



## CAS HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS

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## **VISION**

To provide a legacy in education which promotes qualities of open-mindedness, tolerance and respect for others, which will provide a best practice model for the future of students from all nations in Gabon.

## **MISSION**

To become Africa's most enterprising school, focusing on sustainability and innovation to play a significant role in Gabon's and in Africa's education.

## **VALUES**

### **EXCELLENCE**

We strive for excellence in every aspect of life: in human relations, in one's abilities and expectations.

### **RESPECT**

We respect ourselves, our environment, and each other.

### **VIRTUES**

We value truth and honesty, tolerance, integrity and responsibility.

## **VISION**

Transmettre un héritage dans le domaine de l'éducation qui valorise les qualités d'ouverture d'esprit, de tolérance et du respect de l'autre, offrant ainsi un modèle de pratiques exemplaires pour l'avenir de tous les élèves vivant au Gabon, quel que soit leur pays d'origine.

## **MISSION**

Devenir l'école la plus dynamique d'Afrique, mettant l'accent sur la pérennité et l'innovation, afin de jouer un rôle important dans l'éducation au Gabon et dans toute l'Afrique.

## **VALEURS**

### **EXCELLENCE**

Dans tous les aspects de la vie : dans les relations humaines, dans les aptitudes personnelles et les attentes.

### **RESPECT**

Le respect envers nous-mêmes, envers les autres et notre environnement.

### **VERTUS**

nous valorisons la vérité et l'honnêteté, la tolérance, l'intégrité et la responsabilité.

## I. IB LEARNER PROFILES

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. IB Learners strive to be:

**Inquirers:** They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

**Knowledgeable:** They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

**Thinkers:** They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

**Communicators:** They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

**Principled:** They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice, and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

**Open-minded:** They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view and are willing to grow from the experience.

**Risk-takers:** They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

**Balanced:** They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

**Reflective:** They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

**Caring:** They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

## II. A BRIEF GUIDE TO CAS

**Creativity, Activity, Service** (CAS) is intended to be a collection of enjoyable and challenging experiences determined by you to extend your abilities.

The CAS program 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 a local and global communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment.

### **CAS Strands**

CAS stands for Creativity, Activity and Service. Experiences will be comprised of these strands and can follow one or even a mixture of all three.

**Creativity:** Arts, and other experiences that involve creative thinking. (Must have an end product.)

**Activity:** Physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle, complementing academic work elsewhere in the Diploma Program.

**Service:** An unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for the student. The rights, dignity and autonomy of all those involved are respected.

## **Learning Outcomes (LO)**

There are also **7** Learning Outcomes that must be achieved by students. Not every experience has to hit a Learning Outcome every time, but all 7 do need to be achieved at least once, over the 18 month period of CAS.

Each LO has been broken down to make it easier for you to explain to your CAS student. The list below will help you, as a supervisor, whether an experience is CAS worthy or not and will help the student hit the LOs as they write their reflection statements.

### **A. Identify your own strengths and develop areas for personal growth.**

What it REALLY means: when you leave your comfort zone, you learn things about yourself. For example, when you organised the fundraiser for Gabon, were you patient with other people? If not, why not? Maybe you could try to improve this area of personal growth. When you saw those homeless people in Libreville, were you shocked? If yes, why? Could this help you improve your perception of the world and help you become a more open-minded individual?

### **B. Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken, developing new skills in the process**

What it REALLY means: what have you done to push yourself? What was unfamiliar about it? What skills do you think you developed? For example, have you run a marathon? Set yourself a goal before embarking on an experience and develop new skills to achieve your goal.

### **C. Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience.**

What it REALLY means: this one's easy! When you are organising your CAS events or activities, just make sure you keep notes on how you organized them who you contacted and what the organisational process was like.



#### **D. Show commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences.**

What it REALLY means: all IB diploma students are thinking the same thing – why do we have to do this when we have so much to do already? You are not alone. We know this sounds unbelievable now, but you will benefit from it so much in the future. Whatever happens, keep going! Take one step at a time and you will reach your end goal.

