ROTTERDAM
INTERNATIONAL
SECONDARY
SCHOOL

RISS
CAS/CE

STUDENT HANDBOOK
2026 - 2027

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate Organization 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 IBO 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.

RISS Vision and Mission

The RISS vision and mission parallel those of the IB CAS/CE Programmes. To ensure that all students enjoy being young, RISS educates for self-awareness, curiosity and integrity in a changing world.
The culture at RISS promotes:

- Joy in achievement
- Collaboration
- A sense of service
- High expectations
- Inquiry, action and reflection
- Intercultural understanding
- Citizenship, leadership and lifelong learning

These RISS values are essential for a successful CAS/CE journey!





The Nature of CAS and CE at RISS

"If you believe in something, you must not just think or talk or write, but must act."
- Alec Peterson, Head of the International Baccalaureate Organisation, 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.

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 and CE enable 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/CE complements a challenging academic programme in a holistic way, providing opportunities for **self-determination**, **collaboration**, **accomplishment** and **enjoyment**.
CAS/CE enables students to enhance their personal and interpersonal development. A meaningful CAS/CE programme is a journey of discovery of self and others. For many, CAS/CE is profound and life-changing. Each individual student has a different starting point and different needs and goals. A CAS/CE programme is, therefore, individualized according to student interests, skills, values and background.

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

Successful completion of CAS/CE is a requirement for the award of the IB/CP Diploma and the RISS Diploma. While not formally assessed, students reflect on their CAS/CE experiences and provide evidence in their CAS/CE portfolios of meeting the seven CAS learning outcomes or the four CE learning outcomes.

The CAS/CE programme formally begins at the start of the Diploma/Careers 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/CE portfolio on ManageBac** as evidence of their engagement with CAS/CE. The CAS/CE portfolio is a collection of evidence that showcases CAS/CE experiences and for student reflections; it is not formally assessed.

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 of Service Learning** (investigation, preparation, action, reflection and demonstration) as a framework for the CAS project.

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

Engagement with the programme is expected to be consistent and ongoing, which will result in the status of "on track" or "excellent." When a student falls behind in reflection work or is submitting inconclusive reflection work, the status will change to a red flag of "concern." The red flag of "concern" may also be assigned to students who have not met a reasonable number of CAS/CE learning outcomes after the first year and those who have not completed mandatory interviews in a timely manner. If a student has a red flag of concern at the end of a term, the student will be required to attend mandatory catch-up sessions on Thursdays from 15:00 until 16:30 until the student is back "on track."

CAS/CE EXPERIENCES

Key to a student's CAS/CE programme is personal engagement, choice and enjoyment of CAS/CE experiences. Throughout the Diploma/Careers Programme students undertake a variety of CAS/CE experiences on a weekly basis during the two-year IBDP/IBCP. Students will reflect on these CAS/CE experiences weekly on their ManageBac CAS/CE portfolios. Using evidence from their CAS/CE portfolio, students will demonstrate that they have met the seven (or four for IBCP) CAS learning outcomes. At the end of the two-year programme, students will have approximately 70 meaningful, written CAS/CE reflections (supplemented with photos, visual/audio files) in their ManageBac portfolios.

IBDP students must also undertake two CAS Projects. The first one must be an advocacy project and be completed during term one of the first year. The second CAS Project must be initiated by students; it must be collaborative, it must address one of the United Nations sustainable development goals, it must take place over the course of four weeks, and it must be reflected upon on ManageBac using the 5 stages of service learning. This second CAS Project should be finished before the beginning of IB2.

IMPORTANT: CAS/CE experiences MUST be entered regularly/weekly on ManageBac. Waiting until the end of a term or until the final weeks before IB exams is not in the spirit of the programme and could possibly result in delaying the receipt of your IB Diploma. CAS/CE students with red flags of concern for more than two consecutive weeks may be required to complete a second CAS Project during the four weeks after the IB2 exams in spring.

