

Service learning guide

For use from August 2016

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Career-related Programme Service learning guide

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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.

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About this guide

Purpose

This guide supports the planning and organization of service learning, one of the core components of the International Baccalaureate Career-related Programme (CP). It is written primarily for the teacher/supervisor/CP coordinator and is also expected to inform school staff members.

What it includes

The guide is divided into the following sections:

- Introduction
- Service learning
- Service learning details
- Course review
- Programme evaluation
- Learning diversity
- Teacher support material
- Examples of service learning
- Understanding the service learning outcomes
- Working with cross-cultural communities
- Diversity in values and beliefs
- References

Further resources

The CP website offers resources for all four core components. There are additional resources—for example, web pages, books, videos, journals and teaching ideas—in the CP forum resource section.

Acknowledgment

The IB wishes to thank the educators and associated schools for generously contributing time and resources to the production of this guide.

Principles of the Career-related Programme core

The following principles must be followed by schools offering the Career-related Programme:

- The IB provides the curriculum and assessment framework for the programme's core components.
- Schools determine the nature of the delivery of the programme's core components.
- A teaching and learning philosophy that forms the basis of delivery for all core components is outlined in *What is an IB education?*
- Schools determine their own assessment for personal and professional skills, language development and service learning.
- Schools will assess the reflective project based on the assessment criteria determined by the IB; a sample of the school's reflective projects will be moderated by the IB.
- Schools are responsible for the health and safety of students and staff involved in the programme.

Aims of the Career-related Programme core

Drawing on the attributes of the learner profile, the core of the programme aims to develop students who are:

- thoughtful and active citizens
- responsible for their own learning and development
- competent and confident communicators
- reflective, creative and critical thinkers
- aware of our shared human condition
- able to establish a sense of identity in a context of time and place
- prepared to think about the needs, values and perspectives of other people
- active participants in their own intercultural learning.

Ethical education

The Career-related Programme provides an excellent opportunity for ethical education conceived as involving principles, attitudes and codes of behaviour. While ethical principles are also embodied in the IB's mission statement and learner profile, the programme's core emphasis is on helping students to develop their own identities and beliefs.

Various ethical issues will arise, either implicitly or explicitly, in the course of the programme's activities, for example as challenges to students' ideas, instinctive responses or ways of behaving. Schools have a specific responsibility to help students think, feel and act their way through ethical issues, particularly in view of the reflective project. Utilizing the personal and professional skills course for the exploration and application of ethics will support students' understanding of ethics.

Approaches to teaching and approaches to learning

Approaches to teaching and approaches to learning sit within the inner circle of the Career-related Programme model as they are within the models for all IB programmes. These approaches refer to the strategies, skills and attitudes that permeate the teaching and learning environment. They are closely linked with the learner profile attributes and aim to enhance student learning and prepare students for assessment and beyond.

Approaches to teaching and approaches to learning are also linked to the development of internationally minded students, a central aim of all IB programmes. Education for international-mindedness “relies on the development of learning environments that value the world as the broadest context for learning” (*What is an IB Education?* 2013).

Effective approaches to learning in the CP should therefore be developed within global contexts, with particular attention being given to promoting three key elements—global engagement, multilingualism and intercultural understanding.

There are clear connections between the core components and the approaches to teaching and approaches to learning. A package of resources (<https://ibpublishing.ibo.org/dpatl/>) has been developed to support approaches to teaching and approaches to learning in the Diploma Programme (DP) that can be an extremely useful source of guidance for teachers and coordinators in the design and delivery of the core components.

The nature of service learning

Service learning is a component of the Career-related Programme core.

Service learning provides opportunities for students to understand their capacity to make a meaningful contribution to their community and society. Through service learning, students develop and apply academic knowledge, personal skills and social skills in real-life situations involving decision-making, problem-solving, initiative, responsibility and accountability for their actions. The purpose is for students to contribute to society by improving the lives of people or assisting the environment or animals.

