

Creativity, Activity, Service Student Handbook
Utica Academy for International Studies
Student Name: _____

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The Nature of Creativity, Activity and Service

“An education isn’t how much you have committed to memory, or even how much you know. It’s being able to differentiate between what you know and what you don’t.”

–Anatole France

I. Aims and Overview

CAS provides an opportunity for students to further develop the IB learner profile traits. The aims of CAS have been written in a form that highlights their connections with the IB learner profile. The CAS programme aims to develop students who:

- Find significance in a range of CAS experiences
- Reflect upon their experiences
- Identify goals, develop strategies and determine further actions for personal growth
- Embrace new challenges and adapt to new roles
- Participate in one or more sustained CAS projects
- Understand they are members of local and global communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment

A. The Spirit of Creativity, Activity, and Service

Above all else, CAS should involve:

- real, purposeful experiences and projects, with significant outcomes
- personal challenge
- thoughtful consideration, such as planning, reviewing progress, reporting
- reflection on outcomes and personal learning
- a healthy balance among creativity, activity, and service hours in and outside UAIS that is focused on professional—not personal—relationships

B. Requirements for Completion of CAS

1. Range and Diversity

CAS emphasizes personal and interpersonal development through experiential learning. A good CAS programme should be both challenging and enjoyable, but it must also be diverse. When proposing ideas to CAS advisors, students should consider the following questions:

- Is at least one experience/project something that I am initiating myself?
- How am I making experiences my own rather than repeat what others have done?
- Am I showing that these experiences are goal-oriented specifically to me?
- Where am I active in the community outside UAIS and my house of worship?

2. Minimum Guidelines for Completion

“Successful completion of CAS is a requirement for the award of the IB diploma.”

--Creativity, activity, service guide 2020

CAS does not contribute direct points to the 24 required points to earn the IB diploma; it is a pass/fail grade. A failing grade automatically results in the forfeiture of the IB diploma. UAIS students will receive a passing grade for CAS in March of senior year if they achieve:

- A. a minimum of 150 total hours of completed hours¹
- B. a reasonable balance² of creativity, activity, and service
- C. a sustained CAS programme lasting eighteen months
- D. at least one CAS project, lasting at least one month in duration
- E. evidence of achieving each of the seven learning outcomes at least once
- F. maintaining an online CAS portfolio for reflections and documentation
- G. a minimum of five CAS interviews with their CAS advisor

3. The CAS Project

CAS students must be involved in at least one CAS project during their CAS programme.

Many students complete more than one CAS project as well. The CAS project should:

1. Be at least one month in duration
2. Involve collaboration (with other students or people in the community)
3. Qualify as creativity, activity, service or as a combination of strands
4. Be challenging and of personal interest to the student
5. Result in some tangible product, presentation, achievement or outcome

Additionally, UAIS requires students to plan the CAS project out week-by-week or month-by-month, listing the steps from planning to completion, to ensure student do not fall behind.

II. Exploring the CAS Strands

A. Definitions of Creativity, Activity & Service

¹ Hour counting is discouraged. Hour proposals are always approximate, and students can adjust the hours up and down before submitting the experience for completion. By their 4th interview, students should propose greater than 150 hours in the event they do not complete the full proposed amount.

² Students should attempt experiences and projects that emphasize all three strands of CAS to some extent, and advisors should push hesitant students to engage in all strands. Students should have at least 30 completed hours in any strand and may compensate for the remaining hours in others.

This packet provides a basic description of each CAS strand. Please see the CAS website for an extensive list of CAS ideas (www.uaiscas.com).

Creativity: Creativity is defined as “exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance” (CAS service guide 2020). Creativity in CAS arts, and other experiences that involve creative thinking or production in some measurable sense (event planning, formulation of a club, stage crew, scrap booking, drawing, painting, website design, learning an instrument, organizing a fundraiser, speech preparation).

Whatever the case, creativity must result in some sort of tangible product.

Because creativity is largely abstract, creative experiences must have a definite goal or outcome to allow for observation and measurement. They should be planned and evaluated like all CAS experiences. This can present something of a challenge where, for example, a student is fluent in a foreign language. Is continuing to speak in the foreign language “creative,” then? Probably not. However, the student can use that skill to design lesson plans to teach introductory material to elementary school students. This lesson planning would constitute creativity.

Activity: Activity is defined as “physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle, complementing academic work elsewhere in the Diploma Programme” (CAS service guide 2015). Examples include sports, an exercise program, karate, a hiking trip, planting a garden, weight loss). Think sweat!

Similar issues rise here as to what constitutes activity. An established athlete cannot simply count hours for simply participating on the same team for another year. However, by establishing a personal goal, an accomplished athlete can create personal challenge, further success, and make the sport more enjoyable. Similarly, by shifting the range of play from a personal sport to a team sport or by creating a league for underprivileged children and teaching them the game, the action occurs in a different context that may constitute personal challenge and even reach into realm of service.

