

# PRINCE ANDREW HIGH SCHOOL



## CAS Handbook Creativity, Activity and Service

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## IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate 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 organization 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.





## IB 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.

As IB learners we strive to be:

### INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

### KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

### THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

### COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

### PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

### OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

### CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

### RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

### BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

### REFLECTIVE

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.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.



## What is CAS?

CAS is one of the three elements of the IB Diploma Programme core, along with Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay.

Through CAS, students strengthen the approaches to learning they develop in their classes, and “are encouraged to grow both personally and socially, developing skills such as cooperation, problem-solving, conflict resolution and creative and critical thinking as well as developing their own identities. CAS continues to develop students’ ability to engage in critical reflection, offering increasingly sophisticated opportunities for students to analyse their own thinking, effort and performance. Students also learn how to set challenging goals and develop the commitment and perseverance to achieve them” (Creativity, Activity and Service Guide 7).

Each student’s CAS experiences should be uniquely reflective of their own interests, areas of strength and areas for growth. CAS is organized around the three strands of creativity, activity and service. Through CAS, IB aims to help students to develop their skills beyond the academic setting.

**Successful completion of CAS is a requirement for the IB Diploma.** Through personal reflections, students provide evidence of achieving the seven CAS learning outcomes.

CAS begins at the beginning of Year 1 (Grade 11) and continues on a weekly basis for at least 18 months with a reasonable balance between creativity, activity and service. Students are expected to maintain a CAS portfolio as evidence of their engagement with CAS, which includes their CAS project. The CAS portfolio is a collection of evidence and reflections that showcases CAS experiences and highlights a student’s growth with regard to the CAS outcomes. *CAS is graded pass/fail and students must be assessed as passing in order to earn the IB Diploma.*



Student learning to skate at the Emera Oval

## What are the aims of CAS?

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 local and global communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment



Playing club soccer as a continuing activity experience

## What are the Responsibilities of the CAS Student?

The key to a successful CAS programme is personal engagement, choice and enjoyment of CAS experiences. Students undertake at least one CAS project with a *minimum* duration of one month. CAS is largely student-driven and thus students are expected to be independent, responsible and organized in their approach to CAS experiences.

### **CAS students are expected to:**

- Approach CAS with a positive attitude
- Develop a clear understanding of CAS expectations and the purpose of CAS
- 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 experiences with the CAS coordinator and/or CAS 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 programme
- Maintain a CAS portfolio and keep records of CAS experiences including evidence of achievement of the seven CAS learning outcomes
- Understand the reflection process and identify suitable opportunities to reflect on CAS experiences
- Demonstrate accomplishments within their CAS programme
- Communicate with the CAS coordinator/adviser and/or CAS supervisor in formal and informal meetings
- Ensure a suitable balance between creativity, activity and service in their CAS programme
- Behave appropriately and ethically in their choices and actions



Helping lower elementary students develop their own story ideas through crafts

## What are the CAS Outcomes?

Student completion of CAS is based on the achievement of the seven CAS learning outcomes realized through the student's commitment to their CAS programme over a period of no less than 18 months. While it is strongly recommended that students devote about 3 hours a week to CAS, a student's focus should be on choosing meaningful experiences, not trying to "fill" hours. Some learning outcomes may be achieved many times, while others may be achieved less frequently. Students demonstrate their achievement through the reflections and evidence included in their portfolios.

### CAS Outcomes:

1	<p><b>Identify own strengths and areas for growth</b> Students are able to see themselves as individuals with various abilities and skills, of which some are more developed than others.</p>
2	<p><b>Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken, developing new skills in the process</b> A new challenge may be an unfamiliar experience or an extension of an existing one. The newly acquired or developed skills may be shown through experiences that the student has not previously undertaken or through increased expertise in an established area</p>
3	<p><b>Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience</b> Students can articulate the stages from conceiving an idea to executing a plan for a CAS experience or a series of CAS experiences. This may be accomplished in collaboration with other participants. Students may show their knowledge and awareness by building on a previous experience, or by launching a new idea or process</p>
4	<p><b>Show commitment and perseverance in CAS experiences</b> Students demonstrate regular involvement and active engagement in CAS</p>
5	<p><b>Demonstrates the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively</b> Students are able to identify, demonstrate and critically discuss the benefits and challenges of collaboration gained through CAS experiences</p>
6	<p><b>Demonstrates engagement with issues of global significance</b> Students are able to identify and demonstrate their understanding of global issues, make responsible decisions, and take appropriate action in response to the issue either locally, nationally or internationally</p>
7	<p><b>Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions</b> Students show awareness of the consequences of choices and action in planning and carrying out CAS experiences</p>