Service learning benefits all involved—students as they continue developing skills and knowledge applied to real-life situations, and the community through reciprocal collaboration. Service learning fosters development of abilities, attitudes and values in accordance with the IB mission statement and the IB learner profile. The process of service learning is best when understood and organized as an ongoing experience occurring with regularity throughout the duration of the students' CP.

The five service learning stages offer a helpful ongoing process framework for students.

Reflection is central to building a deep and rich experience in service learning. Reflection allows students to explore ideas, skills, strengths, limitations and areas for further development, and to consider how they may apply their prior learning and background in new contexts.

Aims

The aims of service learning are for students to:

- develop and apply knowledge and skills towards meeting an authentic community need
- develop as leaders who take initiative, solve problems and work collaboratively with others
- enjoy the experiences of both learning and service
- develop a sense of caring about, and a responsibility for, others
- gain a deeper understanding of themselves, their community and society through meaningful reflection
- enhance and strengthen their experience with the existing school curriculum.

Time required

A minimum of 50 hours is expected to be devoted to service learning. The school and students must give service learning as much importance as any other element of the CP and ensure sufficient time is allocated for engagement in service learning.

Learning outcomes

The five learning outcomes articulate what CP students are able to do at some point during their service learning programme. Through meaningful and purposeful service learning experiences, students develop the necessary skills, attributes and understandings to achieve the five service learning outcomes.

The five service learning outcomes are:

LO 1	Identify own strengths and develop areas for growth
Descriptor	Students are able to see themselves as individuals with various abilities and skills, of which some are more developed than others.
LO 2	Demonstrate participation with service learning experiences
Descriptor	Students can articulate the five stages from investigating and conceiving an idea to executing a plan for a service learning experience or series of service learning experiences. Students may show their knowledge and awareness by building on a previous service learning experience, or by launching a new idea or process, or by advancing the work of others. This may be accomplished in collaboration with other participants.
LO3	Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively
Descriptor	Students are able to identify and critically discuss the benefits and challenges of collaboration gained through service learning experiences.
LO 4	Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance
Descriptor	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.
LO 5	Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions
Descriptor	Students show awareness of the consequences of choices and actions in planning and carrying out service learning experiences.

Helping students understand the outcomes

Service learning outcomes can be more fully explained through the use of additional descriptors. See Understanding the service learning outcomes for further information on service learning outcomes and descriptors.

Evidencing the outcomes

Some service learning outcomes may be achieved many times, while others may be demonstrated less frequently. Not all service learning experiences lead to a service learning outcome.

Students provide the school with evidence in their service learning portfolio of having achieved each learning outcome at least once through their service learning programme.

The service learning coordinator must reach agreement with students as to what evidence is necessary to demonstrate achievement of each service learning outcome. Commonly, this evidence draws from the students' reflections and, along with other representations, is collected in the student service learning portfolio.

Assessment

The school is responsible for setting the wider requirements for students' achievement in service learning. See section on "Assessment".

Overview of service learning

This section covers all the main aspects of service learning that the school will need to consider.

These aspects are:

- Service learning within the CP
- Requirements
- The career-related context
- Links to personal and professional skills
- Links to academic studies
- The international dimension

Service learning within the CP

Service learning is the development and application of knowledge and skills towards meeting an identified and authentic community need. In this research-based approach, students often undertake service initiatives related to topics studied previously in their academic disciplines, utilizing skills, understandings and values developed in these studies. Service learning builds upon students' prior knowledge and background, enabling them to make links between their academic disciplines and their service experiences.

Service learning provides opportunities for students to apply their interests, skills and talents along with academic knowledge towards the common good while being observant of personal development and the impact of their actions. Student engagement in the process of service learning often engenders a natural enthusiasm as students find meaning by bridging classroom content with purposeful action.

Through the authenticity of the experience, there is the potential to transform or redefine a student's behaviour and actions within his or her personal values, changing the student while the student's actions change the community for the better.

