

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE THE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME



Copenhagen International
School

CAS

(Creativity, Action, Service)

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CAS AT CIS

WHAT IS IT?

HOW DOES IT WORK?

THE CAS HANDBOOK

2013

Index

What is CAS?.....	3
The Learner Profile.....	4
The Formal Requirements.....	4
What is a CAS activity?.....	5
Developing a good CAS programme.....	5
The Learning Outcomes.....	5
How Can Students Challenge Themselves?.....	7
The IB Learner Profile.....	7
Prospero.....	7
The CAS Folder.....	8
The CAS Folder on Managebac.....	8
What is a good summary?.....	10
What is good evidence?.....	10
What is good reflection?.....	11
Who is Involved in CAS?.....	12
CAS Advisors.....	12
Activity Supervisors.....	13
The CAS Coordinator.....	13
The Year in CAS.....	13
Report Cards.....	14
Celebrating CAS at CIS.....	15
Links between CAS and TOK.....	15

What is CAS?

CAS is an element in the IB Diploma Programme designed to add another dimension to student learning. Regular classes provide learning through study, CAS provides learning through experience. Regular classes have set syllabi, CAS requires students to develop their own set of goals and activities within the formal framework stipulated by the IB.

The Learner Profile is at the centre of the DP circle which has the Learner Profile at its core.



The Learner Profile

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.

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 positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

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.

CAS activities should link to the Learner Profile and to TOK because they all share a focus on individual experience and development.

CAS: The Formal Requirements

A student must be active in CAS for a continuous period of 18 months, starting in mid-August of the first year of a student's Diploma Programme.

A student's completed CAS programme must include

A total of 150 hours of activities spread evenly in the three categories Creativity – Action - Service

A CAS Project that combines at least two of the categories, lasts for a significant period of time and is cooperative in nature

...and all the Learning Outcomes must be met.

We also require students to have three different and substantial activities in each of the three categories. If activities are particularly substantial, two in each category may suffice. For two-year activities, see p 16 below.

Students must maintain a CAS folder to provide evidence for activities and continuous reflections.

Each activity must be supervised by a person who can vouch for the student's involvement. This person must not be a friend of the student's or a member of the student's family (unless that person acts in the capacity of coach, teacher or the like).

A completed folder is a requirement for being awarded a Diploma. An incomplete or poor CAS folder is the most frequent reason why students who have achieved a passing grade, still fail the IBDP.

What is a CAS activity?

CAS is not about just signing up.

CAS is not about counting hours.

CAS is not about being busy and developing an impressive calendar.

CAS is about a student's personal learning, so a good CAS activity is defined by a student's reasons for getting involved. CAS is about students challenging themselves and coming up with activities that take them out of their comfort zones.

There are few restrictions on CAS activities, but they must not involve any paid work unless the money is given to charities, and they must not be directly career related. They must also be extracurricular and last for a reasonable number of weeks to allow for learning to occur. Also they must not involve the active spreading of any religious beliefs.

Developing a good CAS programme

The learning outcomes

For each activity, a student must identify the learning outcome(s) that the activity involves. The programme identifies eight such outcomes which often cannot all be met in a single activity, but a student's programme as a whole must include them all. The outcomes are:

Awareness of strengths and growth potential

This is the starting point of all good CAS activities and should be a guiding principle in students' choices and their initial statement of plans and intentions. It should also be a focus point in their reflections.

New challenges

This should be a guiding principle in all students' choices of activities. Specific activities which may challenge students include first time involvement in MUN which requires students to develop confidence when speaking publicly, involvement in BRAP and Team Peru which requires face-to-face support for the most vulnerable, improvising on stage as part of the ETC, serving the homeless in a soup kitchen, participating in the Creative Writing Club... Challenge will mean something different for each student – playing in a band may be a challenge for a student who has only ever had individual music lessons previously, while learning how to read music may be a challenge for the naturally gifted musician.

Planned and initiated activities

Examples of student planning and initiation include planning the annual Prom, organising activities as part of BRAP, Team Peru and the Charity Club during the annual Christmas and Spring Fairs, working out the rota for activities such as the Soup Kitchen, planning training drills for younger sports teams and initiating new school based activities such as Amnesty International.

