

Creativity, activity, service

International Baccalaureate · IB Diploma · Creativity, Activity, Service

IB Diploma Programme Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS; 2016 guide). CAS is part of the core of the Diploma: every student does it, and it is not graded, but you must complete it to receive the Diploma. For at least 18 months you take part in **experiences** in three strands, with a reasonable balance between them. You complete at least one **CAS project** that lasts at least a month, keep a **portfolio** of evidence, and have three formal interviews with your school's CAS coordinator.

A student joins a team that runs a monthly repair café in the community centre: neighbours bring broken lamps, radios and bicycles, and volunteers fix them for free. At the first event the team expected twenty visitors and six came. They could have written "it was a good experience" and moved on. Instead they asked why, found that all their posters were inside the school, and moved them to the community centre and the local market. Thirty people came the next month. That question ("why, and what will we change?") is what turns an activity into CAS.

Must-know for CAS:

Area	Key content
strands	creativity, activity, service
learning outcomes	seven; each shown at least once in the portfolio
CAS project	collaborative, planned by students, at least one month
reflection	during, after and later; decisions and what you learned
portfolio and interviews	evidence of each outcome; three interviews with the coordinator

The three strands

Strand	What it means	Examples
creativity	exploring ideas that lead to an original product or performance	designing the lighting for the school play; writing songs; coding a game
activity	physical effort for a healthy lifestyle	a weekly swim club; learning tai chi; training for a 10 km run
service	unpaid work with a community that meets a real need	a reading scheme for younger students; teaching older people to use phones

Service must respond to a real **need** that you have investigated with the community, not one you imagine for them.

The seven learning outcomes

Your portfolio must show each of these **learning outcomes** at least once:

- 1. Identify your own strengths and areas for growth.
- 2. Show that you have taken on challenges and developed new skills.
- 3. Show how you start and plan a CAS experience.
- 4. Show **commitment** and **perseverance**.
- 5. Show the skills and benefits of working with others.
- 6. Show engagement with issues of **global significance**.
- 7. Recognise and think about the **ethics** of your choices and actions.



Check your portfolio against all seven outcomes: here, global significance still needs evidence.

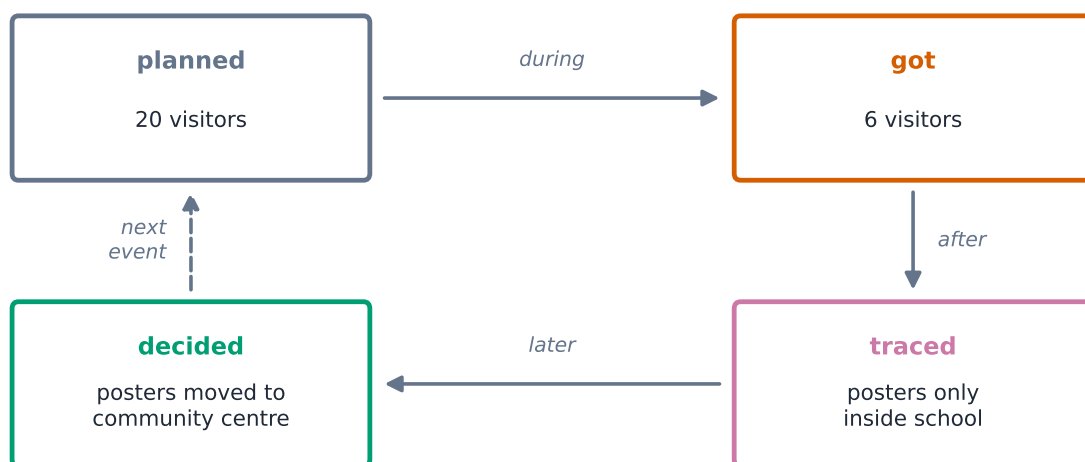
The CAS project and the portfolio

The CAS project is **collaborative** : you work with others, you plan it yourselves, and it lasts at least one month. The repair café is a project in two strands at once (service and creativity).

Your portfolio holds the evidence: plans, photos, records and reflections. Evidence is better than claims: show the attendance list and the moved posters, not just “I learned to work in a team”.

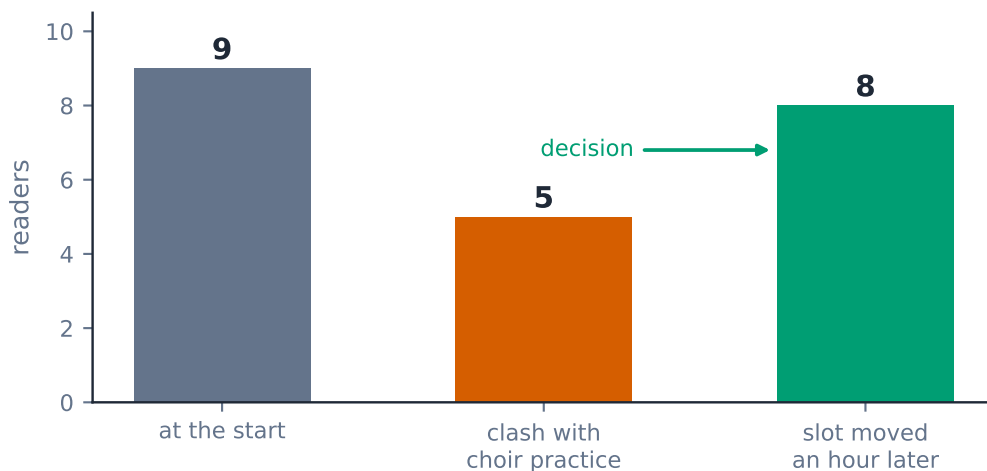
Reflection

Reflection is thinking about what you did and what you learned. Do it during an experience, straight after it, and later, when you can see how it changed you.



A reflection that changes the next decision.

A second example. A student runs a weekly reading scheme for younger students. Attendance falls from nine readers to five. The student finds that the sessions clash with choir practice, moves them an hour later, and attendance returns to eight. The portfolio shows the problem, the decision and the result, which is evidence of commitment and of thinking about the readers’ needs.



The attendance counts are the evidence.

Weak reflections: a diary of what happened with no learning; one line of “I grew a lot” under a photo; writing all the reflections at the end of the course.

Checklist

- At least 18 months; three strands in balance; not graded but required.
- The seven learning outcomes, each shown at least once.
- One collaborative project, planned by students, at least a month.
- Reflection during, after and later; decisions and what changed.
- A portfolio of evidence; three interviews with the coordinator.