During service learning, students develop and apply academic knowledge, personal skills and social skills in real-life situations in accordance with the IB mission statement and the IB learner profile. These skills include:

- decision-making
- problem-solving
- initiative
- responsibility
- accountability for actions.

Service learning fosters positive development in four key areas:

- **Knowledge development** refers to a deeper understanding of the nature, purpose and importance of what is learned through varied approaches to content and experiences. It should lead to improved cognitive and intellectual skills, while providing a richer context for academic learning and improved student engagement.

- **Personal development** refers to the ability to tap into students' self-perception in relation to their abilities and potential. During the service learning process, students identify personal interests, skills, talents and areas for growth. Through awareness of their strengths, areas for growth, inner feelings and thoughts, students become more self-aware, self-confident, self-directed, able to take risks and resilient.
- **Social development** refers to the ability to work with other individuals and within groups. Issues of responsibility, commitment, communication, independence and interdependence, diversity of opinion, leadership, recognizing emotions and interpersonal relationships can all be explored.
- **Civic development** refers to becoming involved in community issues and developing pro-social behaviours. This can lead to an increased awareness of community connections, community problems, citizenship and social responsibility, which in turn allows the students to develop an understanding of the relationships between local and global concerns.

Requirements

All CP students are required to engage in a service learning programme. Completion of service learning is based on student achievement of the five service learning outcomes.

All students are required to maintain and complete a service learning portfolio as evidence of their engagement with service learning throughout the programme and of application of the five stages of service learning. While not formally assessed, the portfolio gives students an opportunity to outline and reflect on their service learning experience. This provides the school with evidence that the student has achieved the five service learning outcomes.

As part of the programme, students engage in three interviews with their service learning coordinator. These formal interviews are documented by the coordinator and the student as further evidence of student achievement of the five outcomes.

- The first interview is at the beginning of the service learning programme.
- The second interview is at the end of the first year of the service learning programme.
- The third interview is at the end of the service learning programme.

The provision of service learning is expected to run concurrently with the other components of the CP core.

The career-related context

With many students, it may be appropriate for the service learning plans and identified need to be correlated to their career-related studies. If, for example, students are undertaking a course on health care as part of their career-related studies, service learning experiences related to hospitals, health clinics, rehabilitation centres and nursing homes could be ideal.

For some students, exploring a distinct or different area of interest may develop or provoke new avenues for exploration and open further career opportunities. In most service learning experiences, students will come into contact with people in diverse roles in society and learn about careers that may be new to them, or that they may experience and understand in new ways.

Links with the personal and professional skills course (PPS)

The relationship between personal and professional skills and service learning is relevant and useful to the students. Service learning coordinators/advisers are encouraged to make links between personal and professional skills and service learning.

Each of the five themes of personal and professional skills has relevance to service learning.

- **Personal development:** forms the basis for self-reflection and explores the skills required to organize and manage time, make decisions and manage change.
- **Intercultural understanding:** the exploration of cultures and cultural perspectives, including one's own, enables students to be effective in diverse settings.
- **Effective communication:** focuses on interpersonal communication, writing, presentation and IT skills.
- **Thinking processes:** explores the topics of ethical thinking, critical thinking, creative thinking, problem-solving and lateral thinking.
- **Applied ethics:** the IB's commitment to principled action requires students to take responsibility for their actions and consequences and act with integrity and honesty.

These themes can be utilized by the service learning coordinator/adviser in consultation with the personal and professional skills teacher. Incorporating aspects of the personal and professional skills course in service learning would provide further relevance to the students of the interrelated nature of the components of the CP core.

Links to academic studies

Service learning should be associated wherever possible with students' academic studies. Service learning provides an ideal vehicle to make tangible the nature, content and knowledge of the students' academic studies. For example, a student studying business management may utilize the knowledge gained to undertake social entrepreneurship benefiting an area of the local community. A student studying biology may investigate the local waterways and develop a plan to assist with cleaning it up.