Collaboration

Specific activities include being part of the three charity groups, working as a team in MUN, being a member of the ETC (Extraordinary Theatre Company), playing in one of the school bands, participating in any of the school sports teams, producing the Year Book as a member of the editorial team, working on the Labyrinth team to produce the school's annual 'Journal of the Arts'....

Perseverance and commitment

This is a requirement for all activities on offer. Perseverance and commitment are particularly important in areas such as sports teams, dramatic and musical performances, learning a musical instrument or a language, maintaining regular gym attendance, attending band rehearsals, producing pieces of creative writing on a regular basis, attending Charity Club meetings every week, turning up to run the Snack Shop punctually when rostered.

Global issues

This outcome is particularly relevant to the following activities: BRAP, Team Peru, the Charity Club,, working with UNICEF and participating in MUN, Amnesty International and OD day whose chosen charity is generally one based overseas.

Ethical implications

This happens most often in the activities listed under Global Issues, but reflections on this aspect are also encouraged in students' CAS folders, in group discussions with CAS Supervisors and occasionally in

presentations at school assemblies. There are ethical aspects to many of the students' activities, ranging from the simple 'is skipping sports team rehearsals ethical' to the more complex concerns relating to how best to support those in need whether it be in Ghana, Peru, Thailand or Denmark.

New skills

This is ensured primarily through individual discussions with students in relation to their planning of their programmes. One particularly interesting example involves last year's 'Trashion Show' where students learned how to recycle 'trash' in order to make and model clothes at a fashion show, raising funds for Roots and Shoots. Students learned how to knit, use sewing machines, create outfits from a variety of materials ranging from sweet papers to coffee bags and model these with flair! This year, the Crafty Club is teaching students a variety of creative skills in order to make bunting to celebrate the school's 50th anniversary. New skills can also be acquired via the Photography Club, the Outdoor Club, and through participation in the NECIS range of sports offered at the school.

How can students challenge themselves?

Each CAS programme is unique, so there are no universal answers to this question. Students need to examine themselves, find their strengths and weaknesses and then define challenges for themselves. This is a continuous process, but activities at the beginning of DP1, during the Retreat, are designed to help them get started. CAS Advisors are always available to help in clarifying a student's needs and options. Students should also use each other as resources in this respect, and the CAS Coordinator can also be of help.

But students themselves must take charge of their own CAS programmes.

The IB Learner Profile

The IB Learner Profile defines skills that are important to a student's CAS Programme. Students should use it for inspiration to find ways to challenge themselves.

Prospero

Every student is required to complete the Prospero questionnaire. In response to the completed questionnaire, each student receives a personal profile showing various aspects of his or her learning styles. This profile should also be used for inspiration when students design their CAS programme.

Here is an example of a summary of a Prospero profile. The full report gives many more details and concrete suggestions, and the information can be used as starting points for students to challenge themselves.

Information Processing		percentage
	Visual	60%
	Auditory	40%
	Tactile-Kineasthetic	0%

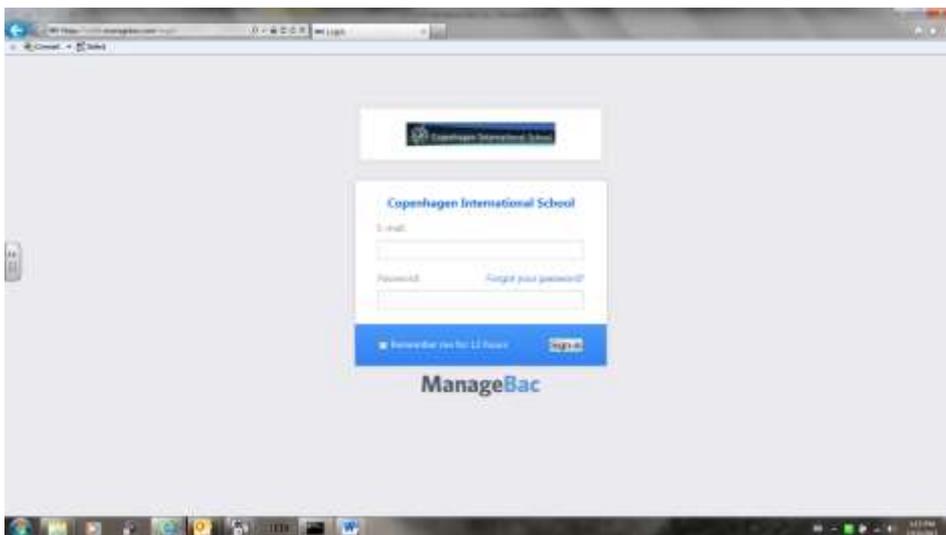
		Low	Fair	Average	High	Very High
StudyPreferences	Interactive-Self	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Interactive-Others	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Music	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Enhancing daily life	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Mechanical Reasoning	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Spatial	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Word-language Reasoning	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Math-logic Reasoning	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Body Coordination	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Interactive-Nature	[Red bar from Low to High]				
PersonalStyle	Relating/inspiring	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Thinking/creating	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Discoverer	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Performer	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Producer	[Red bar from Low to High]				
Learning Style	Tangible random	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Abstract random	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Tangible step by step	[Red bar from Low to High]				
	Abstract step by step	[Red bar from Low to High]				