## What are the Three CAS Strands?

### **Creativity**

#### **Exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance**

Creativity experiences may include visual and performing arts, digital design, writing, film, culinary arts, crafts and composition. While students may continue with activities they are already engaged in as part of a CAS experience, they should extend their involvement and deepen their skill level. Students should also embrace new creative opportunities to broaden the scope of their experiences. Creativity in CAS is not met by the appreciation of the creative efforts of others, such as attending a concert or art exhibition. Students may use the skills they have developed in their IB Diploma courses to meet new challenges using creativity; however, they cannot submit work they have completed as part of an IB course as a CAS experience. Students should include evidence of their products or performances as part of their CAS portfolios.

#### **Approaches to Creativity**

**Ongoing creativity:** These are events students are already a part of as part of a school group or club, or through some other form of sustained creativity. Students may continue this as part of the creativity experiences for CAS; however students need to further extend and develop their skills and/or participation.



Student attending on-going pottery classes

**School-based creativity:** Students may choose to join existing clubs or groups within the school that allow them to explore an aspect of creative expression. Alternately, students can initiate or participate in creative experience originating from their CAS programme.



Students performing in PA's school musical, *Mary Poppins*

**Community-based creativity:** Creativity experiences best occur with regularity that allow students to build their skills, become exposed to new ideas and build relationships within the community. Students could consider joining a community choir or ensemble, take cooking classes, joining a local theater group, contributing to a community art gallery, etc.



Donating artwork to a community fundraiser

**Individual creativity:** Students who are interested in pursuing a solitary creativity experience could engage in opportunities to compose music, develop a website, write some short fiction or poetry, or create various art pieces and/or crafts. Individual creativity should take place over an extended period of time in order to allow students to explore various methods and mediums and develop their skills. Students should set goals for themselves as the beginning of these experiences.



Developing drawing skills

## Activity

### Physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle

The purpose of the activity strand is to promote lifelong healthy habits related to physical well-being. These include individual and team sports, aerobic exercise, dance, outdoor recreation, fitness training, and any other form of physical exertion that purposefully contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Students should participate in activities that are appropriate to their level and on a regular basis to provide a genuine challenge and benefit. Students who already participate in physical activities such as team sport may count this for CAS, but should set new goals to attain in terms of their fitness level.

### Approaches to activity

**Ongoing activity:** A student may already be engaged in physical activity as part of a school team or club, or through some other form of sustained physical exercise. Students should seek to further extend and develop their physical activity in ongoing activities they wish to count as CAS.



Student in a slalom ski race

**School-based activity:** Students can take part in one or more school teams, a school group that promotes physical activity or timetabled sports sessions like lunchtime intramurals. Students can also initiate a school-based activity like a basketball tournament or a running club.



Playing basketball for the PA Panthers

**Community-based activity:** When possible, activity experiences that occur regularly allow students to build relationships and develop their interpersonal skills while maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Single events can lack the depth and meaning that allow students to truly develop in terms of the CAS outcomes. Community-based activities such as club teams, dance or yoga classes, swimming or skating lessons or joining a martial arts program allow students to develop their physical health over time. In the case of single-day events, such as a community fun run, students can make them more meaningful by setting training goals for themselves that they work towards leading up to the event like increasing running speed, length of the run, etc.



