent news of Afghanistan regarding Taliban and women's right. However, we found that the matter could be too heavy and sensitive to deliver hence we decided to focus more on the history and culture of the country, an aspect that not a lot of us are aware of. We designated slides to each person and had meetings with a history and languages teacher to ensure our content is reliable and correctly sensitive. Along with the presentation, we wrote a script, which makes the process easier and I have definitely improved my organisation skills along this journey.

I think I developed my leadership as I am the only member of the House members who had previous experiences delivery assemblies, and now that I am the Head of Darwin, I guided the new students in these roles on the process and methods that are the most efficient. Many of them have directly asked me or contacted me on the content and the presentation, which I am in honour to be the person they turn to. I always tried my best to connect with the teachers and school events, while informing the other heads and deputies.

My deputy and I met up before the day of the presentation and practiced our delivery of slides and coordination. We found our method of agreeing on our coordination and what to amend to our script, and are slowly discovering what works the best for us. During the presentation, although it was online and we had some slight technical difficulties at first, we were able to overcome it and manage to do our 15 minute assembly smoothly.

We have received positive feedback on our approach "It was good to acknowledge the rich cultural history of Afghanistan, and to draw attention away from the complex political history", and it marks our successful first assembly of the year.

December 17, 2020 12:39 AM Challenge & Skills Commitment & Perseverance Global Engagement Strength & Growth

After the summer break, I represented the Dominican Republic and part of the Political Committee. It was a significant change from the Environmental Committee, but I was excited to attempt something new. I had to inform myself on measures to protect free elections, the protection of free speech on social media and maintaining and controlling access to the internet. Indeed, I researched the outlook on free speech in the country, discovering that the 2010 constitution declares the freedom of speech. However, some laws and government actions do not lead to the actuation of this fundamental human right. Additionally, I investigated the protection of free speech in general and the recent debates on whether governments should limit the freedom of speech on social media in cases where violence is promoted, increasing my understanding of the global issue. I was much more comfortable with writing resolutions on these topics after having composed them previously, illustrating how I developed a new skill after having undertaken a new challenge. Although my debating skills also improved, I still found it slightly scary to participate unless the Chair called on me. Hence, despite an improvement from the very start of MUN, I decided to be more confident and aimed to contribute at least once every debate.

Evidence

For each experience, the students are asked to record evidence of progress and achievement(s). Evidence could include photos, videos, planning forms, emails, websites, screenshots, schedules and so on.

Evidence should be added to their portfolio on ManageBac.

How to use ManageBac for CAS

Adding CAS experiences

To **add a new experience** to the student's portfolio, please follow these steps:

1) select 'Add CAS experience' on the top right corner of the student's CAS page (see image below).

Once clicked on 'Add CAS experience', a new tab will appear:

2) Carefully complete the following fields:
   - **Experience name:** choose a clear title and decide what CAS strand(s) it focuses on.
   - **Start/end dates**

- **Description and goals:** write a **clear description** of the experience (where are you doing it, how often, what it involves) and **clear goals (**what you hope to achieve, why have you chosen this experience)
- the **supervisor contact details**
- the **learning outcomes** you hope to achieve with this experience

3) Click on 'Add CAS experience'.

Completing reflections and evidence

To add evidence or reflections, select the experience you want to add to. Click on **Reflections & Evidence** on top of the panel.

Here you can add a journal entry, website link, video, photo, or file. Reflections and evidence must be linked to one or more of your targeted learning outcomes.

After adding reflections, you can access the **Reflections & Evidence** tab at the top of the page to view all your entries.

Obtaining a Supervisor Review

The aim of the supervisor review is to provide a comment on the student's progress, effort, and achievement(s).

If the experience has been approved and all reflections and evidence have been added, the students can ask for the **Supervisor review.**

There are two options for this request:

Option 1:

Click on '**Request Supervisor Review'**: the supervisor is notified via email and completes the review online.