The CAS Folder

The CAS folder on ManageBac

A successful CAS programme includes a completed CAS folder.

The CAS folder is electronic and kept at <https://cisdk.managebac.com/login>

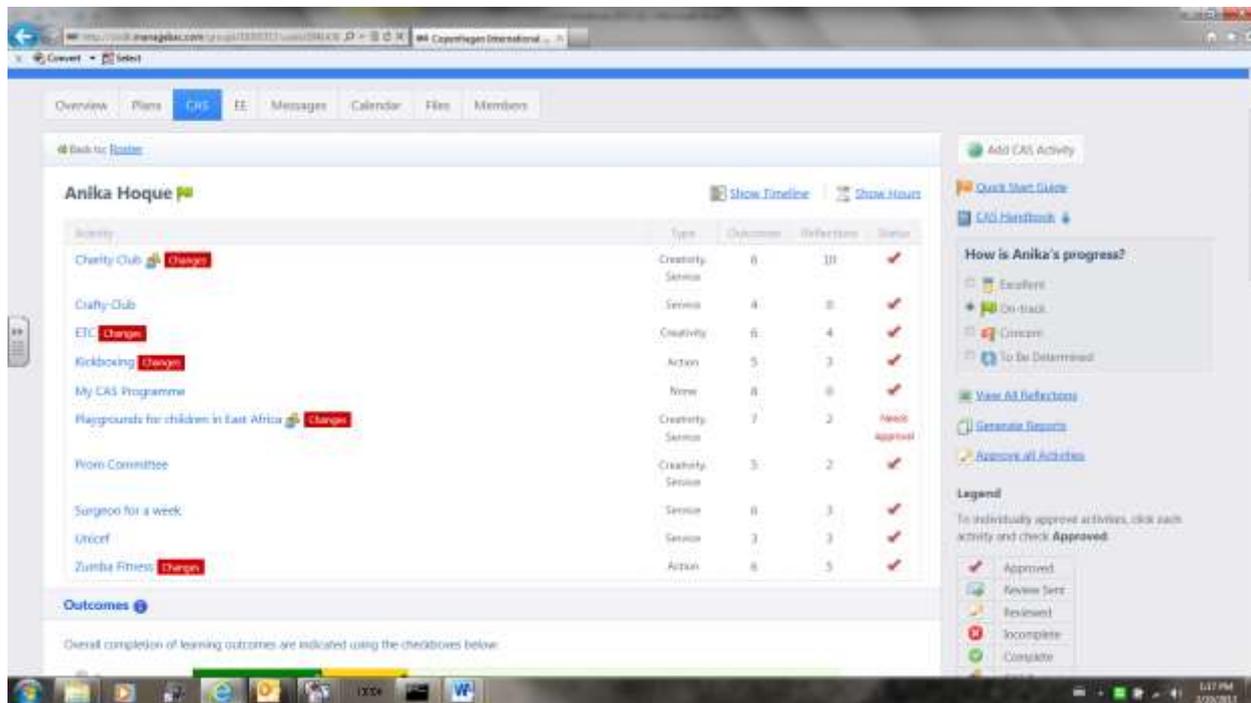


The CAS folder consists of subfolders for

Plans for the CAS programme as a whole

Each CAS activity

Here is an example of a list of subfolders:



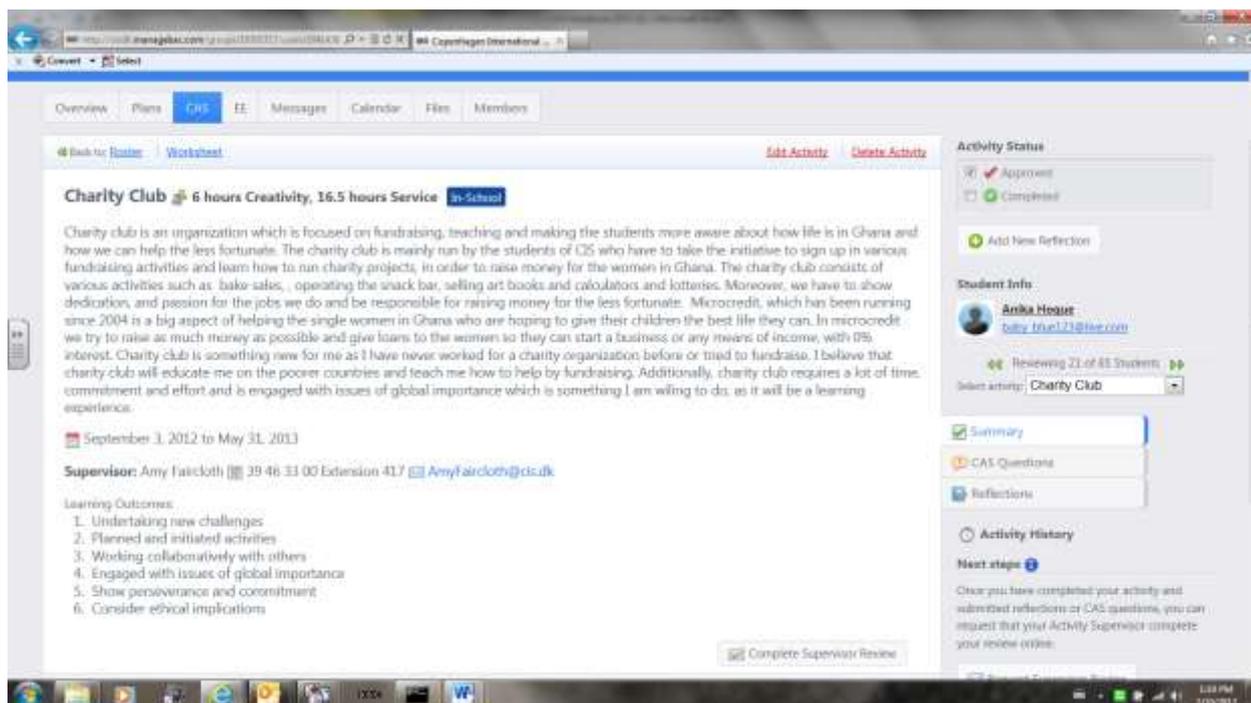
Each subfolder includes

1. Goals and intentions and plans for the activity (Why am I doing this?)
2. Evidence of a student's involvement. (What am I doing?)
3. Reflections on the experiences the student encounters (How am I developing? How am I meeting the Learning Outcomes?)
4. Final assessment of each activity (What were the final outcomes of this activity?)
5. An evaluation from the activity supervisor.

The Managebac site has a preset structure for a CAS folder:

- Summary: for students to describe their goals, intentions and plans (item 1 above)
- Reflections: for students to provide BOTH evidence AND reflections (items 2 and 3 above)
- CAS questions: for students to reflect on the final outcomes of the activity (item 4 above)

It can look like this:



What is a good summary?

A good summary for an activity explains the student's own goals, intentions and plans. The summary must be as specific and detailed as possible. That makes it much easier for the student to provide good evidence and good reflections on the activity. Goals and intentions can be difficult to specify, but students should give this good attention and get help if needed. A summary must also include the student's selection of learning outcomes, and this selection should be explained in the summary. A student's CAS advisor must approve all the student's activity, and approval cannot happen until the summary for the activity is adequate.