Student practicing *Kindai Bujitsu*

**Individual activity:** Students may wish to participate in solitary physical activities such as joining a gym, mountain biking, strength conditioning or swimming at a community pool. These activities are best done over an extended period of time in order to allow students to gain the benefits of sustained physical activity. In these cases, students can set personal goals and then work toward attaining those goals over a period of time. **Students who engage in individual activity should make sure they consider safety risks with a parent or guardian first.**



Practicing for a canoe journey at Keji

## Service

### Collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need

Through service, students aim to understand their capacity to make meaningful contributions to their community and society. The use of the CAS stages in developing a service experience is recommended. In order to be considered a CAS service experience, students need to identify and address authentic community needs; these experiences should be based around reciprocal collaboration with the relevant community members. CAS service experiences are **unpaid**, which includes any ways that students could benefit materially from their service (for example fundraising for a trip that a student plans to go on does not count as a CAS experience).

Students may engage in service experiences that benefit the school; however, they are encouraged to also seek service experiences within the broader community by considering local, national and international needs that could be meaningfully addressed.

### Approaches to Service

**Ongoing service:** When students dedicate themselves to service over time, they develop perseverance and commitment. Students already engaged in service activities may continue to participate in those activities as CAS experiences and should consider their personal growth in relation to those experiences over time in their reflections.



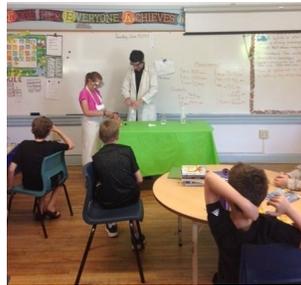
Coaching girls' soccer

**School-based service:** Students are encouraged to look for ways that their service can fill an authentic need within the school. For example, peer tutoring, joining Best Buddies or helping to organize and run awareness presentations for students all help students to create valuable experiences while preparing them to use the skills they build to engage in service opportunities outside the school.



Students showing their PositiviTEA with Jack.org

**Community-based service:** When possible, interactions involving people in a service context best occur with a regularity that builds and sustains relationships for the mutual benefit of all. Single incidents of engagement with individuals in a service context often lack enough depth for personal growth. For example, running a series of events to promote healthy living at a local elementary school over several months has more benefit to all parties than a single-day experience.



Demonstrating science experiments with elementary school students

**Fundraising:** When pursuing fundraising as service, students are encouraged to pursue a cause that has personal meaning for them. Before beginning fundraising, the students should further inform themselves about the cause and any organizations that may be receiving the funds. Students should establish a clear understanding of how any funds they raise are going to be used and ensure that the fundraising activity they organize is in keeping with the organization's expectations. Students should also consider other ways they can augment their service such as including information about the cause as part of their fundraiser in order to raise community awareness and engagement.



Supporting Feed Nova Scotia

## What Qualifies as a CAS Experience?

A CAS experience is a specific event in which the students engages with one or more of the three CAS strands.

A CAS experience can be a single event or may be an extended series of events. A typical CAS program involves both singular and ongoing experiences. It is important to note that a successful CAS programme must be more than unplanned/singular events.

CAS experiences incorporate one or more of the CAS strands. For example:

- Going on a hike at Cape Split (activity/singular)
- Playing in a community jazz ensemble (creativity/ongoing)
- Organizing a group to train and fundraise for participation in a charity fun run (activity/service/ongoing)

### Guidelines for CAS experiences

A CAS experience must:

- Fit within one or more of the strands
- Be based on a personal skill, interest, talent or opportunity for growth
- Provide opportunities to develop the attributes of the IB learner profile
- Not be used or included in the student's Diploma course requirements

**Through reflection on personal growth as a result of engaging in CAS experiences, students demonstrate evidence of achievement of all seven CAS outcomes in their CAS portfolios.**