Option 2:

Click **'CAS Completion Form':** this will generate a PDF of the experience information which can be printed and signed by the experience supervisor, with a brief comment. The student will then scan and upload the document in the evidence section.
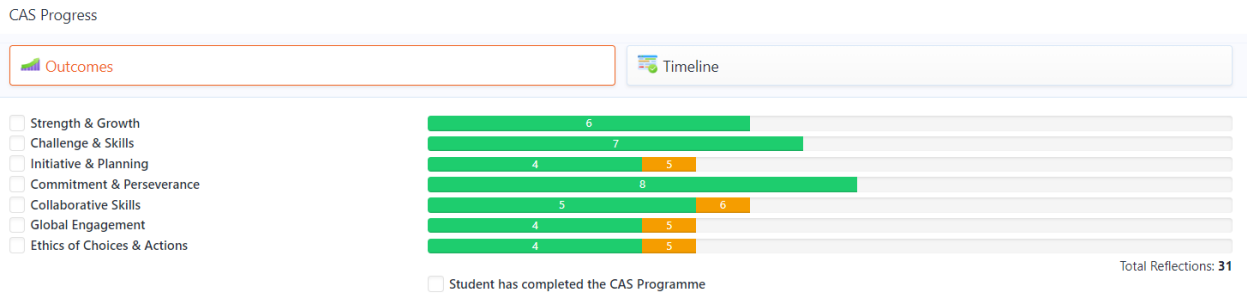

Editing or deleting CAS experiences

Navigate to any chosen CAS Experience within your CAS portfolio. To edit or delete the experience, click **Edit Experience** or **Delete Experience** on the right.

Evaluating your progress in CAS

Progress is CAS can be assessed by looking at two useful tools:

1) The **Outcomes** tab shows how many times a learning outcome has been selected during your CAS programme. Yellow bars indicate those experiences that have been planned and approved. Green bars indicate experiences with completed reflections.

CAS Progress

📶 Outcomes	📊 Timeline

☐ Strength & Growth	6
☐ Challenge & Skills	7
☐ Initiative & Planning	4 5
☐ Commitment & Perseverance	8
☐ Collaborative Skills	5 6
☐ Global Engagement	4 5
☐ Ethics of Choices & Actions	4 5

Total Reflections: **31**

☐ Student has completed the CAS Programme

2) The **Timeline** tab shows the length of each experience, as well as the type of experience (Creativity, Activity or Service). This helps the students to make sure that they show a continuous engagement in CAS.

CAS Progress

📶 Outcomes	📊 Timeline

Zoom in by clicking and dragging across the experience of interest.

🔴 Creativity 🔵 Activity 🟢 Service
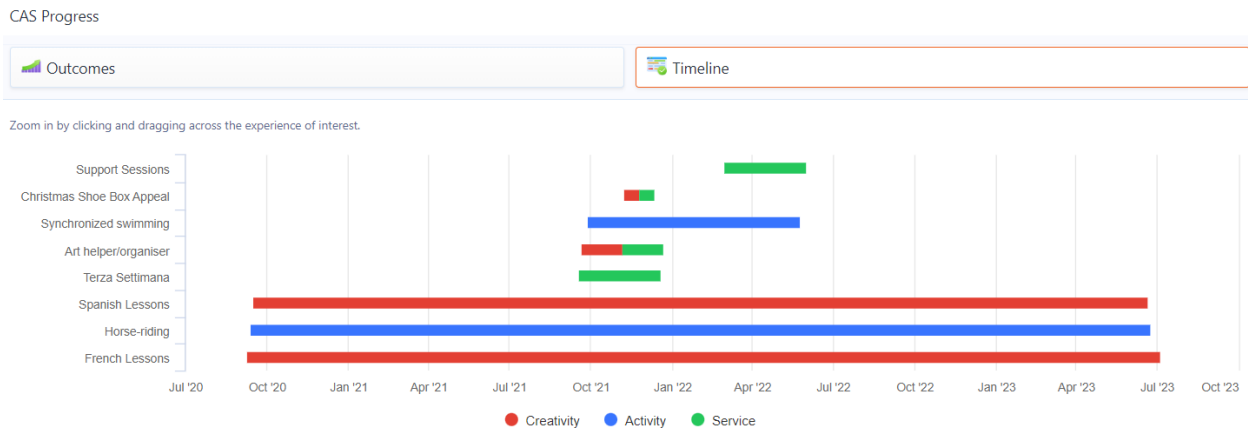
The responsibilities of a CAS student