Categories for Attaining Activity Hours Include:

1. UCS Sponsored Sports
2. Team Sports Outside UAIS
3. Personal Fitness Plan
4. Elective Gym Class
5. As Part of Another Creativity/Service Event

Service: Service is defined as “collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need” (Creativity, Activity, Service Guide 2015). Service must be unpaid, address an authentic need in the community, and cannot directly support a UAIS teacher or family member.

The Four Categories of Service Include:

Direct: _____

Indirect: _____
Advocacy: _____
Research: _____

B. How to Determine CAS-Appropriate Experiences

Students are responsible for asking themselves a series of questions to determine the appropriateness of a CAS experience. This is never a simple, close-ended answer. Rather, it requires a description and plan specific to the student rather than a general “yes” or “no.” Here is a general guide for students to ask themselves:

- Does it fit the definition of a CAS strand?
- Is it based on personal interest, skill, talent or opportunity for growth?
- Is it personally challenging?
- Does it provide opportunities to develop the attributes of the IB learner profile?
- Is it used in any way toward your Diploma course requirements?
- As you describe it, does it violate the IBO mission statement?

The examples below are *possible* appropriate CAS experiences.

C. What May Count for CAS Hours:

- Extracurricular activities (sports, arts, music, dance) outside DP classes and assignments
- In-school club service hours
- Personal hobbies and passions from which you design your projects
- Leadership conferences that involve active planning, networking, and participation
- Volunteer hours for which you are not paid
- Speeches or presentations you prepare and give
- Coaching, tutoring, or teaching
- Painting, composing, drawing, sketching, and related activities
- Meetings that you direct and run for clubs that you represent
- Religious activism of a secular (non-religious) nature
- Any planning for an event that you carry out

D. What CANNOT Count for CAS Hours:

- Any project or experience that primarily benefits a teacher
- Work completed on Extended Essay, TOK, IAs, or other IB diploma requirement
- Any class taken outside UAIS for college credit
- Experiences that offer no learning opportunities (letter-stuffing, for example)
- A paid job or hired position
- A volunteer position associated with a family (extended family) business
- Listening to a lecturer/speaker or sitting through any class
- Attending regular meetings for clubs simply as a member

- Projects of a religious or political context that violate the IB learner profile
- Key Club activities you plan to count as NHS activities or vice versa (no triple dipping!)
- Meetings with your CAS advisor or coordinator
- Writing reflections or maintaining your uais.managebac.com account

E. Politics and Religion in the CAS Environment

Political activism is acceptable for the CAS project provided that the student works carefully to meet the following criteria. Students must:

- Engage in experiences that unify rather than cause or worsen social divisions
- Work to create change with a tone of harmony, not disharmony
- Specifically plan out the learning opportunities for personal growth and acknowledge in a discussion with their advisor any personal limitations and biases
- Promote a project that can assure school administrators that experiences will maintain a safe, secure environment for the student
- Recognize a goal to provide service to others, not superimpose values on others

CAS work within a religious community is acceptable as an experience or project provided that the student meets the following criteria, which aligns with the IBO's Mission Statement. The student must:

- Refrain from proselytizing to others or in some way violate the rights and beliefs
- Refrain from counting hours associated with personal worship (i.e. church choir).
- Students are encouraged to frame CAS experiences with a secular (non-religious) goal in mind. An example would be providing engaging lesson plans in a Catechism class.

III. Fundraising Projects & Protocols

A. Fundraising

Fundraising as part of a CAS project, club, or other experience may fulfill the service element of a project provided it meets the aims of CAS. **In-school fundraising must benefit the school in some way, not an outside organization with no ties to a UAIS club or event. Fundraising efforts involving outside organizations that have no tie to UAIS must take place outside the school.** Fundraisers should be carefully planned with advisors and supervisors. If a fundraiser interests you, there are many considerations, rules, guidelines and restrictions that a student must take into consideration. Two sources pertinent to review include:

1. The uaiscas.com website under the "Fundraising Projects" page AND
2. The UAIS fundraising flowcharts located on the wall outside Mr. Spear's office

B. Utilizing School/Club Funds for Reimbursement

1. Seek approval from the club advisor or CAS supervisor before making any purchases.
2. If purchasing online, orders **MUST** be shipped to UAIS, not your personal residence.
3. If purchasing in person, keep and deliver all receipts to your club advisor.
4. Parents—not students—will be reimbursed, less the sales tax.

IV. Student Senate & CAS: Approval for New Clubs & School Activities

A. New Clubs

For new clubs or previously defunct ones may be proposed as potential CAS projects through the Student Senate application located outside room 334. The process for new club approval and the pilot requirements is included in the supplemental handouts of this packet. Before counting a new club as a CAS project, you will be required to earn Senate's approval *before* proposing the club to your advisor. If you have any questions about the process, please see out a Senator.

