The actual *specific requirements* of CAS depends on your **CAS coordinator/advisor** since your school has the final decision of passing/failing you!

CAS 101 and FAQs

A (hopefully) comprehensive CAS guide to help you know CAS better!

The art of doing whatever and tweaking it to sound convincing

A Guide Written by rolla#2995 (now rollacs) from the IBO Discord Server. (Also, please scroll down. Hope you won't be intimidated by the page count because I tried to cover everything as much as I could)

Special thanks to kaizokuoo#1097, worldsinger#3305, JenerallyJenius#5409, eden#6028 for proofreading this guide and ToxicScorpius#5782 for suggesting the formatting design!

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The actual *specific requirements* of CAS depends on your **CAS coordinator/advisor** since your school has the final decision of passing/failing you!

Intro

CAS - Creativity, Action, and Service - is one of the three core strands in the IB Diploma Program alongside the EE and TOK. To receive the diploma, **it is compulsory for every IB student to pass CAS**. According to the IB CAS Guide, CAS' purpose as a core strand is as follows:

"students 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."

In other words, IB turns CAS as a compulsory requirement so that you:

- Actually "have a life."
- Don't spend your time solely to die on academic coursework.
- Ensure a chance for you to become a slave to the IB learner profile
 explore interests you might have thought of doing but have never
 actually done.

Purpose

Some main things the IB hope to encourage you to do in CAS include:

- Engage in critical thinking by analyzing and reflecting on the activities that you have done.
- 2. Learn how to set your own goals and have commitment through it.
- 3. To have a balanced set of activities between the CAS strands (will be explained further).
- 4. Fulfill the IB learner profile.

Creativity, Activity, Service

CAS is fundamentally based on these 3 strands:

- Creativity generally creative-related activities or learning languages.
- Action usually sports or anything physical.
- Service typically involves planning and interacting with humans.
 Volunteer events or researching about some global issue.

This is how they typically categorise the CAS experiences and CAS projects that you're going to do in CAS. To make sure that you're not only focusing on one aspect of life. The activities you do can fit into either one, two, or all three strands but they always try to encourage you to do all three if possible. For IB's official definition of each strand, check CAS Definition or IB's CAS Guide.

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The "ideal" CAS program, according to IBO

This is what the IB would ideally expect you to do in CAS:

- Work on CAS continuously every week for 18 months
- Have a CAS Portfolio where you dump all your activities' reflection and evidence.
- Achieve all 7 CAS learning outcomes (LO).
- Do CAS experiences which involve 1 or more strands. They can be one-time events or continuous (next CAS should be more challenging than before though).
- Do one CAS project which takes at least one month which involves 1 or more strands.
- Use CAS stages (investigation, preparation, action, reflection and demonstration).
- Do 3 formally documented CAS interviews with CAS coordinator and adviser (roughly at the start of year 1, end of year 1, and end of CAS).
- Using reflections to develop a deep and rich experience in CAS.

Alright, the list above may sound intimidating for someone and a lot of work, but hear me out: **CAS** is more flexible and lenient than the above. That is the *ideal* requirement given from the IB in order to pass.

- The actual requirement is more lenient (or can be harsher) and this
 varies by your CAS coordinator(s) because the one who determines if you
 pass or not is your school. This means they can add extra minor
 requirements or keep it lax and you'd have to follow their requirements
 in order to pass.
- You can easily integrate CAS into your life if you have some hobbies/interests that you're already working on - just remember to make sure to document them for evidence and make reflections for them!
- 3. Or if you have something you've been wanting to do but haven't got around doing so, now is the time to do so!

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Learning Outcomes (LO)

IB puts more emphasis on you to complete CAS LOs:

- Strength & Growth the abilities/skills that you have improved
- Challenge & Skills new/unfamiliar challenges means you may learn a skill you did not expect
- Initiative & Planning describing from idea to execution and planning ahead based on previous experiences
- Commitment & Perseverance regularly involved
- Collaborative Skills talks on the demonstration of working together, its benefits and challenges
- Global Engagement showing global issue understanding and what was done in response to it
- Ethics of Choices & Actions knows the (potential) consequences of your actions

For more details on each LOs, check out the CAS Learning Outcomes where I dumped the detailed IB CAS Guide version or check it out in the IB's CAS Guide.