Subject-specific teachers can assist students in developing service learning experiences by deepening their understanding related to a relevant issue identified by the students. Students can utilize their classroom time to investigate and research issues associated with their subject area, leading to planning and action of service learning experiences.

Teachers can deliberately integrate the process of service learning within academic courses to advance understanding through depth of inquiry and application of knowledge and skills to meet an authenticated need. When integrated within an academic class, students can participate in the five stages of service learning:

- investigation
- preparation
- action
- reflection
- demonstration.

By doing so, students become more capable of transferring this process to an idea of their own design. Service learning is known to enliven academics as students see how their studies can be readily applied in the community.

For example:

- Students learn about an event in recent history and, as a result, collect local stories from senior members of the community to contribute to the library and historical archive. Students develop both inquiry and documentation skills.
- In a literature class, students create and perform a contemporary version of a play for elementary children. This increases the students' understanding of the original text while developing their collaboration, writing and communication skills.
- In a mathematics class, students assist in designing a community parking lot to maximize the number of cars while ensuring adequate spaces for accessible parking for disabled people.
- In a science class, students identify a location for a rainwater garden then install and maintain it as a model for the local community.

As service learning is integrated within academic classes, teachers and students find a shared purpose in applying knowledge and abilities in ways that call upon the continual development of transferable skills. Experiencing the process within a classroom heightens student confidence in taking independent action.

The international dimension

Service learning builds on other international dimensions experienced by CP students. They are encouraged to view aspects of their service learning in a broad, global context. They are challenged to become internationally minded and culturally aware. Students can investigate and reflect on cultural values and behaviours, leading to a greater understanding and respect for other peoples and the way in which they lead their lives. Students should be reminded, however, that often it is just as important to look closer to home. Working with people from different social and cultural backgrounds in the local context can do as much to foster international-mindedness and mutual understanding as international service learning experiences or projects.

Service learning experiences

The service learning experience

A *service learning experience* is when the student engages in an event that involves service learning.

A service learning experience can be a single event or may be an extended series of events.

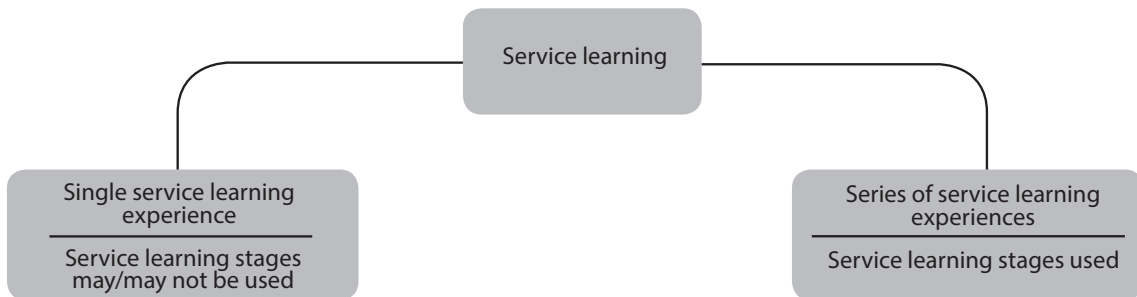


Figure 2

Service learning experiences and stages

A meaningful service learning programme must be more than unplanned or single experiences. A series of planned service learning experiences following the five stages of service learning is expected for a more engaging and comprehensive service learning programme.

By participating in service learning within the local community, students develop awareness and understanding of societal issues and solutions. However, single incidents of engagement with individuals in a service learning context can lack depth and meaning. When possible, interactions involving people best occur with a regularity that builds and sustains relationships for the mutual benefit of all.

The five stages of service learning

The five stages of service learning (adapted from *Five stages of service learning*, Kaye 2010) offer a helpful and supportive framework and continuum of process; this is the expected approach for service learning.

Note that **curriculum** is at the core of this service learning model. As students progress through each of these stages, they draw upon the skills and knowledge gained from their academic subjects to support their service learning experiences. When teachers integrate the service learning process as part of an academic class, the curriculum is central—both the knowledge and skill development—as they also adhere to these five stages. In an academic context, teachers ensure that students meet the class learning objectives within this process.