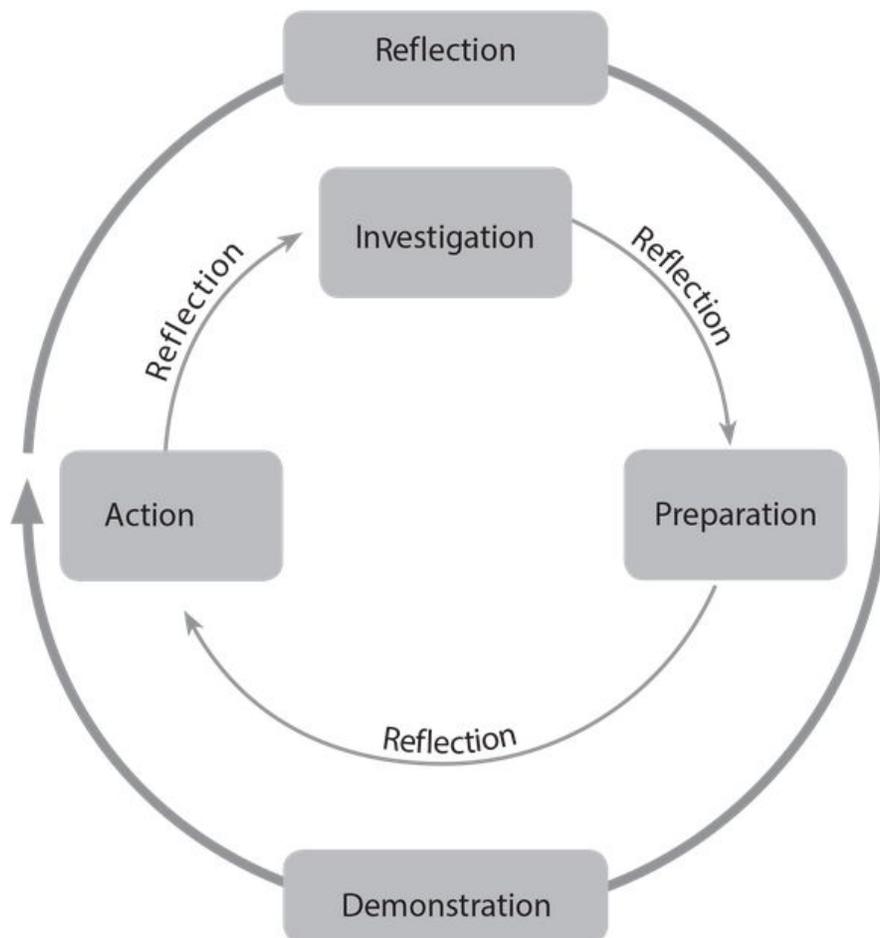


Organizing a Book Swap for a local elementary school

## What are the CAS Stages?

The CAS stages are a framework that students can use to guide their experiences as they consider what they would like to do in CAS, make plans and carry out their ideas. There are many ways the CAS stages can be used as evidence to support students' growth towards the outcomes and can be used in creativity, activity, service or the CAS project.

The CAS stages represent a process and sequence that can be applied throughout a student's life. Students follow a process where they investigate an interest, prepare by learning more, take some form of action, reflect on what they have done along the way and demonstrate their understandings and the process.



**Figure 4**  
*The five CAS stages*

**The five CAS stages are as follows:**

- 1. Investigation:** Students consider their interests and skills as well as areas for personal growth when deciding on CAS opportunities. Before choosing to participate, students should consider what they want to do and *the purpose for the CAS experience*. In the case of service, students identify a need they want to address.
- 2. Preparation:** Students clarify their roles and responsibilities, develop a plan of actions to be taken, identify specific resources and create timelines in order to engage in a CAS experience. Any documentation students make at this point can be used as evidence in their portfolios.
- 3. Action:** Students implement their idea or plan. This may be done individually, with partners or in groups.
- 4. Reflection:** Students described what happened, express their feelings, generate ideas and raise questions. Reflection should assist students in revising plans, learning from experience and to make explicit connections to their own personal growth. Reflection may lead to new action.
- 5. Demonstration:** Students make explicit what and how they learned and and what they have accomplished. This can be done via the CAS portfolio, in informal or formal discussion with the CAS supervisor, etc.



Students at a Halloween Day they organized at a local elementary school

## What Qualifies as a CAS Project?

A CAS project is a collaborative, well-considered series of sequential CAS experiences, engaging students in one or more of the CAS strands. **CAS students must successfully complete at least one CAS project in order to meet the requirements of the CAS programme.**

The primary purpose of the CAS project is to ensure engagement in sustained collaboration. A CAS project also challenges students to demonstrate initiative, perseverance, and develop skills such as decision-making and problem-solving.