CAS Experience

Here are the following requirements for a CAS experience:

- Fits in one or more of the three strands
- Based from a potential activity that promotes personal growth
- Provides a chance to develop the IB learner profile
- Not used for Diploma course requirements

Things that are NOT a CAS experience:

- Any paid task
- Any unethical activity
- Any activity which may potentially offend politics or religion
- An activity where you are passive and does not give you the opportunity to interact
- Anything that's a task for a class
- Activities with no clear goal or purpose
- Any activity which you've ever done before without any extra challenges or twists at all
- Family or religious duty

These aren't a CAS experience as they neither fit to any of the strands nor do not address any of the learning outcomes.

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CAS Project

CAS Project requirements are similar to CAS experiences, typically with the addition of two requirements: it has to be **longer than a month**, involve **collaboration**, and **address the learning outcomes**.

CAS Supervisor

CAS experiences and projects often require a CAS Supervisor. In some schools, CAS coordinators also function as your CAS supervisors. However, if your school asks you to find individual CAS Supervisors, here are the **common requirements**, but **not every requirement is applicable** (again, this varies per school so check with your supervisor on this):

- Must NOT be your parent or friend
- Must be an adult or over 18
- Must be knowledgeable in the activity that you have done
- Must be able vouch that you participated in the activity
- Must only be your school teachers

CAS Portfolio

The CAS portfolio is essentially the medium where you will compile most of your CAS experiences and CAS projects' reflections and evidence. Nowadays, most schools use ManageBac. However, other schools still may use other mediums such as big compiling binders or blogs to track your CAS portfolio. This once again entirely depends on your coordinator!

The CAS Portfolio generally consists of:

- Personal CAS plan and timeline
- Evidence of CAS involvement (documentation, evidence)
- CAS reflections
- Evidence of CAS interview (usually coordinator contact)
- Evidence of completing a CAS experience

Examples of other people's CAS portfolios:

- Justin's portfolio pdf from the IBO Discord
- Soff's reflection link from the IBO Discord
- Eden's portfolio link from the IBO Discord
- An excerpt of my CAS' Project, Experiences, and Reflections

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Every school varies on the requirements of the CAS portfolio should work so on details of how CAS portfolios work please check with your coordinator to see what they've got to say about them. Managebac usually already has convenient logs of timelines, LOs, and coordinator contact, so all you need to do would be to create the CAS experience proposals and so on which your CAS coordinator should explain to you.

CAS interviews

CAS interviews are a way for the school to discuss about you and the progress you've made. It should in no way be something that's judged, but rather a form of encouragement and perhaps a space to give advice on your overall progress. There is no right or wrong in these interviews.

There will be a minimum of 3 CAS interviews. Usually, it is during:

- The start of 1st year it's the chance for you to talk about the interests you have and potential plans you can do for your future CAS experiences
- The end of 1st year to reflect again on the CAS experiences you have done, and your future plans for the next CAS year
- The end of your CAS journey time for you to relax, unwind the CAS progress that you have done and talk about your personal progress on the overall CAS experiences you have done!

CAS Stages

You can implement this in your CAS experiences or projects if you're confused as to where to start. It's not a requirement to follow these, but they can be helpful as a guideline.

- Investigation identify interests, skills, and talents + personal growth and development potentials for CAS experience opportunities
- Preparation clarify roles and responsibilities, plan activity, get necessary skills for CAS experience, state expected challenges
- Action implementing the plan/idea, things that went down with it.
 Maybe changes, problems, or unexpected challenges?
- Reflection (ongoing) ramble. every. single. detail. Describe what happened, feelings, ideas, and questions. Address your learning outcomes here. (they also hope this can sometimes lead to another CAS experience by generating ideas)
- **Demonstration** show what is learned and accomplished.