1) The student shows a proactive approach towards CAS and understands the CAS requirements.

2) The student discusses plans for their CAS experiences with CAS Advisor (Form Tutor) and/or CAS coordinator.

3) The CAS programme shows **a balance** between C/A/S as well as a good range of single events and ongoing experiences.

4) Each experience addresses <u>at least</u> one of the C/A/S strands.

5) The student provides evidence of achieving the 7 Learning Outcomes at least once over the 18-month programme.

6) The student submits a plan for the project – this must be agreed with the CAS Advisor/CAS Coordinator. <u>The project is completed by Monday, 7th June 2024.</u>

7) Each experience should have an **adult supervisor** (a BSM teacher or an external supervisor) who agrees to sign a final review and write a brief comment. <u>Please note that other students and/or family members cannot act as supervisors.</u>

8) The student asks for the supervisor review immediately after completing the experience. This is to avoid inconveniences such as for example a teacher leaves BSM and is unable to sign off the student's review.

9) The student uses ManageBac to record their experiences and update their portfolio.

10) The student communicates with CAS Advisor in **three formal interviews.**

The role of the Supervisor

The supervisor **must be** an adult, who is <u>not</u> a family member, or a person related to the student.

The supervisor's role is to assist, guide and oversee the student's experience or project. It is also their duty to check their progress, verify attendance and write the final supervisor review.

The supervisor can be a member of staff at the school or somebody external. When it is an external supervisor, the student must provide a contact e-mail address and telephone number, and this should be recorded on the experience page on ManageBac.

The student should request permission of the supervisor before starting an experience. If there is a genuine struggle to find a supervisor, the student may ask their CAS Advisor (Form Tutor) or CAS coordinator to fulfill the role.

When an experience or project finishes, it is vital for the student to ask for the review straight away. This is to avoid unnecessary delay in marking the experience, and eventually, their portfolio as complete.

Specific guidelines on how to request a Supervisor Review can be found on pages 20-21 of this handbook.

CAS calendar 2023-2025

Month	IB Year One	IB Year Two
June (Year 11)	12/06: CAS Induction	
July	CAS experiences begin *	
August	CAS experiences begin or continue *	
September	**CAS Fair** Create the CAS Portfolio on ManageBac	
October	Setting up CAS interviews	
November	Term 1 Progress check **First interview**	Term 1 Progress check: final CAS experiences completed
December	Some CAS experiences completed Project under way	**Third and final CAS interview** ** **CAS portfolio final submission:** all reflections, all evidence and supervisor reviews for the project and experiences**
January	19/01: **CAS project proposal form** submitted on ManageBac	
February		Students update their portfolio (evidence/reflections/supervisor review for each experience)
March	22/03: **First progress check on the CAS project** (signed proposal form +correct dates + two reflections on Managebac)	**Third and final CAS interview** *** **CAS portfolio final submission:** all reflections, all evidence and supervisor reviews for the project and experiences ***
April		
May		
June	07/06: **project and most CAS experiences completed** **Second interview** Term 3 Progress check: progress evident on final CAS experiences	

- * Although it is not mandatory to complete CAS over the summer holidays, we strongly advise the students to undertake at least one experience
- ** for those students who attended Induction in June 2023
- *** for those students who did not attend Induction and started CAS in September 2023