All CAS projects should use the CAS stages as a framework for implementation to ensure that all requirements are met. All CAS projects are designed with a defined purpose or goal. Individual students within a project group can identify one or more CAS outcomes to further guide their role and responsibilities in the CAS project.

As the CAS project consists of a series of sequential experiences, a minimum of one month is required for the CAS project; however most CAS projects run for about six weeks. Students are strongly encouraged to undertake their CAS project locally in order to see the most direct benefit on the community. Students are able to reflect on their individual CAS project experiences as well as on the project as a whole.

When a CAS project addresses the CAS strand of *service*, students must take into account the opinions and expectations of service of others involved and focus on meaningful and authentic needs to ensure actions are respectful and reciprocal. Once students commit to service work, the expectation is that they uphold their commitments to the best of their abilities. For any CAS service project it is important to ensure that there is:

- A genuine need for the service project, which has been stated and agreed upon the potential partners
- An understanding of the level of student participation that is feasible in the service project
- A clear assessment of potential risks to participating students
- Approval from the CAS Coordinator for the service project
- A demonstration of how the CAS stages were followed
- A thorough evaluation of the benefits of the service project for all involved



A community clean-up at Morash Pond as part of a CAS project on Environmentalism

## How Do I Write a Reflection?

CAS reflections are kept in the CAS portfolio and are used to demonstrate student achievement of the CAS outcomes. The purpose of a reflection is *not* to merely describe what the activity entailed - the focus of the reflection should be on what the student thought, felt and learned during the experience in relation to the CAS outcome they have selected. To support the reflections, students must also upload evidence of their involvement in their experiences (photos, certificates of completion or recognition, audio or visual clips of performances, etc.), and the name and contact information of an adult supervisor who can attest to the student's participation in the experience (this could be a teacher, coach, volunteer coordinator, etc.). Below is an example of how to structure a CAS reflection. Students can use this as a guide but remember that CAS reflections are personal and therefore should represent the student's individual voice.

### CAS Reflection Template

#### Step 1: Identify the outcome you are working towards through your chosen activity.

"I decided to participate in planning and carrying out a Halloween Day for a local elementary school in order to work towards demonstrating the skills and recognizing the benefits of working collaboratively."

#### Step 2: State clearly how the activity would help you reach the outcome.

"I had to work with other students from the IB program and teachers from my school and the elementary school in order to plan and coordinate our events."

**Step 3: Explain what progress you made in reaching the outcome, what challenges you faced and how you overcame (or maybe didn't overcome) those challenges. Note: it is essential that you are honest in your reflections in order to gain the most benefit from reflection. It is appropriate to write about how you felt, what you thought, frustrations you experienced, etc. IB does not expect that every experience you have is going to be positive, but you want to remain focused on what can be learned from failure and challenges.**

"I was very nervous when the event began that it would not go well. I didn't like some of the activities our class had planned for the students and I think there some things we could have done better. Although I voiced my opinions, the others wanted to go forward with the activities as planned I realized that working in a group meant that sometimes I had to compromise and all I could do was state my opinion and then leave it to the group to decide what to do. I was very happy that my group and I worked together well when we were helping the kids... (insert example here) ... It was challenging to coordinate so many people, especially when everyone was working in different classrooms. We found a way to work around this by ..."

**Step 4: If this is an experience that you are using for the CAS stages, explain what learning you will apply to future situations. You can also include things you would do differently the next time.**

"I have learned some really good skills for working in groups that I will be able to use in my students' council work (insert example here). I was very frustrated by the lack of communication between groups and next time I would (insert what you would do differently here).

## What Do I Keep in my CAS Portfolio?

The CAS Portfolio is a means of demonstrating continuous engagement with CAS and achievement of the CAS outcomes. We use an online system called Managebac, which can be accessed at <https://pahs.managebac.com/login>.

The CAS portfolio is used by students to plan their CAS programme, reflect on their CAS experiences and gather evidence of involvement in CAS. The portfolio itself is not formally assessed but is used as an indicator throughout a student's involvement with CAS to indicate to their supervisor their participation and growth. In our experience, it is also a valuable resource for students when applying to postsecondary institutions, employment opportunities or putting themselves forward for scholarship consideration.