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Approaches to the Three Strands

If you're using Managebac, you probably need to tick off these options:

- Ongoing something you've been working on or your hobby.
 (ex: if you generally enjoy drawing or playing a certain sport and have done them before joining the IB diploma and would like to make a CAS experience to improve those skills, you would need to categorize them as an ongoing experience.)
- **School-based** these are usually school clubs, school activities which are allowed to be included as CAS, or any school-related activities.
- Community-based this involves the local community.
 (ex: a community group outside school, community park, etc.)
- Individual these are personal things you are interested in doing as an individual which typically doesn't involve others, but rather your own interests.

Types of Service

- Direct direct interaction with other people
 (ex: tutoring, working in an animal shelter, etc.)
- Indirect actions that are beneficial to community even though they
 don't directly interact with the community
 (ex: designing a campaign poster, designing a nonprofit website, etc.)
- Advocacy speaking on behalf of an awareness or a public issue
 (ex: creating a video on plastic waste, initiating a campaign, creating a
 play or challenge to raise awareness about one issue, etc.)
- Research collecting resources about an issue
 (ex: surveys, social research, contribute to a study, etc.)

General CAS Ideas

Credits to @eden#6028 for making the CAS ideas list!

"Don't be limited by these, these are only my suggestions. Large projects are not suggested as they are more personal and prone to academic dishonesty.

Remember that CAS is about fulfilling the learning outcomes, you do not have to complete projects/parts perfectly, but reflect on them"

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Creativity	Activity	Service
 Art-related activities (Painting, drawing, sculpting, collage) Writing-related activities (Journaling, Creative writing, making a blogspot) Music-related activities (Learning a new instrument, music theory, new piece/song) Digital-related activities (Starting a YouTube channel, making videos, TikTok) Cooking-related activities (Learning to cook, bake, experiment to find a new recipe) Learning a new language Learning how to use makeup, bodypaint Photography Write for a non-profit charity-based magazine (could also be service) 	 Running/walking Dancing Working out Working out and logging the plan could also be creativity Cycling Any type of sports (that includes chess and e-sports if your coordinator allows it!) Walk your neighbours' dogs (could also be service) 	 Online tutoring Starting an online fundraiser Teaching people different languages you can speak, more so for fun than for educational/academic reasons Deliver groceries for your elderly neighbours Teaching people a skill you have, e.g. drawing. Writing letters to elderly homes Doing a clothing drive/food drive (asking neighbours/family friends to donate and then provide the resources to charity) Making videos/guides to teach the elderly how to use online devices to get in touch with their friends/family during quarantine (could also be creativity) Contributing Collaborative projects such as OpenStreetMap and Wikipedia

You can google other CAS ideas like 50 CAS Project Ideas, 100 CAS Project Ideas, or look at what other IB students do for inspiration.

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How to write CAS reflections

Generally, the questions given in Managebac (assuming you do) are already enough to help you write reflections by answering them. Nevertheless, if you don't know where to start on reflections or how to do a proper one, keep in mind that **there is no right or wrong way to make reflections**. Reflections are all about writing on you and your experiences, it doesn't have to be perfect. However, if you're still stuck or unsure of where to start here are some of the things which can help guide you and ask yourself on when you start writing your reflections:

Basic elements of reflections

- **Describe** tell your experience. Tell the process from how it started and what happened in between.
 - What have you planned for the experience?
 - What happened in the experience?
 - How did it happen? Why did it happen?
 - Where did it happen? Who is involved?
 - Did things go like how you expected? Why?
 - Did you encounter any problems? Or were you successful?
 - Did you go through the LOs you picked? How did you go through them?
- **Express your feelings** tell them the emotions you feel about these experiences.
 - How did you feel about the things you experience?
 - What makes you feel that way? What started it?
 - If that were to not happen, how might you feel instead?
 - How did you feel after going through the LOs?