Additional Notes:

B. School-Sponsored Activities

Any school-sponsored activity that does not already take place naturally within the context of a club's normal operations or is a special event that will be broadcasted to the student body must seek approval from Student Senate using the Student Activity Approval Form, also located outside room 334. You should earn Senate's approval *before* proposing the club to your advisor as a CAS project/experience.

Additional Notes:

V. UAIS Electives as CAS Experiences

If your junior or senior year schedule includes a non-IB testing class, you are potentially eligible to earn some CAS hours during the actual school day. Please refer to the "UAIS Policy for Counting Electives for CAS" distributed during scheduling visitations for additional details. Please consider the following general restrictions for this option:

- CAS hours in school can total up to 50 total hours for the entire 18 months
- They must be outside IB diploma testing subjects
- Your CAS project cannot be completed as part of elective classes
- Due to scheduling constraints, please do not plan on hours during senior year
- Music performance is excluded for IB Music candidates

VI. CAS Roles and Responsibilities Inside and Outside UAIS

A. The CAS coordinator is involved in every aspect of the CAS programme, which includes:

- developing and maintaining policy statements and documentation
- training all staff and students
- providing access to CAS experiences and projects
- ensuring that staff, parents and other students are kept informed about CAS
- publicizing achievements
- ensuring that students are prepared for the challenges they will face
- meeting with students who need help or guidance
- reporting completion or failure to the IBO

B. CAS Advisors are involved in:

- helping students to identify personal goals
- monitoring the pacing of their CAS programme
- supporting and providing guidance/suggestions to students
- reading/responding to students via Managebac
- meeting with students no fewer than five times during the two-year program
- ensuring proper supervision with outside supervisors related to safety and training
- communicating concerns about CAS completion with parents and the coordinator

C. CAS Students are required to:

- approach CAS proactively and positively
- develop a clear understanding of CAS and its purpose
- explore personal values, attitudes, and areas for growth
- plan, do and reflect on CAS experiences/projects
- initiate and lead five meetings with their CAS advisor
- keep diligent records of their experiences/projects
- take part in a range of experiences, including at least one CAS project
- maintain a CAS portfolio that shows achievement of the seven CAS learning outcomes and maintains other non-digital documentation, including supervisor agreement forms
- behave professionally and ethically

D. CAS Supervisors can be defined as:

Any adult of no familial relation to yourself who agrees to monitor you in the completion of a CAS project or CAS experience, provide helpful advice and training, account for your safety and whereabouts (if necessary), and provide objective feedback documenting the successful completion of said project or experience.

CAS supervisors are never yourself, your siblings, or your parents, or another UAIS parent, or another family member (extended or not). Family friends are also highly discouraged and should be avoided. Such relationships create a conflict of interest and are not indicative of the real purpose of CAS because these relationships are more personal than professional. Exceptions are rare but include the following:

1. a pre-existing professional relationship already established for a significant duration
2. a parent chaperoning an event for which there is no teacher
3. a club or organization for which the parent is the organizer or advisor

Even in these cases, if another adult is a viable supervisor, the student is expected to list the non-familial adult as the supervisor.

How CAS Supervision Works:

1. Each approved CAS experience for a student at UAIS is required to have a supervisor. For each activity, the student must identify and meet with the adult who will supervise the activity. This person should be best aligned to fulfill the duties listed above. The student should make sure the supervisor reads the form in its entirety and provides necessary contact information before signing it at the bottom.
2. The student and supervisor discuss the CAS experience/project proposal the student has completed on managebac, signs the form, and returns it to the student.
3. The student then hand-delivers the form to the advisor or must be place as a scanned document on his/her managebac page before the experience/project will be approved
4. The advisor retains a copy of the agreement form for the student in case that adult needs to be contacted for verification of completion or any other issues that arise.
5. Once the CAS experience/project has been approved, the student then begins the activity and works as closely with the supervisor as is necessary. Students are expected to develop a relationship/ rapport with each supervisor, seeking help and advice, as necessary.
6. At the close of the CAS experience/project, the student should promptly request the supervisor to complete the supervisor completion form via email on the uais.managebac.com website.
7. Once the supervisor has evaluated the student, the student can officially close out the experience/project and be awarded hours.
8. Solitary CAS Experiences: While collaboration with others is expected in one's CAS programme, by nature some CAS experiences are non-collaborative and require no new

skills or training. Examples of these experiences include jogging, working out at the gym, knitting, painting, designing a photo-album, and others. The CAS advisor will help identify which experiences fall into this category. In this case, students should list the advisor as the supervisor, not themselves. The advisor and student will work out an acceptable form of documentation for completion of the activity.