#### **E. Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively.**

What it REALLY means: participate in team activities. Simple. One of the best and most fun parts of CAS is the team work. This can range from learning a new collaborative activity such as Salsa to being involved in a volunteer group. You are stronger when you work in a team. Think of Cristiano Ronaldo or Lionel Messi – they are soccer stars but without their teammates they wouldn't have accomplished what they have today.

#### **F. Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance.**

What it REALLY means: there are so many global issues right now it's hard to know which one to support most. Global warming, the refugee crisis, homelessness, cancer research, sustainability, plastic, wildlife? Pick one per year and think about what you can do to help that cause from where you are. Plan it. Initiate it. Do it. You can also have a look at the UN Sustainable Development goals and see which issue you are interested in and can tackle.

#### **G. Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions.**

What it REALLY means: your parents have been telling you this for as long as you can remember and your teachers joined a little later: the things you do and the choices you make have consequences. Think about the CAS activities you are doing and how they affect others. Is what you are doing right or wrong? How?

### **III. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Thoroughly familiarise yourself with the ERV CAS handbook and timelines.
- Meet with your CAS coordinator according to the timeline, at least three times over the duration of your CAS program. Be sure to come prepared.
- Base your choices on your interests, skills, talents and areas for growth to stay motivated. Challenge yourself!
- Balance your experiences between creativity, activity and service.
- Initiate or engage in at least one CAS project (page 9) in collaboration with others that extends over at least one month.
- Use the CAS stages (page 10) as much as possible when considering, planning and undertaking your CAS experiences. Be sure to apply these to service and to the CAS project.
- Ask questions along the way when you need assistance or clarification.
- Keep your portfolio in Managebac up to date.
- Participate in meaningful reflection (page 12) in Managebac as a way to capture your experiences and summarize your evidence linked to the learning outcomes.
- Enjoy CAS! That is most important — to participate in experiences which assist your personal growth and offer you a world of possibilities.

### **IV. THE CAS STAGES**

The CAS Stages are used with the CAS project, CAS Service, and may be used with other CAS experiences.

The five CAS stages are as follows:

- **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 experience. In the case of service, students identify a need they want to address.
- **Preparation:** Students clarify roles and responsibilities, develop a plan of action to be taken, identify specific resources and timelines, and acquire any skills as needed to engage in the CAS experience.
- **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. 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.
- **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.

## V. THE CAS PROJECT

Students must be involved in at least one CAS project during IB CAS.

### A. CAS project

- A collaborative “team” effort with other students or members of the community
- A series of CAS experiences

- Lasting minimum one month from planning to completion
- Involve one or more of the three strands of CAS
- Use the CAS stages (page 9) as a framework
- Challenges students to show initiative
- Demonstrate perseverance/commitment
- Develop skills of cooperation, problem solving, and decision making

Not to be undertaken without supervisor approval

## **B. Examples of CAS projects**

- Creativity: A student group plans, designs and creates a mural.
- Activity: Students organize and participate in a sports team including training sessions and matches against other teams.
- Service: Students set up and conduct tutoring for people in need.
- Creativity and activity: Students choreograph a routine for their marching band.
- Service and activity: Students plan and participate in the planting and maintenance of a garden with members of the local community.
- Service and creativity: Students identify that children at a local school need backpacks and subsequently design and make the backpacks out of recycled materials.
- Creativity, activity, and service: Students rehearse and perform a dance production for a community retirement home.

## VI. CHOOSING A CAS EXPERIENCE/PROJECT

Choose your CAS projects and activities according to your interests but remember that all projects/activities must meet the CAS guidelines detailed below.