Elements to increase reflection's depth

- Generate ideas rethinking choices and actions made to be more aware of yourself and the situation.
 - How well did you think you do?
 - What might've been better? What do you find satisfactory?
 - What would you do if you encounter a similar situation in the future?
 - Will you continue to do this? Or maybe did you suddenly think of improving it/changing it?
- Ask Questions asking further questions (especially on ongoing interests)

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- Is there anything you'd like to know more about?
- Would you like a tougher challenge? Ask yourself the questions you may ask if you were to do so.

In other words, think of your CAS portfolio as your diary of the activities you have done. Write them when you just experienced something you might want to share with your friends about right away, or when you feel satisfied with your experience. Share the things you have learned and improve in. Also, reflections don't have to be in forms of long boring essay-like paragraphs. If you feel like it, you can also discuss your essay in the form of a video, a poem, a song, a collage, or any other form to highlight your CAS experiences.

In people's samples of CAS Portfolio, some CAS reflections were short while others were lengthy. Everyone passed CAS, so CAS requirements can vary a lot and it depends on your school!

According to the IB,

A Reflection is:	A Reflection is NOT:
 Honest Personal Done in many different ways Sometimes easy, sometimes difficult Sometimes creative Necessary for learning What you did + felt Surprising Helpful for planning Done alone or with others About thoughts, feelings, ideas Perspectives 	 Forced Right or wrong, good or bad Marked or graded Difficult Copying what others said Predictable To be judged by others Only a summary of what happened Done to please someone Only written/discussion A waste of time Only led by teachers

Or, you can also check CAS Portfolio Examples for reflection examples.

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Personal tips to survive CAS

CAS is all about being able to flexibly follow your coordinator's directions while pursuing your interests mid-juggling IB work. Try not to stress it out too much, and don't expect yourself to do something grand or great for CAS experiences. Sometimes you can make small challenges for your interests, other times you may have thought of executing a small idea that you find might feel like a huge step out of your comfort zone. Do it, and try to enjoy it. Make your reflections a space for you to share the experiences you had the flicker of fire in and keep it that way. You'll surely pass, and you can do it!

Most of the time, people did not pass CAS because they didn't complete the requirements their schools gave, rushed their CAS (doing it last minute, doing a lot of activities at the end of the IB year), or barely did any CAS (one CAS only in a few months instead of a month each). Again, some schools may be completely fine with you doing little CAS, others are stricter and demand you to complete all their demands.

Further Reading

The Official IB CAS Guide Syllabus. Yes. Read it.

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

What is CAS? What do I do with CAS?

What is CAS about? I have no idea what it is

Please read starting from the Intro Section to get a general idea of what CAS is.

What can be included as creativity? activity? service?

Read the Creativity, Activity, and Service Section. For ideas and examples, refer to the General CAS Ideas Section. But keep in mind that if you can successfully

persuade your CAS coordinator why it can be included as these strands, that wouldn't be a problem either. Just make sure not to overdo it/argue them to the point where you don't disrespect your coordinators!

How many reflections are needed for CAS?

How much CAS do we need to do?

There is no specific number for this requirement according to the IB, only general requirements. However, your school may set specific minimum requirements for reflections or CAS experiences, so it's best to check with your CAS coordinator.

How do I record my CAS experiences?

Different activities have different ways of recording CAS experiences. Common ways of recording CAS experiences include taking photos, screenshots, videos, or including external information from a third party which proves that you've done the experience (the leniency or strictness of this depends on your coordinator, so be sure to confirm with them for activities.)

How to use managebac?

I would suggest jumping into managebac's "Everything you need to know to get started with ManageBac" page.

Do I need to do a minimum of 150 hours or x reflection for CAS?