What is good evidence?

Good evidence is designed to answer the questions: What did you do in the activity? How often did you do it? Who did you do it with? Where did it happen? Evidence can take all sorts of forms: videos, logs, blogs, calendars, recordings, photos etc. so remember to have cameras, recorders, phones with you when you engage in the activity. Students should set up some simple routines to ensure that they collect evidence. Uploading this material to the CAS folder should happen at least once every fortnight while the activity is running. Leaving it later than that will make the process cumbersome, perhaps even impossible.

What is good reflection?

Most students find this part particularly challenging, but if a student has defined goals and intention clearly, reflections are easy to focus. A reflection is designed to show what a student has experienced and learnt at regular points during the activity. Two or three such reflections during the activity would be a good standard, assuming that the reflections are reasonably substantial. Again, reflections can be provided in a variety of different formats: journal, recordings made by individual students, recordings of conversations about the activity involving other students, videos etc. Student should find the format that they are most comfortable with.

Reflection focuses on experience. It must not be overly philosophical or analytical. It must tell, as simply as possible, what a student felt about a particular activity at a particular time and how that fits with the goals and intentions for the activity. It should discuss the extent to which the Learning Outcomes have been met. It should give details of personal growth and of the ways in which other people have benefitted from the student's efforts. It should show what a student has discovered about personal strengths and weaknesses and some thoughts on how the activity could have been developed differently.

Students should avoid the pitfalls that can make reflections difficult to complete, namely:

- If a student engages in an activity for no clearer reason than that 'It's fun' or 'I like it'
- If the actual production of the reflection is left till long after the activity has ended

Here are a couple of examples of good reflections developed at other schools:

Reflecting 1

Although I didn't go to the A ... rehabilitation center for a very long period of time (a year), I did learn a lot from the experience. Living in X my whole life I've always had a fairly good understanding that a lot of people aren't fortunate enough to have in their life what I have in mine; education, good health, economic stability etc. Because of this, I have always been involved, not only through the school but also personally with different groups that support the less fortunate and try to better their lives. I have donated to NGO's, visited orphanages, conducted food drives etc. However, it was not until A that I truly understood not only the pain of the less fortunate but also how our little actions can make a big difference. Every time we would go to the center, we would bring something to do with the children; a soccer ball, colored pencils, nail polish, books, etc. For two hours we would sit (or run) with them and just have a good time. And every time the smiles on their faces were unforgettable. Yes, we were doing small things like playing a game or reading a story, but to the kids I think this meant a lot more than giving them a new t-shirt or 100x to the foundation. The moment I realized this was the day we decided to give the little girls manicures. I brought my manicure set and all my nailpolish and the kids loved it so much even some of the little boys tried it on. I had arrived at the center with 8 bottles of polish and unpainted nails, I left however with no bottles of polish and hands that looked as if they belonged to a clown. But it didn't matter, the kids had a great time and that's all that matters. And although we don't go as often this year, every time the kids see us get out of the car they greet us with the biggest smiles on their faces and it makes me think: maybe the little things do count.

ooo000ooo

Reflecting 2

About a year ago, my 11th grade class planned and took a trip to A A is a town about 4 hours away from X. The purpose of our trip was to interact and help the students at the S.O.S Children's Village. *SOS Children's Villages supports hundreds of children through its activities in X. SOS Children's Villages supports children and adolescents by providing day care, education, medical services and vocational training.* We planned for about 3 weeks before the trip and stayed at the S.O.S Village for 4 days before spending the last night at

Actually executing the activities took a lot more energy than we expected. We ran into several obstacles, and being in a place with such limited resources we had to think quickly on our feet and come up with rapid solutions. I also found it a bit difficult personally, because I did not get along well with one of my other team members and at several point we clashed in ideas on how to do things. At the end of the day though, we knew we had to put aside our differences and get what we needed to get done.

Obviously there were other tough points and of course many highlights of the trip. We didn't have access to any showering facilities during our stay at the village however we did have access to some water. This was a little bit difficult because most of the people in that area did not have access to water very regularly yet we had fresh water brought to us. That was a bit unfair, however we did our best not to waste any water and be very aware with how we used our water. However, the last night spending the night in the hotel we had access to showers and swimming pools and such which was very nice. The entire experience made me realize how precious water really is and when I stepped into that shower, I had never felt such relief but also I took a quicker shower than I usually do because in the back of my head I had thought of the children from the village.