### All projects and activities must...

- Have measurable goals: This means that you can clearly state your goals before beginning and provide valid evidence of them at the end.
- Entail planning and organization: This means that you complete and submit a proposal to your advisor, prior to beginning, which considers the time, resources and skills needed for success.
- Be documented and verifiable: This means that you use ManageBac to record, and have an adult supervisor, who is not a parent, to provide a current email address, phone number and timely feedback/reviews.
- Involve you in learning new skills and meeting new challenges: This means that you are doing something you have never done before, or expanding your current abilities, knowledge or practices to new areas or levels.
- Demonstrate effort and commitment: This means that you show commitment to achieving the goals you have set by investing the necessary time, energy and attention.
- Show reflection and self-review: This means that you evaluate your own participation using the 8 Learning Outcomes to demonstrate your achievements and reflect upon your personal development.

## VII. WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CAS EXPERIENCE AND A PROJECT?

### A. Projects...

- Require collaboration: You plan and **work cooperatively with at least two other students** for the duration of the endeavor.
- Are of significant duration: You and your partners commit to the endeavor for a **minimum of four weeks**.

- Provide opportunities to engage with issues of global importance: You and your partners engage in exploring a topic or area of concern within local, national and/or international communities.

### VIII. GUIDELINES FOR CAS EXPERIENCES/PROJECTS

- CAS experiences must be distinct from, and may not be included or used in the student's diploma course requirements
- CAS should be done on a regular basis, preferably weekly
- There should be relatively equal balance between Creativity, Activity, and Service
- CAS needs to be eighteen continuous months. Students will need to do weekly Creativity, Activity, and Service for all terms in Year 12 and until Easter in year 13 (October 2018 – March 2020)
- CAS cannot be made up; it must be a regular continuous commitment. Though hour counting is **discouraged**, CAS should be minimum ten hours approximately for each strand a term (30 hours total each term)

### IX. IS IT CAS-ABLE?

It is important to consider the spirit of CAS! The purpose is lost if this becomes an hour counting exercise, rather than a rewarding experience.

Here are some examples of what would NOT count as CAS:

- Any class, activity or project that is already part of your Diploma Program
- An activity for which you are personally rewarded (financially or some other benefit like receiving a grade or credit) unless the benefit is passed on to a worthy cause
- Doing simple, tedious and/or repetitive work (like shelving books or cans, or clerical tasks)

- Working in elderly care facilities when you:
  - Have no idea how the facility works
  - Are just making sandwiches
  - Have no contact at all with the elderly
  - Actually do no service for the elderly
  
- A passive pursuit such as a visit to a museum, art exhibit, vacation tours, concert/sports event, unless it clearly inspires work in a related activity in which a student is already engaged and provides some benefit beyond self
  
- All forms of duty within a family
  
- Work experience that only benefits the student
  
- Fund-raising with no clearly defined end in sight
  
- An activity where there is no leader or responsible adult on site to evaluate and confirm student performance. This adult cannot be a member of your family.
  
- Activities that cause division amongst different groups in the community (e.g. work on a political campaign or attending a demonstration)

## X. NEW VERSUS EXTENDED ACTIVITIES (*EXPERIENCES*)

Valid CAS experiences fall into two categories: **New activities** and **Extended activities**.

### A. New activity

A NEW activity is defined as **a new experience for you that allows for your *growth in one or more of the Learning Outcomes***.

Involvement in new activities could look like the following:

- Taking up a new sport or other physical skill that you have little or no prior experience in.

- Participating in a new form of creative expression in which you have no prior experience, such as learning to play a new musical instrument, acting in a play, or learning a new art technique.
- Participating in a new community service activity that you have never done before, such as serving food at a food kitchen, tutoring in an after-school program, or volunteering at an animal shelter.