What is the minimum reflection/hours/LOs possible for CAS? The 150 hours minimum is no longer a requirement. If you see this requirement when googling about CAS on the internet, you should know that it is an old curriculum requirement (however some schools may still enforce that requirement). There are no minimum reflection or word requirements for CAS either. Today's CAS requirements only mostly put emphasis on your LOs and to be consistently working on your CAS for 18 months instead of rushing it over the last minute/few months. There is no minimum requirement for how many LOs either. If there are indeed minimum requirements for reflections or LOs, this

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depends on your school and they have the right to impose these requirements as they want. For more general CAS requirements, check out the "ideal" CAS program Section.

Does this count as CAS?

Do you think this CAS idea would work?

This really depends on your coordinator. If they allow it, then you may do it. But otherwise, you can generally decide whether it's allowed if it fits either of the three CAS strands and whether it fulfills the requirements of a CAS Experience or CAS Project.

Any CAS ideas? I'm stuck.

We can't give you CAS ideas for you to do since it destroys the integrity and violates the purpose of CAS to explore the things you supposedly might be passionate about, but you can research around hobbies, interests or get ideas from the General CAS Ideas Section or google some general activities you can do and start from there!

For each learning outcome, what can I do for [insert LO here]? I find most of them quite self-explanatory (Strength & growth involves improving on a skill, knowing your abilities better, and etc.). Furthermore, most of the time this also depends on how you can link it. As long as you can reason why you will fulfill these learning outcomes and your coordinator approves it, any activity would work but pls follow the general definitions of them, don't just link them despite being completely unrelated.

People often seem to be stuck on figuring out CAS experiences on global engagement and ethics of choices & actions. What can be considered as these again can depend on what your CAS coordinator may say, however a general rule of thumb when you can include global engagement is when you relate it to global issues. It doesn't necessarily have to be a direct relation, it can be something minor from the skills you have which is indirectly contributing to global issues. (ex: making posters for a global issue, running for a cause, visiting old people's homes, sharing food for the homeless, etc.)

The same applies with Ethics of choices and actions. This usually relates to the actions you do and how it might affect other people. Typically, it's very easy to link anything involving human contact with ethics of choices and action, even for indirect actions - for example, when you are making posters for a global issue, you have to consider the appropriate wording or design of the poster and how it may affect how other people interpret the final results.

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If I do something which is related to a portion of an IB subject, can I still include it as CAS?

Yes, you can as long as the CAS experience is not going to be something that's graded by IB. For example, being a Helper or Revision Session host in the IBO Discord can be counted as CAS because it is something the IB will not grade you on and there are other skills you can attain other than increasing your subject's ability, however doing an experiment to raise about a national issue whose data will be used for EE may or may not be allowed depending on whether your activity delves into the issue deeper or whether it's a one-time superficially done experiment. But then again, your coordinator is the one who will give the final call on whether it can be included or not.

How do I know if I've done enough CAS?

It depends on when your coordinator says you've done enough, or when they confirm that you've done the bare minimum required by your school. Ask them if you're unsure.

What's the best way to pass CAS?

Best is subjective. It can mean passing CAS with minimal effort, passing CAS with memorable experiences, or many other interpretations. I'd suggest taking a moment to reflect on your priorities for CAS, understand the nature of CAS and expectations of your school, and figure it out from there.

I have just started my IB year and my coordinator hasn't done anything, and I haven't done anything either for CAS. What should I do?

The start of a new school year may be rough, and if your coordinator isn't doing anything it may be best to reach out to them. Regardless, if your whole school isn't informed about CAS it should be okay since your school is the one who is passing you therefore it should be their responsibility to inform you about CAS and handle it - but it may be good to start collecting evidence on potential activities you can use as CAS evidence. At least two forms of evidence or knowing someone who may have external evidence or confirm that you have done that activity (someone other than parents and friends) may be a good idea.

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Does the IB check my CAS?

The IB does periodically check samples of reflections from schools to monitor CAS. However, this shouldn't affect your diploma.

I want to ask other questions online. They weren't answered/explained here.

I'd suggest you to go to IBO Discord, IBO Subreddit, or IBO Facebook to connect with other online IB students who will be happy to assist you. Or really, just go **ask your CAS coordinator**. If you are unable to contact your CAS coordinator, try reaching out to your IB Coordinator. In the worst case scenario, you can directly contact the IBO themselves.

