

A group of diverse young people, including students and a teacher, are captured in a joyful moment of jumping and dancing in front of a brick building. They are all smiling and have their arms raised, some making peace signs. The scene is set outdoors on a paved area with trees and a clear sky in the background. The overall mood is energetic and positive.

**Liceum Ogólnokształcące
z Oddziałami Dwujęzycznymi
im. Adama Mickiewicza
w Piastowie**

CAS Handbook
for IB Students, Parents and Teachers

CAS Choose Your Own Path

Podczas realizacji IB Diploma Programme w Liceum Ogólnokształcącym z Oddziałami Dwujęzycznymi im. Adama Mickiewicza w Piastowie uczniowie mają szansę wykroczyć poza ramy standardowego nauczania i zrealizować swój pomysł na siebie. Są jednocześnie architektem i obiektem procesu uczenia się.

CAS daje szansę na odkrywanie własnych zdolności, realizację pasji, podejmowanie wyzwań, pomaganie innym. A wszystko to w wybranym przez ucznia środowisku, w szkole lub poza nią.

CAS jest jak życie!

Samodzielne planowanie, samodzielne podejmowanie decyzji, a następnie refleksja nad konsekwencjami własnych wyborów oraz radość z efektów własnej działalności to największa wartość CAS.

During the IBDP Diploma Programme in Liceum Ogólnokształcące z Oddziałami Dwujęzycznymi im. Adama Mickiewicza in Piastów, students have a chance to go beyond standard teaching and pursue their own dreams. They are both the originator and the object of the learning process.

CAS gives them a chance to discover their own talents, follow their passions, take up challenges and help others. All of this takes place in an environment chosen by the student, at school or outside of it.

CAS is like life!

Independent planning, making decisions on your own and then reflecting on the consequences of your choices and enjoying the results of your own activities are the greatest values of CAS.

Tomasz Lukowski
CAS Coordinator



Table of Contents

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| IB Learner Profile | 3 |
| Why CAS? | 4 |
| CAS in a nutshell | 5 |
| CAS Strands | 7 |
| CAS Project And Experience | 8 |
| 5 CAS Stages | 10 |
| The 7 Learning Outcomes | 11 |
| CAS Portfolio | 12 |
| Reflection | 13 |
| References | 17 |

IB Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programmes, including CAS, 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.

We believe these attributes can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

Why CAS?

CAS 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.

CAS students are expected to:



- approach CAS with a proactive 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 behaviours.

CAS In a Nutshell

“...if you believe in something, you must not just think or talk or write, but must act.”

(Peterson 2003)

CAS is at the heart of the Diploma Programme. CAS is designed to strengthen and extend students’ personal and interpersonal learning.

CAS is organized around the three strands of creativity, activity and service defined as follows.

Creativity - exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance

Activity - physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle

Service - collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need.

Students develop skills, attitudes and dispositions through a variety of individual and group experiences that provide students with opportunities to explore their interests and express their passions, personalities and

perspectives. Each individual student has a different starting point and different needs and goals. A CAS programme is individualized according to student interests, skills, values and background.

Successful completion of CAS is a **requirement for** the award of the IB Diploma. While not formally assessed, students reflect on their CAS experiences and provide evidence in their CAS portfolios of achieving the seven learning outcomes.

The CAS programme formally begins at the start of the Diploma Programme and continues regularly, ideally on a weekly basis, for at least **18 months** with a reasonable balance between creativity, activity, and service.



All students are expected to maintain and complete a CAS portfolio as evidence of their engagement with CAS. The CAS portfolio is a collection of evidence that showcases CAS experiences and for student reflections; it is not formally assessed. Through their CAS portfolio, students provide the school with evidence demonstrating achievement of each learning outcome.

Students engage in **CAS experiences** involving one or more of the three CAS strands. A CAS experience can be a single event or may be an extended series of events.

Further, students undertake a **CAS project** of at least one month's duration that challenges students to show initiative, demonstrate perseverance, and develop skills such as collaboration, problem-solving, and decision-making.

The CAS project can address any single strand of CAS, or combine two or all three strands.

Students use the **CAS stages** (investigation, preparation, action, reflection and demonstration) as a framework for CAS experiences and the CAS project.

Each student must have four formal documented **interviews** with their CAS coordinator. In the first year in September and June, in the second year in September and April.

CAS emphasizes **reflection** which informs students' learning and growth by allowing students to explore ideas, skills, strengths, limitations and areas for further development and consider how they may use prior learning in new contexts.



CAS Strands

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

Creativity in CAS provides students with the opportunity to explore their own sense of original thinking and expression. Creativity will come from the student’s talents, interests, passions, emotional responses, and imagination; the form of expression is limitless. This may include visual and performing arts, digital design, writing, film, culinary arts, crafts and composition. Students are encouraged to engage in creative endeavours that move them beyond the familiar, broadening their scope from conventional to unconventional thinking.