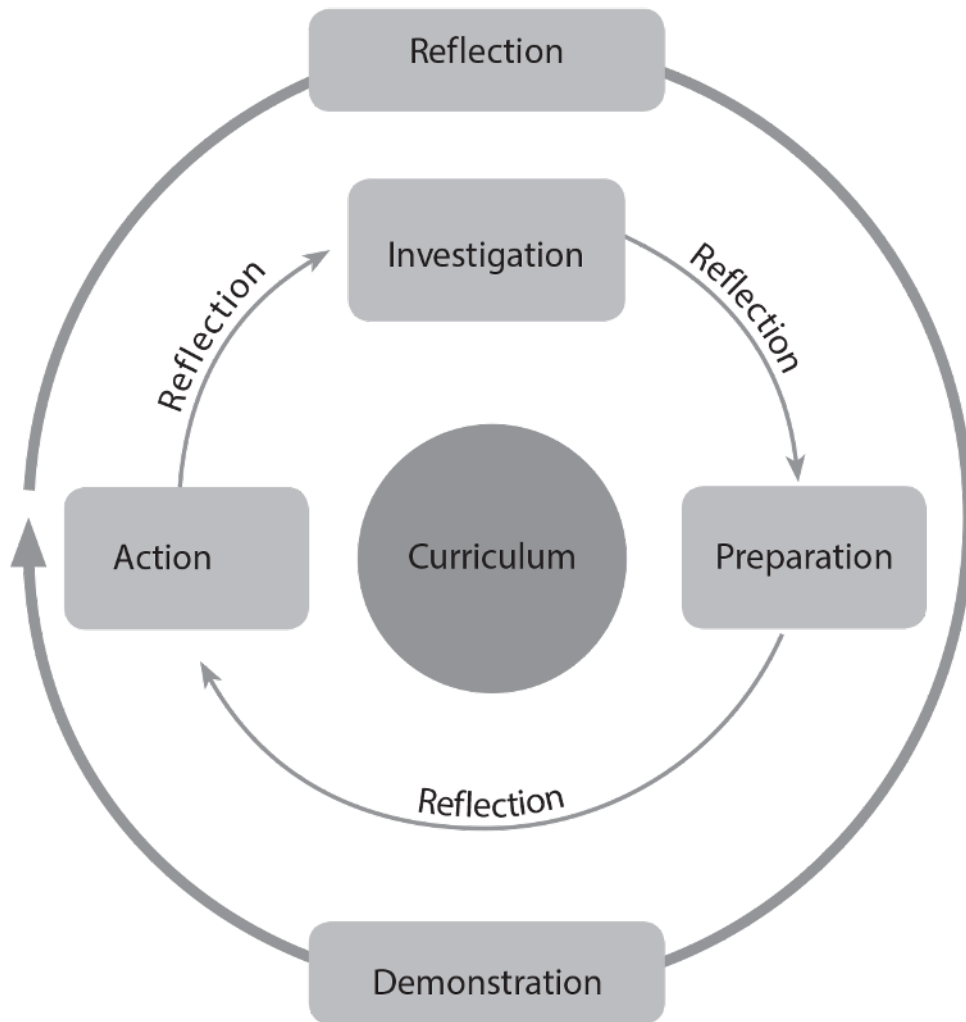
## **B. Extended activity**

An EXTENDED activity is defined as **an activity that you have prior or current experience but that allows for expansion of your knowledge, experience or participation in one or more of the Learning Outcomes.**

Extending, developing or sharing your prior experience or current involvement in creative, physical or service activities could look like the following:

- **Extended Creativity:** Plan and execute a community mural; tutor younger/less proficient students in a musical instrument; or design and set up a web page for a charity organization.
- **Extended Action:** Create and implement a skills improvement plan for your school volleyball team; plan and lead a basketball clinic for elementary students; or choreograph and perform an original dance.
- **Extended Service:** Plan and implement a community awareness campaign, drive or fundraiser for your cause/charity; recruit, coordinate and support new volunteers for your cause/charity; or identify and make improvements to an existing community service program.





### C. 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.”

Students reflect on CAS experiences to deepen and develop the experiential learning process.

## **Elements of reflection**

Reflection is a dynamic means for self-knowing, learning and decision-making. Four elements assist in the CAS reflective process. The first two elements form the foundation of reflection.