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Appendices

These are all directly taken from the IB CAS Guide.

CAS Definition

Jump back to the Creativity, Activity, Service Section.

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

CAS Learning Outcomes

Jump back to the Learning Outcomes (LO) Section.

Learning outcome 1: Identify own strengths and develop areas for growth

Suggested descriptors

The student:

- is aware of own strengths and weaknesses
- is open to improvement and growth opportunities
- is able to propose activities according to own interests and talents
- · is willing to participate in different activities
- is able to undertake a thoughtful self-evaluation
- is able to see themselves as individuals with various abilities and skills, some more developed than others.

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

Suggested descriptors

The student:

- participates in an experience that demands an appropriate personal challenge; this could be with new or familiar experiences
- is willing to become involved in unfamiliar environments and situations
- · acquires new skills and abilities
- increases expertise in an established area
- shows newly acquired or developed skills or increased expertise in an established area.

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Learning outcome 3: Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience

Suggested descriptors

The student:

- is able to articulate the CAS stages including investigation, preparation, action, reflection (ongoing) and demonstration, moving from conceiving an idea to carrying out a plan for a CAS experience or series of CAS experiences
- demonstrates knowledge and awareness by building on a previous CAS experience
- · shows initiative by launching a new idea or process
- suggests creative ideas, proposals or solutions
- integrates reflective thoughts in planning or taking initiative
- is aware of roles and responsibilities when designing an individual or collective CAS experience
- · shows responsible attitude to CAS project planning
- is able to develop a coherent action plan taking into account the aim or purpose, activities and resources.

Learning outcome 4: Show commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences

Suggested descriptors

The student:

- demonstrates regular involvement and active engagement with CAS experiences and CAS project
- is able to foresee potential challenges to the initial plan and consider valid alternatives and contingencies
- · demonstrates adaptability to uncertainties and changes
- gets involved in long-term CAS experiences and CAS project.

Learning outcome 5: Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively

Suggested descriptors

The student:

- shares skills and knowledge
- listens respectfully to proposals from peers
- is willing to take on different roles within a team
- shows respect for different points of view and ideas
- · makes valuable contributions
- is responsible for participating in the group
- readily assists others
- is able to identify, demonstrate and discuss critically the benefits and

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challenges of collaboration gained through CAS experiences.

Learning outcome 6: Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance

Suggested descriptors

The student:

- recognizes the global implications of local issues
- is able to identify global issues in the local or national community
- shows awareness of issues of global importance and takes concrete and appropriate actions in response to them either locally, nationally or internationally
- gets involved in CAS projects addressing global issues in a local, national or international context
- develops awareness and responsibility towards a shared humanity.

Learning outcome 7: Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actionsSuggested descriptors

The student:

- recognizes ethical issues
- is able to explain the social influences on one's ethical identity
- takes into account cultural context when making a plan or ethical decision
- identifies what is needed to know in order to make an ethical decision
- articulates ethical principles and approaches to ethical decisions
- shows accountability for choices and actions
- is aware of the consequences of choices and actions regarding self, others involved and the community
- integrates the process of reflection when facing an ethical decision
- shows awareness of the potential and varied consequences of choices and actions in planning and carrying out CAS experiences.

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Changelog

A tracker of the document's updates.

2020/10/30	Released this document to the public.	
2021/01/25	Added minor edits to the document.	
2021/05/24	Added a service idea proposed by Zen#8660.	
2021/07/05	Added rolla#2995's CAS excerpts and reflections.	
2021/09/29	Added a changelog.	
2021/10/10	Added "How do I record my CAS experience?", "How do I know if	
I've done enough CAS?", "What's the best way to pass CAS?" in the FAQ section.		
2023/05/24	Revised some wordings in the How to write CAS Reflections	
sections for better clarity.		
2023/07/01	Added eden6028's CAS portfolio.	