CAS/CE EXPERIENCE SUPERVISORS

Before a CAS/CE experience can be approved on ManageBac, candidates must select a supervisor who is an educator at RISS. Once the supervisor agrees to oversee a CAS/CE experience, the CAS/CE experience may be entered on ManageBac (by the candidate) to await approval from the candidate's CAS/CE advisor. The description of each experience MUST include exactly what it is you plan to do and why this activity is important to you. Upon completion of the CAS/CE experience, the candidate will request a supervisor's review on ManageBac. The supervisor will then complete an evaluation for the candidate and issue a ManageBac certificate of completion.

CAS/CE REFLECTION WORK

Student ongoing and consistent engagement in the CAS/CE Programme will be documented through regular reflection work posted on ManageBac. The expectation at RISS is for students to enter reflection work weekly; these reflections are traditionally completed as narratives. However, students are encouraged to supplement written reflections with photographs, videos or audio files. The following questions are designed to guide students through their reflection work:

- Why did you decide to become involved in this CAS/CE experience?
- How did being involved in this CAS/CE experience make you feel?
- Why do you consider this to be a valuable CAS/CE experience? To what degree was it important to you?
- Were there any challenges you had to overcome in order to be successful in this CAS/CE experience?
- Who benefitted from your participation in this experience... and how?
- Do you think other people should become involved in an experience like this one? Why or why not?
- Would you want to become involved in a CAS/CE experience like this one again in the future? Explain.

The CAS experiences chosen by students need to collectively meet each of the seven prescribed CAS Learning Outcomes at least once. Several of these will be met repeatedly, and an updated bar graph on ManageBac indicates to students when and how frequently they meet each Learning Outcome.

CAS LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Identify own strengths and develop areas for growth
2. Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken, developing new skills in the process
3. Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience
4. Show commitment and perseverance in CAS experiences
5. Demonstrate the skills and recognise the benefits of working collaboratively
6. Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance
7. Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions

The Community Engagement experiences chosen by students need to collectively meet each of the four prescribed CE Learning Outcomes at least once. Several of these will be met repeatedly, and an updated bar graph on ManageBac indicates to students when and how frequently they meet each Learning Outcome.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Foster reciprocal and dialogic engagement
2. Explore systems, and develop awareness of their roles within these
3. Develop, articulate and enact ethical thinking and action
4. Engage in reflective and reflexive practice

SAMPLE REFLECTION:

Description: Since the March lockdown, the important routines of some of my elderly, single neighbours were dramatically altered, so they had limited contact with others, and their shopping habits were restricted. With the extra time on my hands, I decided to make meals for them on a regular basis. Even though the lockdown restrictions have been relaxed, I decided to continue with this practice and put together several portions of a mushroom lasagne yesterday. An experience like this fulfills CAS Learning Outcome 2, as I needed to experiment with new, seasonal ingredients bought at local markets. LO4 was also fulfilled, because I have made the conscious decision to engage in this service activity on an on-going basis. LO6 was also fulfilled, because the loneliness and isolation of many elderly people is indeed an issue of global significance.

Reflection: I chose to undertake this CAS experience, because a community of neighbours is important; we all need to be aware of the importance of looking out for one another. When some of my elderly neighbors voiced their frustrations with not being able to engage in their normal routines (doing volunteer work, going to clubs, libraries, etc.), I decided to do something to ensure that they had at least some contact with others and to ensure that they knew that they were not forgotten. While engaged in this project, I feel fortunate that I am not alone, and I am forced to reflect on the unfortunate situations in which many others find themselves in. To be honest, there is a bit of selfishness (the good kind) involved, because it makes me feel good to do good things for others. Being selfless now and then is truly good for the soul. The experience of creating something is always a positive one, and working in the kitchen is, in its own way, quite therapeutic to me; it is easy to self-indulgently binge-watch a Netflix series on weekends, so it is important to create balance in life.
Performing thoughtful acts of kindness for my less fortunate neighbors is important to me and to them; being a part of a community is valuable in and of itself, but in this case, the added value is helping to alleviate feelings of loneliness and solitude in others. They do not complain about being lonely, but I perceive that they often are, and the loneliness and isolation of many elderly people has risen to epidemic proportions, making this an issue of global significance. It is important to perform selfless acts regularly; if we do not, then we run the risk of forgetting how truly significant they are. For obvious (and the aforementioned) reasons, I feel that others should engage in service projects like this one; the very concept of “community” requires us to play an active role in doing what we can to meet the needs of others.