- **Describing what happened:** Students retell their memorable moments, identifying what was important or influential, what went well or was difficult, obstacles and successes.
- **Expressing feelings:** Students articulate emotional responses to their experiences. The following two elements add greater depth and expand perspectives.
- **Generating ideas:** Rethinking or re-examining choices and actions increases awareness about self and situations.
- **Asking questions:** Questions about people, processes or issues prompt further thinking and ongoing inquiry.

## **XI. YOUR CAS PORTFOLIO**

All CAS students are expected to maintain a CAS portfolio as evidence of engagement with CAS and achievement of the seven (*eight*) CAS learning outcomes. The CAS portfolio is used to plan your CAS program, reflect on your CAS experiences, and gather evidence of involvement with CAS. It is also used to showcase your CAS achievements and should be a source of pride.

Here at ERV, your CAS portfolio is electronic through Managebac – a system that was actually developed by former IB students! For more information about Managebac, please go to: <http://help.managebac.com/support>

The CAS coordinator (Mr R Welford) will communicate with students through Managebac and it is the student's responsibility to regularly check it for updates. In addition, students must consistently keep their reflections and evidence up to date in their Managebac portfolios.

## A. Managebac - A step by step approach

Students are to ensure the following rules are followed for each experience on managebac:

- Descriptions and Goals box: Here you must write a description of what you are **about** to do. You must write here a **description** of the experience, **what** you will be doing and **why** you want to do it.

Finally set yourself a **goal/target** of what you want to achieve.

(This must be written in the pre-tense - as if planning to do it in the future.)

- Before you go ahead with your experience/project you must await the approval of your supervisor. (You will find that the circle next to your experience title will change to a thumbs up)

(As a general rule, religious activities promoting a religion will not be allowed. The same rule applies for political activities.) If any doubts please contact the CAS Coordinator.

- Once approved, please ensure you are regularly completing the experience and gathering evidence. This can be in the form of photos/witness statements/videos etc

- All evidence must be uploaded on managebac by you.

- As you are working on your experience/project you should be reflecting on a regular basis. If the experience only lasts a few days then one reflection should suffice. If the experience/project is runs for a prolonged period of time, then multiple reflections would be required. These need to be uploaded on managebac by you.

- Once you have completed an experience/project and you are sure you are finished, you must inform your supervisor so that they can write a supervisor report commenting on your **effort, commitment and progress**. If you were working with another teacher or department, then it is your responsibility to obtain the supervisor report from that other teacher or department.

- Finally, once all the above steps are completed, your supervisor will click the completed button on managebac. The thumbs up symbol will now change from this to a green tick. At this point, no amendments can be made.

## **B. Interviews**

Over the 18 months of CAS, you will be formally interviewed about your CAS. This is because CAS requires this and this will be uploaded to managebac.

It is also an opportunity for your supervisor to find out about you and how you are getting on.

Are there issues? Do you need extra support with something?

### **Interviews in CAS**

- Initial Interview - Beginning of course
- 1st Interview - halfway through Year 12
- 2nd Interview - Beginning of year 13
- Final Interview - End of CAS course

An initial interview at the start of the course will be completed by the CAS Coordinator. Your supervisor will then conduct and document interviews with you on at least 2 occasions during the 18 month CAS course.

A final Interview will then be completed by the CAS Coordinator for you.

## **XII. STUDENT DEADLINES**

### **A. Year 12 students**

- October Initial CAS Interview (with coordinator) + CAS discovery, group projects, understanding LOs
- November Planning and developing experiences, projects
- February 1st CAS Interview with Supervisor

Experiences and projects will be ongoing throughout all of year 12

## **B. Year 13 students**

- October                                   2nd CAS Interview with supervisor
- December                                CAS Project completed
- February                                 All CAS experiences completed
- February/March                        CAS Portfolio submission (managebac)
- March                                     Final CAS Interview (with coordinator)
- May – June                               CAS Presentation/Final reflective writing to school