Activity Physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle

The aim of the “Activity” strand is to promote lifelong healthy habits related to physical well-being. Pursuits may 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 are encouraged to participate at an appropriate level and on a regular basis to provide a genuine challenge and benefit. Schools must support students whose circumstances or culture may determine participation in physically active experiences. Similarly, students with disabilities must be given opportunities to take part in this strand. All CAS students must satisfy the basic requirement of physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle as is appropriate for each student.

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

The aim of the “Service” strand is for students to understand their capacity to make a meaningful contribution to their community and society. Through service, students develop and apply personal and social skills in real-life situations involving decision-making, problem-solving, initiative, responsibility, and accountability for their actions. Service is often seen as one of the most transforming elements of CAS by promoting students’ self-awareness, offering diverse occasions for interactions and experiences and opportunities for international-mindedness. Use of the CAS stages in developing a service experience is recommended for best practice.

Service within CAS benefits all involved: students learn as they identify and address authentic community needs, and the community benefits through reciprocal collaboration. Service fosters development of abilities, attitudes and values in accordance with the IB mission statement and the IB learner profile. As such, CAS service experiences are unpaid.



CAS Project and Experience

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

CAS experience can be a single event or may be an extended series of events.

A CAS project is a collaborative series of sequential CAS experiences lasting at least one month.

The CAS coordinator assists students in understanding what may or may not be a CAS experience. There are four guidelines that should be applied to any suggested CAS experience.

A CAS experience must:

- fit within one or more of the CAS strands
- be based on a personal interest, skill, 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

To further assist students in deciding on a CAS experience, the following questions may be useful for students to consider.

- Will the experience be enjoyable?
- Does the experience allow for development of personal interests, skills and/or talents?
- What new possibilities or challenges could the experience provide?
- What might be the possible consequences of your CAS experience for you, others and the environment?
- Which CAS learning outcomes may be addressed?

Some 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.

CAS is not: Activities for pay, an activity that is divisive, a course for a grade, religious proselytizing, or a family responsibility.



Choose something for yourself!

School Gym

Volleyball, Basketball, Unihockey, Gymnastics, Dancing and more

Fitness Gym

Calisthenic, Bodybuilding, Rowing and more

Pottery workshop

Ceramic, Glaze, Clay modeling

Quiet activities

Chess, Snooker, Darts

MOSiR courts

Soccer, Speedminton, Intercrosse and more

Słopiewnie choir

weekly singing classes

Local Entrepreneurs

Cooperation for charity purposes

Volunteering

Running referee, Children helping

Możesz Association

Cyclical charity campaigns for psycho-prevention and development of children

City Campaigns

organizing or participating in various charity and other events

PE activities

as part of school sports activities

Animals helping

food collection for animals shelters

5 CAS Stages

The CAS stages mentioned below offer a helpful framework and continuum of process for CAS students as they consider what they would like to do in CAS, make plans, and carry out their ideas.

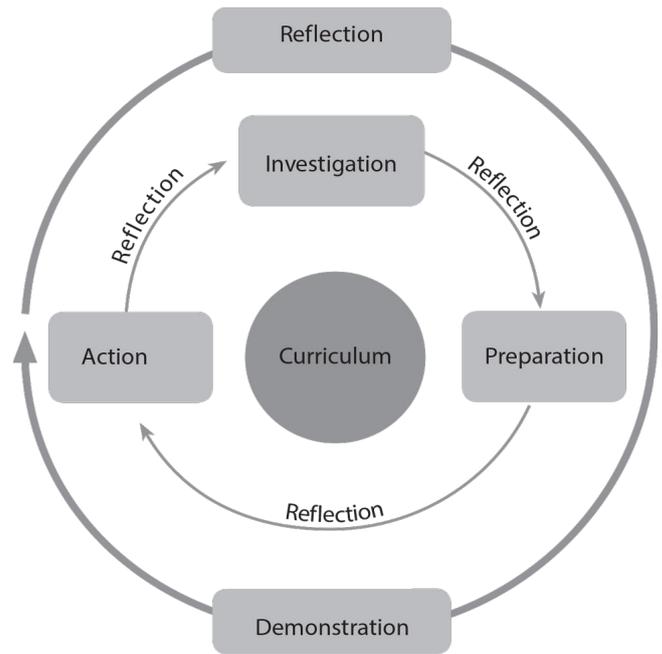
1. **Investigation:** Students identify their interests, skills and talents to be used in considering opportunities for CAS experiences, as well as areas for personal growth and development. Students investigate what they want to do and determine the purpose for their CAS experience. In the case of service, students identify a need they want to address.