VII. The CAS Interview Process and Academic Integrity

A. CAS Interviews:

As stated in the “Minimum Guidelines for Completion,” UAIS students must attend and lead five CAS meetings during junior/senior years. These five interviews officially occur:

September of Junior Year
December of Junior Year
May of Junior Year
October of Senior Year
March of Senior Year

Here is the general process for completing a CAS Interview:

1. Mr. Spear will schedule a visitation to all TOK classes to review the online rubric that will direct the course of your CAS meeting. Students will be able to ask questions and seek clarification during this block.
2. Mr. Spear will email CAS advisors and students about making sign-ups available. Students will sign up for a time during the allotted window and inform the teacher whose class they are missing within 24 hours that they will need to attend this meeting.
3. The student prepares for the interview according to the directions provided on the rubric, ensuring that all online and offline paperwork is ready before the interview
4. The student will provide supervisor agreement forms to the supervisors for each of their experiences to sign. This provides informed consent for both parties. The student will bring these signed forms to their CAS meeting, which will be collected by the advisor.³
5. In later interviews (December of junior year and beyond), students should also request supervisor completion forms online via Managebac for any experience/project that is completed. More on this later.

³ Note: If the experience is solitary or the student’s advisor is also the supervisor, a form is not required. However, if the adult supervising the experience is someone other than the student’s own CAS advisor, this form is required for the experience or project to be approved.

6. Attend the interview, prepared to discuss in detail your goals for your CAS experiences and the specific steps, tasks, and potential hurdles you'll have to overcome to complete them.

B. Time Requirements and Restrictions:

Because CAS experiences must follow a process by which the students consider, plan, and THEN propose and have accepted CAS experiences and projects, CAS cannot be retroactively completed. This means the following:

1. Absolutely no hours can be counted for CAS unless and until the student has successfully proposed and the advisor has approved the CAS experience during or following a meeting. For example, if a student begins work for a CAS project but fails to propose it in Managebac, provide the required supervisor form, discuss it during an interview and have it approved, none of the hours prior to the APPROVAL will count toward fulfilling requirements. If the entire project or experience is completed and no approval was sought by the student, the entire experience is invalid.
2. The IBO states that students are not IB Full Diploma Candidates until the first day of their junior year. This means, by default, that CAS cannot begin until September and not until the student has successfully completed their first CAS interview.
3. Because a student cannot time-travel, a student who does not have an active CAS experience during an extended time period due to lack of up-keep or procrastination on these responsibilities may fail to reach the 18-month requirement to complete CAS and lose IB Full Diploma eligibility. CAS experiences will not be retro-actively granted under any circumstances unless a mistake of omission is found on the part of an advisor. It is the student's responsibility to manage their own CAS programme.

C. CAS Intervention Levels:

Failure to meet expectations will invalidate your IB diploma. Each CAS rubric carries indicators for intervention levels, which can be found on the "International Baccalaureate DP Intervention Procedures" handout, which all students should review. For CAS specifically, the following behaviors will result in one or more levels of intervention:

- A. skipped/missed CAS meeting
- B. lack of reflections
- C. failure to initiate or continue experiences/CAS project
- D. lack of proposed, active, or completed hours

This discussion below is specific to CAS. Students and parents will receive a copy of these rules and sign off early during junior year indicating they have read and understood them. Pertaining to CAS, students should understand the following:

From the IBO publication "Academic Dishonesty" (2012): "The Regulations define malpractice as behavior that results in, or may result in, the candidate or any other

candidate gaining an unfair advantage in one or more assessment component” and includes “any other behavior that gains an unfair advantage for a candidate or that affects the results of another candidate (for example taking unauthorized material into an examination room, misconduct during an examination, *falsifying a CAS record*.”

As with all classes and assessments, students are expected to maintain academic integrity through their CAS programme, which demands careful maintaining of personal CAS records. For the sake of clarity, UAIS defines a “CAS record” as any of the following:

1. the name and description of a supervisor
2. all supervisor agreement forms (proposals and completions)
3. the supervisor’s name and contact information (phone and email address)
4. the description and focus of any project or activity
5. any reflection, typed or otherwise that discusses an experience/project
6. personal logs or forms of documentation that prove completion of an experience/project
7. any other information attached to the student’s managebac CAS page or information submitted during an interview for the purpose of attaining completion of hours, including the student’s verbal statements

Fabrication of CAS hours, forged signatures, or inconsistencies in supervisor completion forms, personal logs, or reflections will invalidate the CAS experience or project in question, and the student will receive no credit. If the result of that invalidation triggers a failing condition for the student, the CAS coordinator is required to indicate in his final report to the IBO that that student has failed CAS and is, by implication, no longer an IB full diploma candidate. That student may also face disciplinary action per the UCS Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, the colleges and universities to which the student applied will need to be informed of the change.