During the three scheduled interviews with the CAS supervisor, the student's portfolio is discussed and the supervisor may recommend changes or further steps the student needs to take in order to ensure that the portfolio meets the requirements for CAS. Students are expected to update their portfolio *at least* once a month and make any revisions recommended by their supervisor. After each of the three interviews, the CAS supervisor will write a brief report in the student's portfolio commenting on their progress and any further steps that need to be taken.

Students should think about their experiences in three sections, all of which are recorded in Managebac:

1. **Profile:** Before engaging in an experience, students should set goals for themselves in relation to the outcomes - students should consider what they hope to accomplish as part of the experience and ways that the experience help them in their personal growth.
2. **Experiences:** After participating in experiences, students will incorporate a variety of reflections, learning moments, personal achievements, and how they have utilized the CAS stages. *This section demonstrates that the student has actively engaged in his or her individual CAS programme and thus should be updated monthly.*
3. **Evidence:** In this section, students collect evidence of their involvement and achievements. This could include (but is not limited to): planning documents, letters, emails, certificates, photos, videos, audio recordings, etc.

## What Can I Expect from the CAS Interviews?

The CAS interviews are a means for students and their supervisors to assess progress throughout the 18 months. Supervisors provide encouragement and advice in order to help guide the student through successful completion of the outcomes. Typically a student has three formal interviews with his or her supervisor; however, they may contact their supervisor to ask questions or update their progress at any time. The third interview is a summative interview that is meant to reflect on the student's engagement with CAS and his or her achievement of the outcomes. After each interview, the CAS supervisor logs a brief summary of the discussion and any recommendations given in the student's CAS portfolio.

**First Interview:** This interview is conducted at the beginning of the CAS program. Your supervisor is going to ensure that you understand the purpose of CAS and the CAS outcomes, discuss your interests and goals and review the CAS stages. Students should ask any initial questions they may have at their first interview and discuss plans for up-coming experiences with their supervisors.

**Second Interview:** This interview is normally held towards the end of Year 1. The main purpose of this interview is to assess your progress up until that point and discuss what still needs to be done. Your supervisor will be looking for your portfolio and discussion to reflect: a range of CAS experiences, progress towards the CAS outcomes, relative balance between creativity, activity and service and that reflection is being done on a continuous basis. By this point, you should also be finished your CAS project and should be prepared to discuss it in relation to the outcomes and your personal growth.

**Third Interview:** This is the summative interview for CAS. In preparation for this interview, you will be asked to provide your supervisor with a CAS Completion Form, indicating the reflections you feel best represent your achievement towards each of the CAS outcomes. In the interview, students outline how they have achieved the learning outcomes for CAS and evaluate their overall CAS programme.

**Once the third interview is complete and the supervisor feels that the student's portfolio adequately reflects that the demands of the CAS programme have been met, the student will be graded as having passed CAS.**

## Where do I go for Help?

### **CAS Adviser:**

Each student is assigned a CAS adviser who helps to oversee his or her CAS programme. CAS advisers can provide guidance to students and answer questions with regard to CAS. CAS advisers provide feedback on reflections and assist students in identifying goals. CAS advisers monitor students' CAS portfolios to ensure that the requirements are being met. While three formal meetings are required as part of the CAS programme, students are encouraged to reach out to their CAS adviser for guidance when necessary.

### **CAS Supervisor:**

CAS supervisors monitor individual CAS experiences. A supervisor could be a member of the Prince Andrew staff, but supervisors can also be coaches, instructors, community members, etc. The roles of the CAS supervisor are to ensure students are meeting their goals safely and to report on a student's participation with the CAS experience if required by the CAS Coordinator.

### **CAS Coordinator:**

The CAS Coordinator oversees CAS for the IB Programme at PA. Any questions students have that cannot be addressed by their advisers CAS should be directed to the CAS Coordinator. The CAS Coordinator runs the CAS workshops introducing the programme and the CAS project, helping students with initial goal-setting and teaching students to write reflections.

### **CAS Google Classroom:**

Each IB cohort has its own Google classroom. The classroom is used to post reminders and opportunities for CAS experiences as well as documents and other materials relevant to CAS. Students should be checking the Google classroom on a regular basis.