The process of service learning, when done well, engages students in inquiry. Students:

- **investigate** an interest that often raises questions and curiosity and typically reveals an authentic need
- **prepare** by learning more to deepen understanding
- take **action** based on the verified need
- **reflect** on what they have done along the way
- **demonstrate** their understandings and accomplishments to an audience.

These service learning stages ensure that students gain experience with a reliable yet flexible structure that they can then apply with confidence to future situations in many aspects of their life.

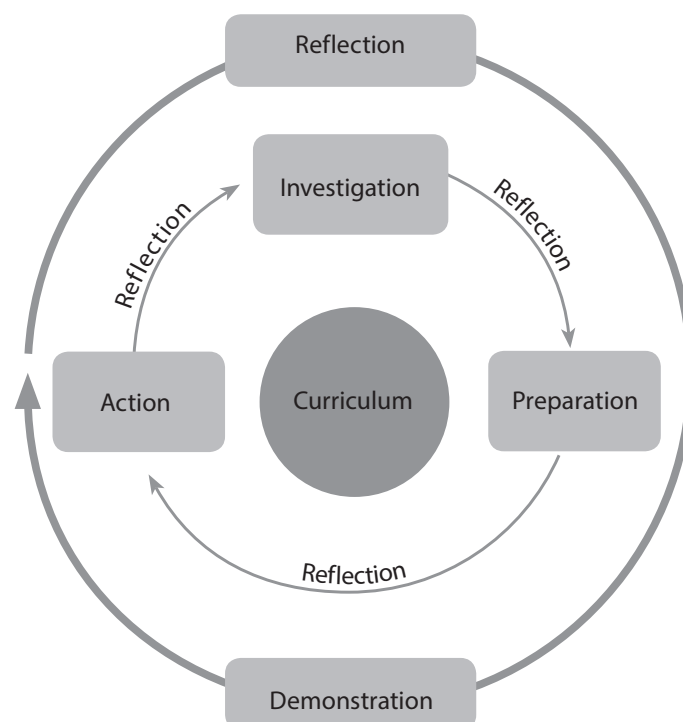


Figure 3

The service learning model

There are three parts in the service learning model:

- The core is the **curriculum**; the service learning experience draws from and enhances academic learning.
- The surrounding circles and arrows represent the process with four key parts: **investigation, preparation, action** and **reflection** (occurring intermittently in response to significant experiences).
- The outer circle has two parts and guides students in summarizing their experience: **reflection** and **demonstration**.

For all service learning experiences, students begin with investigation.

During ongoing service learning experiences, the action stage may lead students back to investigation or preparation as they further develop, expand and implement new or related ideas to address the same or different aspects of the identified need.

As the action draws to a conclusion, this leads to the outer circle of summative reflection and demonstration, as noted in figure 2.

The five service learning stages are:

1. **Investigation:** Students participate in social analysis of a selected issue, with identification and confirmation of a community need, often with a designated community partner. Having an inventory of interests, skills, talents and areas for personal growth, students are able to make choices based on their priorities and abilities and the designated need.
2. **Preparation:** Students acquire and develop the knowledge and skills needed for deeper understanding of the issues that prepares them for purposeful action. Students design a service plan appropriate to the identified need, with clarification of roles and responsibilities, resource requirements and timelines to successfully implement the plan. Any community partners are likely to be consulted.
3. **Action:** Students implement the plan through direct service, indirect service, advocacy or research. Their service may be a combination of one or more of these types of service. Students may work individually, with partners or in groups.
4. **Reflection:** Students examine their thoughts, feelings and actions applied to the context of self, community and the world. With service learning, reflection often occurs with greater frequency as students identify significant moments generated by new situations and insights.
5. **Demonstration:** Students make explicit what and how they learned and what they have accomplished, for example by sharing their service experience through their service learning portfolio, or with others in an informal or formal manner. Through demonstration and communication, students solidify their understanding and evoke responses from others.