All in all it was a great trip. I got to know my classmates better and learned a lot about myself as well.

Who is involved in CAS?

CAS Advisors

Each CAS Advisor is responsible for a group of approximately 10 students. A CAS Advisor will meet regularly with the advisees, collectively and individually, to help and support them in developing their CAS programmes. A CAS Advisor is available to the advisees for consultation and will keep an active eye on their CAS folder to ensure that advisees give them continuous attention. CAS advisors are responsible for approving advisees' individual activities, and for informing parents of any reasons for concern.

Activity supervisors

Activity supervisors must be willing to vouch for students' involvement in the activity they supervise. Activity supervisors could be coaches, teachers, or a wide range of professionals from outside the school community. They will be asked to submit a short report once a student has completed the activity in question. The CAS coordinator will contact all activity supervisors to inform them of their role, but students must make sure that they nominate only supervisors who are prepared to vouch for them.

Once they have been named by students, activity supervisors will receive a welcoming letter from the CAS Coordinator. This is the text of the letter:

Dear....

Thank you for agreeing to act as an activity supervisor for The activity forms part of the student's CAS Programme designed to offer opportunities to learn through experience. Students must complete a successful CAS programme if they are to be awarded the International Baccalaureate Diploma, which gives access to universities around the world.

Therefore, we should be grateful if you could vouch for ... 's involvement in your activity. We are of course concerned for the safety of our students, so please inform me if your activity raises any issues in relation to health and safety. If you notice that the student is often absent, please contact me at karstenengelberg@cis.dk Once the student has completed the activity, you will be asked to complete a very short form which confirms the student's successful completion of the activity.

Thank you again for supporting If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Family members (except in cases when parents work as teachers or as recognized activity supervisors) and friends cannot act as activity supervisors.

The CAS Coordinator

The CAS Coordinator oversees the CAS programme in all its aspects. He organizes students' work on Managebac and the introduction to the CAS programme, coordinates the Extracurricular Activities Fair, liaises with the IB Coordinator and the IBO in matters relevant to CAS, ensures that CAS is integrated into relevant classes, provides advice to CAS advisors, promotes uniformity in all CAS advice given to students and parents. He is also available to students for individual advice, but CAS advisors are responsible for guiding their advisees' individual CAS activities and folder.

The Year in CAS

In late August/early September, all DP Students spend two days at a Retreat. The programme for the Retreat includes an introductory session on CAS for DP1 students. A few weeks after, the activities programme is introduced at a Fair at school. In the weeks that follow, DP 1 students will begin to put together their individual programmes.

In the course of the two years, students will meet with their CAS Advisor at least three times to discuss their progress. One meeting in semester 1 that will focus on providing a good start to the programme; one meeting towards the end of semester 2 to discuss progress and plans for year 2, and one in semester three that will focus on completing the programme in an appropriate and successful manner. The report cards for those three semesters will carry comments on students' CAS programmes.