CAS reflection work is more qualitative than quantitative; however, by the end of the two-year programme students should have a minimum of 70 meaningful reflections.

THE CAS PROJECTS

At RISS, CAS students will complete two CAS Projects. Ideally, both will be collaborative in order to enhance student enjoyment and personal fulfillment. The first CAS Project will be a service project of advocacy; students select a cause or organisation that is important to them and create an awareness campaign (i.e. school bulletin board) for the organisation they select. This first CAS Project should be completed before the end of term one and must be documented on ManageBac using the five stages of service learning (adapted from Cathryn Berger Kaye's Five Stages of Service Learning, 2010). The five stages offer a helpful and supportive framework and continuum of process for CAS students as they consider what they would like to do for the CAS Projects, and they will be used as reflection tools for the Projects.

The second CAS Project will address at least two of the CAS strands (Creativity, Activity and Service), but this is up to the individuals involved. It must also address at least one of the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals . **The CAS Project may meet all seven of the CAS Learning Outcomes.** Again, students will document their Projects on ManageBac using the five stages of service learning; **for CAS Projects, students will enter a reflection on ManageBac for each of the five stages of service learning** (in addition to the reflections they wish to post throughout the duration of the project).

These CAS/CE stages represent a process and sequence that can assist students in many aspects of their lives. They follow a process whereby they investigate an interest that often raises questions and curiosity, prepare by learning more, take some form of action, reflect on what they have done along the way, and demonstrate their understanding and the process. By applying these stages to CAS/CE, students have a reliable yet flexible structure they can then apply to future situations with confidence.

The Five Stages of Service Learning:

- **Investigation**: Students identify their interests, skills and talents to be used in considering opportunities for a CAS Project, as well as areas for personal growth and development. Students investigate what they want to do and determine the purposes. In the case of service, students identify a need they want to address.
- **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 Project.
- **Action**: Students implement their idea or plan. This often requires decision-making and problem- solving. Students may work individually, with partners, or in groups.
- **Reflection**: Students describe what happened, express feelings, generate ideas, and raise questions. Reflections occur throughout the two-year CAS Programme 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.
- **Demonstration**: Students make explicit what and how they learned and what they have accomplished, for example, by sharing their CAS Projects through their CAS portfolios or with others in an informal or formal manner. Through demonstration and communication, students solidify their understanding and evoke response from others.

The CAS/CE stages provide a framework that enables students to:

- Increase self-awareness
- Learn about learning
- Explore new and unfamiliar challenges
- Employ different learning styles
- Develop their ability to communicate and collaborate with others
- Experience and recognize personal development
- Develop attributes of the IB Learner Profile.

There are four different possibilities for service and service learning with regard to CAS/CE experiences and CAS Projects:

- Direct service
- Dndirect service
- Advocacy
- Research

Here are examples of successful CAS Projects completed by RISS students in the past:

- Plan and organise fundraising opportunities (i.e. bake sale, sports competition, etc.) to raise funds and awareness for Operation Smile, a nonprofit medical service that helps children living with cleft lips/palates.
- Organise and execute a film afternoon for the school community in order to raise funds for a local charity.
- Create an awareness campaign for a charity/organisation that provides valuable services; this can involve constructing bulletin boards on campus and visiting tutor groups to provide information via slideshows or lectures.
- Research several Amnesty International cases and sign petitions. This may be followed up with personalised letters sent to government officials or directly to Amnesty
- International as well as by visits to tutor groups to share information/findings regarding the cases researched.

Students are encouraged to complete the CAS Project during the first year of the IB studies; the second year is a very busy one!

THE CAS SHOWCASE

Toward the end of the second year of IB studies, each student will create a short (5-10 minutes) presentation that highlights significant aspects of the two-year CAS journey. These Showcases may be presented in a full class assembly or perhaps during tutor lessons. The CAS Showcase fulfills the "Demonstration" stage of the 5 Stages of Service Learning, which must be applied to all CAS Projects. "Demonstration" requires students to "make explicit what and how they learned and what they have accomplished…
through demonstration and communication, students solidify their understanding and evoke responses from others."