These five stages of service learning provide a framework that enables students to:

- increase self-awareness
- learn about learning
- enjoy the learning process through purposeful experiences
- explore new and unfamiliar challenges
- employ different learning styles
- develop their ability to communicate and collaborate with others
- experience and recognize personal development
- transfer acquired skills and knowledge to new settings and situations in and out of the classroom
- develop attributes of the IB learner profile.

Four types of action

During the stages of investigation and preparation of the five stages of service learning, students identify a need and learn more about the issue, situations and circumstances. They also determine an appropriate form of **action** that addresses this societal or community need. This often requires students to verify the need and to innovate or join others already engaged in purposeful action. By engaging in different types of service learning within the CP, students accumulate different ways of knowing about their community and their potential for contributing to societal change.

The type of action and what is done as action is enhanced when students draw from their interests, skills and talents; this accounts for high levels of engagement as they also integrate academic content and knowledge.

The four types of action are:

- **Direct service:** Students engage directly with the people, environment or animals.
 - *Examples:* Students could undertake one-on-one tutoring, develop a garden in partnership with refugees, or work in an animal shelter.
- **Indirect service:** Though students do not see the recipients of indirect service, they have verified their actions will benefit the community or environment.
 - *Examples:* Students could redesign a non-profit organization's website, write picture books to teach a language, or nurture tree seedlings for planting.
- **Advocacy:** Students speak on behalf of an issue of public interest in order to promote awareness and understanding through dispersal of accurate information that may lead to others taking action.
 - *Examples:* Students could lead an awareness campaign on hunger, perform a play about replacing bullying with respect, or create a video about sustainable water solutions.
- **Research:** Students collect information from various sources, analyse data and report on a topic of importance to influence policy or practice.
 - *Examples:* Students may conduct environmental surveys to influence their school, contribute to a study of animal migration, compile effective means to reduce litter in public spaces, or conduct social research by interviewing people on topics such as homelessness, unemployment or isolation.

When making choices about action, an important consideration is the community being served. A key purpose and intent of service learning in the CP is for students to experience and understand the local community outside the school. However, if authentic needs are found within the school, it is possible for the school to be the beneficiary of student action, which may then prepare students for further action within the larger community.

Approaches to service learning

When planning for service learning, always consider the advantage of students conducting service locally. Local interactions allow for:

- developing relationships
- observing and participating in sustained change
- meeting challenges through collaboration.

From the local context, students can extend their thinking and knowledge to understanding global issues.

Wherever possible, service learning should be associated with or draw from students' academic studies. As students see the correlation between academics and service learning, their content studies have greater relevance and purpose through application. Service learning also involves the utilization of students' skills, expertise and knowledge; the following approaches to service learning should always take into account these three important factors.

Ongoing service learning: When investigating a need that leads to a plan of action implemented over time, students develop perseverance and commitment. They observe how their ideas and actions build on the contributions of others to effect change. Their reflections may show deeper awareness and knowledge of societal issues.

School-based service learning: While students are encouraged to participate in meaningful service that benefits the community outside school, they may well find appropriate service learning opportunities within the school. In all cases an authentic need must be verified that can be met through student action. Identified needs met within school may prepare students for further action in the larger community. For example, by tutoring within the school, students may then be better prepared to tutor at a community centre.

Community-based service learning: Participating in service learning within the local community advances student awareness and understanding of social issues and solutions. Single incidents of engagement with individuals in a service learning context can lack depth and meaning. Interactions involving people best occur with a regularity that builds and sustains relationships for the mutual benefit of all. For example, rather than making one visit to a retirement facility as a single service learning experience, students could arrange regular visits over a longer period of time, and in doing so find that their efforts are valued and have reciprocal impact.