2. **Preparation:** Students clarify roles and responsibilities, develop a plan of actions to be taken, identify specified resources and timelines, and acquire any skills as needed to engage in the CAS experience.

3. **Action:** Students implement their idea or plan. This often requires decision-making and problem-solving. Students may work individually, with partners, or in groups.

4. **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.

5. **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.



The CAS stages provide a framework that enables students to:

- increase self-awareness
- learn about learning
- explore new and unfamiliar challenges
- employ different learning styles
- develop their ability to communicate and collaborate with others
- experience and recognize personal development
- develop attributes of the IB learner profile.

For singular CAS experiences, students may begin with investigation, preparation, or action. For ongoing CAS experiences, beginning with investigation is advised. In these ongoing experiences, the action stage may lead students back to investigation or preparation as they further develop, expand and implement new or related ideas.

The 7 CAS Learning Outcomes

To meet the CAS requirement the CAS Portfolio should include evidence that all seven learning outcomes mentioned below have been demonstrated in a variety of activities allowing you to gain experience and reflect on your own activities.

1 Identify own strengths and develop

areas for growth

Students are able to see themselves as individuals with various abilities and skills, of which some are more developed than others.

2 Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken, developing new skills in the process

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.

3 Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience

Students can articulate the stages from conceiving an idea to executing a plan for a CAS experience or 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.

4 Show commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences

Students demonstrate regular involvement and active engagement in CAS.

5 Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively

Students are able to identify, demonstrate and critically discuss the benefits and challenges of collaboration gained through CAS experiences.

6 Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance

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.

7 Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions

Students show awareness of the consequences of choices and actions in planning and carrying out CAS experiences.

CAS Portfolio

All students are required to maintain and complete a CAS portfolio showing that they have participated in CAS during an 18-month period. You will be expected to show this completed portfolio to the CAS coordinator in March Year 2 in order to qualify for your IB Diploma. Your portfolio will be checked during the two years of the CAS program to make sure that you are on track. You will not qualify for the Diploma, if the portfolio is not complete.

During advisory time you will participate in activities and complete exercises that can be added to your portfolio. Your portfolio should be made up of 3 elements: **Profile**, **Experiences** and **Evidence**.

Mandatory items

- Make your profile as a part of portfolio
- Place in Cas Experiences (using C-A-S categories)
- Work, write and reflect about all 7 Learning Outcomes during the program.
- Plan at least one project (And write a full CAS Planning Form for it).
- At least one activity with the three elements of CAS (C, A and S).
- CAS Final Reflection/conclusion (500 words).
- Photos and/or videos for all experiences
- Evidences for all activities/experiences
- Four CAS Interviews feedback



Profile

You will create a profile that is made up of your:

- Interests
- Skills and Talents
- Plans
- Goals both short-term and long term

Experiences

Your experiences will be made up of:

- Reflections
- Learning moments
- Personal achievements
- Use of the CAS stages

Evidences

This can be made up of anything that shows evidence of your participation in CAS.

- Planning documents
- Letters/emails
- Certificates
- Photos/videos/audio recordings

These should show a connection to the CAS learning outcomes and may even extend to your thoughts about future ambitions.

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.”

Reflection is central to building a deep and rich experience in CAS. Student learning is enhanced by reflection on choices and actions. This enables students to develop in their ability to explore skills, strengths, limitations and areas for further development. Reflection leads to improved problem-solving and exploring how CAS experiences may influence future possibilities.

The thinking skills category of the approaches to learning in the Diploma Programme highlights the need to explicitly teach students to reflect in different situations. For reflection in CAS to be meaningful, schools plan across the curriculum how to engage students in reflection as a learned process.

The overarching **intention of reflection** in CAS includes the opportunity for students to:

- deepen learning
- consider relevance of experience
- explore personal and group values
- recognize the application of knowledge, skills, and attributes
- identify strengths and areas for development
- gain a greater understanding of self and others
- place experience in a larger context
- generate relevant ideas and questions
- consider improvements in individual and collective choices and actions
- transfer prior learning to new situations
- generate and receive constructive feedback
- develop the ongoing habit of thoughtful, reflective practice.



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.



Extending reflection

Having established an effective understanding of the four elements of reflection, students develop higher-order thinking skills by critically examining thoughts, feelings and actions, thereby synthesizing their learning. The theory of knowledge (TOK) course provides students with critical thinking skills to develop and extend their reflections.

Students can be encouraged to move forward through deeper questions.

What did I do? could become:

- Why did I make this particular choice?
- How did this experience reflect my personal ideas and values?
- In what ways am I being challenged to think differently about myself and others?

How did I feel? could become:

- How did I feel about the challenges?
- What happened that prompted particular feelings?
- What choices might have resulted in different feelings and outcomes?