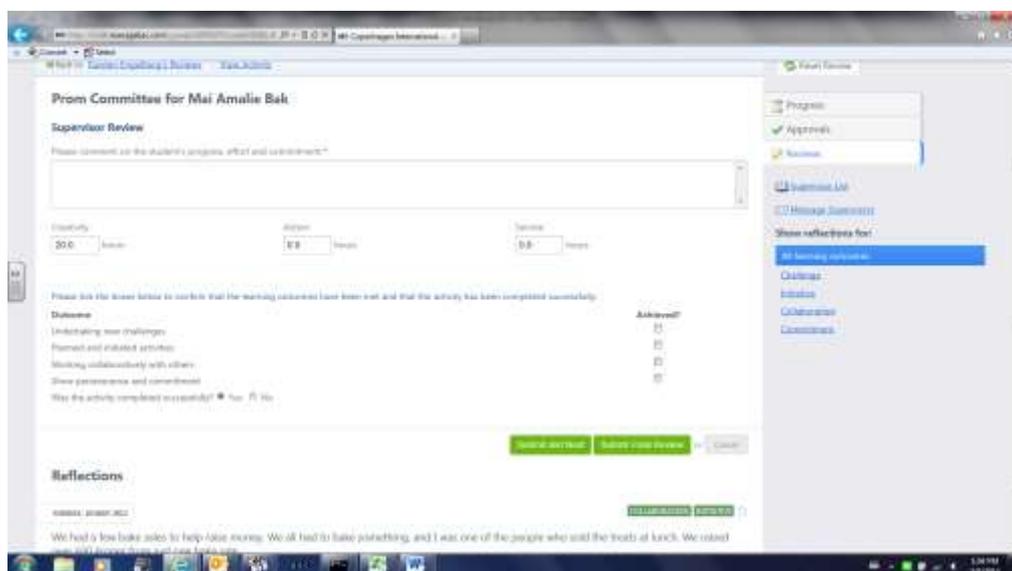
What happens when a student does not complete CAS? If students are continuously active in their CAS programme, they will complete it in March of their second year. The official deadline for completing the CAS folder is mid-March. If by that time, they have not completed their CAS programme, they need to continue to be active in this respect, possibly even into May of the second year. If by that time the programme is still not complete, the IB will be informed of the fact. Students will then not be granted a diploma, but they will have an extra year to complete the CAS programme. Students can then be granted a diploma assuming that they have passed fulfilled all other criteria.

Parents involved/informed. Parents receive information about the CAS programme at orientation evenings at the beginning of each year. They receive information about students' progress in comments on report cards, twice in

the first year – after each semester – and once in the second year – after the first semester. In addition, CAS supervisors and the CAS coordinator will contact parents on an individual basis whenever the need arises.

Health and safety. Given that Copenhagen is a fairly safe and clean environment, health and safety issues rarely occur in relation to CAS activities. If activity supervisors take students on trips, they are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of the students.

Supervisor evaluation looks like this on Managebac



Report cards

Report cards will carry CAS comments after semester one and two in the first year (grade 11) and after semester one in year 2 (grade 12). These comments should coincide with the three mandatory individual interviews that supervisors must conduct and record in each advisee's CAS folder.

CAS Advisors meet regularly with the CAS Coordinator to ensure consistency in the advice given, to resolve any issues that may occur and to discuss new initiatives within the CS programme.

Celebrating CAS at CIS.

CAS Awards are given to students in both Grade 11 and grade 12. The citations for the awards read:

Grade 12:

The CAS Award

This award is given to the student that has shown the utmost dedication to CAS. The student's CAS folder will include inventive and challenging activities and reflections that demonstrate excellent progress in his or her learning through experience.

Grade 11:

CAS Award – grade 11

- At least one particularly original and challenging activity
- Good authentic reflections

- A CAS folder demonstrating enthusiastic commitment to the spirit of the CAS programme

To be awarded by agreement among the CAS Advisors.

- A maximum of three awards per year per grade.

At an Assembly in the second semester, students get a chance to learn about some of the good activities are involved in.

Links between CAS and TOK

TOK is about ways of knowing. In students' academic classes, ways of knowing tend to focus on rational verifiable knowledge, but TOK shows that there are many other ways of knowing. CAS offers students opportunities to explore all the other ways of knowing through personal experience resulting from challenges set by the students themselves.

The CIS website carries a CAS page which explains briefly the nature and requirements of the programme.

How to register 2-year activities.

If an activity continues more or less uninterrupted from grade 11 into grade 12, then the activity should be registered as one in a student's folder. If not, the activity should be registered in two separate activity folders, but clear indications should be given that the activity in year 2 reactivates an activity from year 1. For example, if a student takes part in a NECIS Sport in both year 1 and year 2, it should be entered as two separate sections marked e.g. Basketball Year 1 and Basketball Year 2. The summary for year 2 should then make the link to the activity in year 1. But if a student is active in, say, the Charity Club in both years, it should be entered as one continuous activity, even if the activity lies dormant over the summer.

The CAS Project is an activity that includes at least two of the three CAS areas, last for a significant length of time and is collaborative in nature. The activity combines with all other activities that a student is involved in to complete a programme of three substantial activities in each of the three CAS areas.