THE CAS/CE INTERVIEWS

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

INITIAL CAS/CE INTERVIEW: This takes place within the first month of beginning the IB Diploma Program. Students use the following questions to help articulate and/or write a narrative about their expectations, feelings and plans for your two-year engagement in the IB CAS/CE Programme.

- What kinds of CAS/CE experiences do you plan to initiate and why? In which ones do you think you would like to participate?
- To what extent do you find service to community and others an important component of life?
- What are some of your personal goals, and how do you think you will go about achieving them through the IB CAS/CE Programme?
- What are some things you could do to challenge yourself more over the course of the next two years?
- How might you go about identifying your own strengths and developing areas in which you need to improve/grow?
- Why do you think showing commitment to and perseverance in a CAS/CE experience is important? Why is collaboration so important in certain CAS/CE experiences?
- Why is it important to become engaged with issues of global importance, and how might you go about doing this?
- Why do you feel that it is important to consider the ethics of our choices and actions?
- What kind of CAS Project would you like to initiate and develop (for a minimum of four weeks)? It is important to do something that you enjoy... and something that is important to you.
- What are some of your personal goals, and how can these be achieved through CAS/CE?
- How could something you currently do be made into a CAS/CE experience?
- Why is it important to become engaged with issues of global importance, and how might you go about doing this?

SECOND CAS/CE INTERVIEW: This takes place at the end of the first year of IB studies.

- How are your CAS/CE experiences coming along? Do you have a good balance among the three strands?
- Will your CAS Project be completed by the end of this academic year? How did it go? Remember to use the five (5) stages of service learning (Investigation, Preparation, Action, Reflection and Demonstration) for your CAS Project.
- Re-visit the seven (7) CAS learning outcomes and four (4) CE learning outcomes, and discuss some of your achievements that have met them so far this year. Are there any CAS/CE Learning Outcomes that your experiences have not yet met? If so, how do you plan to remedy this?
- Describe your proudest achievements thus far and discuss any difficulties or challenges you have had to overcome so far this year. How did you deal with these?
- How do you feel about reflection writing? What kinds of evidence do you usually include in your portfolio/reflections? To what degree are your reflections genuine? If they are not very genuine or effective, what are some strategies you can use to improve them?
- Describe the CAS/CE experiences that you have planned for the coming months (including summer).

FINAL CAS/CE INTERVIEW: This takes place at the end of year two in late March.

- Did you manage to achieve your personal goals?
- How did you integrate the three CAS strands/elements in your experience?
- What qualities did you develop or discover? Which areas for growth (improvement) did you discover?
- What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?
- How did you improve/develop your planning skills?
- What did you learn about yourself and others? What have you learned about working together in collaboration with others?
- What abilities and skills did you develop most significantly in CAS/CE?
- What has the role of reflection been in your whole CAS/CE experience?
- How can you apply the things you have learned in your daily life?
- Did CAS/CE help you to consider issues of global importance? How?
- What ethical dilemmas, if any, did you face? How did you deal with them?
- Looking ahead, what are some new goals you have set for yourself?

IN GENERAL: CAS/CE students are expected to:

- approach CAS/CE with a proactive attitude
- develop a clear understanding of CAS/CE expectations and the purpose of CAS/CE
- explore personal values, attitudes and attributes with reference to the IB learner profile and the IB mission statement
- determine personal goals
- discuss plans for CAS/CE experiences with the CAS/CE coordinator and/or CAS/CE adviser
- understand and apply the CAS stages where appropriate
- take part in a variety of experiences, some of which are self-initiated, and at least one CAS project
- become more aware of personal interests, skills and talents and observe how these evolve throughout the CAS/CE programme
- maintain a CAS/CE portfolio on ManageBac to record CAS experiences; this will automatically calculate evidence of achievement of the seven CAS learning outcomes or four CE learning outcomes.
- understand the reflection process and identify suitable opportunities to reflect on CAS/CE experiences
- demonstrate accomplishments within the CAS/CE programme
- communicate with the CAS/CE coordinator/adviser and/or CAS/CE supervisor/advisor in formal and informal meetings
- ensure a suitable balance between creativity, activity and service in the CAS/CE programme
- behave appropriately and ethically in choices and behaviours.
- ENJOY CAS/CE! It is important to participate in experiences that assist personal growth and offer new and limitless possibilities.