Following reflection, feedback from the CAS coordinator is beneficial and necessary as is peer feedback. Feedback provides acknowledgment, confirmation or clarification of students' understanding and insight, and opportunities for further development.

Feedback can take many forms such as part of an informal or formal discussion, as a written response to a blog posting, during group discussion or paired peer conversation. Students may also advise on their preferred method for feedback.

Time for reflection!

Examples of CAS Reflection

UNICEF club: A narrative...

NOT WHAT WE WANT

So far the UNICEF club has made the following plans for our Global Handwashing Day event:

- When: October 12th -14th (the 15th is a Saturday)
- What: We will set up a booth on the ground floor, where we will show students how to wash their hands properly. We will also take a tally of students that wash their hands in the bathroom. We started collecting facts and statistics for the posters to put up. One is that 1000 deaths by diarrhoea each year could be prevented through washing your hands.



Tennis lessons: A narrative...

NOT WHAT WE WANT

Over the past few weeks we focused on serving. We practiced first with the ball toss, and then the arm action. We had to do it over and over and it was boring. The coach just kept saying “do it again”. In the end I did manage to get more serves in.

UNICEF club: A reflection...

WHAT WE EXPECT

Again I was frustrated by people not turning up to the meeting. We rely on them to do their part, when they don't turn up they let us down. I'm not sure what to do - I don't feel I have the confidence to say something to them. I remember once I learned something about being assertive - time to look back at what it means and see if it can help me.

Today a stat was shared - “1000 deaths by diarrhoea each year could be prevented through washing your hands”

Firstly, how do they know? Who came up with this stat? Should I question it, or believe it? If it is true - I bet that it is people in poverty that are dying from diarrhoea, not privileged people like me.

Tennis lessons: A reflection...

WHAT WE EXPECT

My coach has been pushing me to practice more, however we just keep doing the same drills. I think we would learn faster with variety in the drills - it would become less boring. I know that in football I learnt dribbling much faster because the coach used lots of different types of drills. He also gave us a lot of feedback about what I was doing right and wrong, and this made me think about my skills. My tennis coach never really gives me feedback like that. I want to suggest something to him but I'm too shy. Would it be right to ask mum to say something to him (but what does she know about tennis?).

Ideally we use the CAS Learning Outcomes to reflect

1. 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 organized the fundraiser for your Horizons Week Project, 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 Hong Kong, 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?

2. 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 to Cambodia and develop new skills to achieve your goal.

3. Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience. What it REALLY means: This one's easy! When you are organizing your CAS events or activities, just make sure you keep notes on how you organized them, who you contacted and what the organizational process was like.

4. 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. Talk about your struggles and how you overcame them!

5. 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 Trips is the team work. This can range from learning a new collaborative activity such as photography as part of your Creative strand to being involved in a volunteer group. You are stronger when you work in a team. Think of Robert Lewandowski or Marcin Gortat - they are sports stars, but without their teammates they wouldn't have accomplished what they have today.

6. 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 poverty, the refugee crisis, homelessness, cancer research? CAS Trips advice - pick one per year and think what you can do to help that cause from where you are. Plan it. Initiate it. Do it. That's CAS, folks!

7. 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 in 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?

Shape your Reflections around the Learning Outcomes and reflection becomes very easy. However, not all reflections need to be written, so get creative!

The good example of Reflection linked to a Learning Outcome

One of the goals of my CAS is to address the Planning and Initiate Outcome. Through this goal, students are asked to plan activities/events with others and have a personal input in their development.

This goal was a new challenge for me; I've never had an active input or taken decisions for a charity or school/community event, I tended more to be a working hand more than the mind for something. I had to leave my very comfortable bubble of just following others, to be a leader or active planner for something.

My first approach was the Diwali Ball. In this event I was part of the organizing team for the event; something I had never done before. I personally helped in the promotion of the event in the school, for example by creating awareness within the school of the celebration. This event was extremely helpful in showing me how much effort and work is put into these simple events and the coordination that must exist between the people

for them to happen. It has completely changed my perspective on events and how they happen; it is a real, full-time job that requires months of planning in advance. I'm glad I had the chance to learn this at West Island School.

My other important 'Planning and Initiative' job is my involvement with the Diwali Ball Committee and preparations. The Ball is organized by staff, parents and students, but they also like to have student input (which is great!), so I've been (and still am) attending meetings with the parents and helping with the organization of the event. This is a great opportunity as I get to understand how more formal events are planned and also, by representing the school along with fellow students, I have a position of responsibility and have to place others thoughts and wishes before my personal ones. Hence, I literally had to be very aware that I'm not just representing myself but being a leader for this event and the people involved at WIS.

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