CAS/CE COORDINATOR, ADVISORS AND SUPERVISORS

The **CAS/CE coordinator** is the key to the success of a CAS/CE programme. The CAS/CE coordinator is knowledgeable about the role of CAS/CE in the Diploma Programme. The CAS/CE coordinator is the nominated member of staff who facilitates understanding of CAS and oversees the effective implementation of CAS/CE experiences, working directly with students, staff, CAS/CE advisers and CAS/CE supervisors. The CAS/CE coordinator is responsible for reporting the progress of CAS/CE students to the IBDP/IBCP coordinator. The CAS/CE coordinator at RISS meets regularly with the IBDP/IBCP coordinator and together, they make the final decision as to whether the student has met the RISS requirements for CAS/CE, in relation to the passing criteria of the IB Diploma programme.

Working with individual students on their CAS/CE programmes takes time and requires personal knowledge of the student. In schools with a large number of students, a team of CAS/CE advisers under the guidance of the **CAS/CE coordinator** is highly recommended. It is essential for the CAS/CE adviser to be aware of the importance of CAS/CE in the Diploma Programme and to be familiar with all elements of CAS/CE. In this case, CAS/CE advisers, instead of the CAS/CE coordinator, provide the vital ongoing contact for a student. It is vital for CAS/CE advisers to have sufficient contact time with students. At RISS, we have 4 CAS/CE advisers, 3 of whom are also DP tutors, making almost daily interaction very useful. The advisors each have around 25 - 30 students who they regularly monitor in terms of CAS/CE progress. CAS/CE advisers also conduct the three required interviews.

The **CAS/CE supervisor** assists, offers guidance and oversees the students' CAS/CE experiences when needed. A supervisor may not be necessary if a student is able to undertake a CAS/CE experience without assistance or supervision. Students should take responsibility for their own CAS/CE experiences where possible and be provided with opportunities to report on their own attendance and participation. Depending on the nature of the experience, the school should decide whether a supervisor is required to guide and assist the student, to ensure safety and to provide feedback on student involvement to the school. CAS/CE supervisors can be teachers, non-teaching members of the school or wider community, or volunteers with the skills and/or knowledge of the CAS/CE experience undertaken by the student.

CAS/CE Risk Assessment Policy at RISS

The IB and the IB Learner Profile attributes encourage students to be risk-takers; however, this does not mean that students or teachers should be encouraged to take unnecessary risks or place themselves in danger. The key to safely taking risks is having the ability to fully understand the nature of the risk being taken and how to mitigate potentially dangerous outcomes where necessary. As such, schools need to strike the right balance between protecting students from risk and allowing students to participate in CAS/CE experiences.

When planning a CAS/CE experience in which participants may be exposed to hazards, it is important that risks are identified and assessed. **The IB requires that schools always comply with the pertinent local health and safety laws and regulations both in and out of the classroom.** In addition, the IB provides the following guidelines on assessing the potential risk of a CAS/CE experience.

- Schools and teachers should ensure adequate systems are in place to assess and mitigate the risk of any CAS/CE experience.
- The school should ensure the staff organizing and supervising CAS/CE experiences are fully supported throughout the risk assessment process.
- In order to prevent risk assessment from becoming a barrier to CAS/CE experiences, schools should develop risk assessment systems that are proportionate to the level of risk. Although CAS/CE experiences must be properly planned and assessed, experiences presenting a lower-risk level should be quicker and easier to assess and organize than higher-risk experiences

Where risks are identified, schools should ensure that all potential stakeholders (colleagues, students and parents) are informed of both the risk and any precautions or contingency plans that will be implemented in order to minimize the risk.

SOURCES:

International Baccalaureate. *Creativity, Activity, Service Guide*. Geneva: Int'l Baccalaureate Organization, 2015. Print.

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