Immediate need: In response to a disaster, students often want to take immediate action. Typically they quickly attempt to assess the need and devise a planned response. Later, to provide greater context, the students can be reminded and encouraged to further investigate the issue to better understand underlying causes. With increased knowledge, students may commit to ongoing assistance, for example by getting involved in community initiatives regarding an environmental issue.

Fundraising: For fundraising to have meaning and purpose, students must initially develop their understanding of the cause and issues being addressed and then choose the organization to support. Students can draw from their interests, skills and talents to plan the method and manner of fundraising. Ideally, students will communicate directly with the organization and establish accountability for funds raised. Sharing the rationale for the fundraising is essential in order to educate others and advocate for the chosen cause. Students can also support their financial contribution through **direct service, advocacy** or **research** forms of service learning action.

Social entrepreneurship: A social entrepreneur is someone who adopts a business approach towards addressing authentic community needs. Participation in problem-solving of authentic societal issues creates the potential to develop civic knowledge, community awareness and skills, all necessary for social entrepreneurship. Currently, the term also indicates taking action that maintains environmental sustainability rather than depleting natural resources. For example, a social entrepreneur may transform an idea such as distributing food to people in need through creating gardens for communities to have an ongoing food source while teaching job skills for people to earn a more stable income. By engaging in purposeful actions, social entrepreneurs can use service learning to strengthen business skills that represent their personal values and beliefs as they help their community. Examples of young social entrepreneurs provide inspiration and role models.

International service: Students are encouraged to participate locally in service learning before considering service learning opportunities outside their country. Students benefit most from serving in an international context when able to make clear links to parallel issues in their local environs and they understand the consequences of their actions. When participating in international service learning, students must understand the background and the circumstances of an identified and authenticated need to support their involvement. When direct communication with an overseas community is not possible, students could cooperate with an outside agency. Schools must ensure that commercial providers, if used, act in accordance with the aims of the IB mission statement and service learning requirements. Schools must also undertake risk assessment to ensure the safety of students.

Volunteerism: Students often volunteer in service learning experiences organized by other students, the school or an external group. In such cases, it helps if students are already familiar with the need and its context, as this will increase the likelihood that their contribution will have personal meaning and value. Using the five service learning stages prior to volunteering is highly recommended.

Service learning arising from the curriculum: Teachers plan units with service learning opportunities in mind, leading to student action. For example, while studying freshwater ecology in environmental systems and society, students could decide to monitor and improve a local water system.

Reflection in service learning

Being reflective is an 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 service learning. Developing a culture of reflection helps students to recognize and understand how to be reflective, as well as to decide the best methods and appropriate timing. Student learning is more effective when it is enhanced by reflection. Reflection enables students to explore skills, strengths, limitations and areas for further development.

Through reflection students examine ideas and consider how they might use prior learning in new contexts. Reflection can also help students to improve their problem-solving skills, develop higher cognitive processes and achieve a greater depth of understanding of their studies (eg how they might use prior learning in new contexts) in addition to exploring how service learning experiences may influence future possibilities.

During service learning, the form of reflection must take into account student choice. When overly prescribed, students may perceive the act of reflection as a requirement to fulfil another’s expectations. Students may then aim to complete “a reflection” quickly since the value is unrealized. By contrast, the student who understands the purpose and process of reflection would choose the appropriate moment, select the method and decide on the amount of time needed. With this greater sense of autonomy and responsibility, the student may be encouraged to be more honest, forthcoming and expressive, and develop insights including those related to the learning outcomes. The ultimate intention is for students to be independently reflective and to enjoy the process and chosen method of reflection.

The overarching intention of reflection in service learning 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.

Students will require support, feedback and guidance in developing the ability to reflect. Teachers or supervisors should demonstrate and explain how reflection can be a positive experience in students’ learning, and also highlight the many different models and approaches to reflection. Teachers can also assist students by asking guided questions to encourage reflection.

For reflection to be meaningful, schools must plan how to engage students in reflection as a learning process. The development of reflective skills is most effective when explicitly taught, guiding students to reflect independently.

Guiding reflection

Students can be guided in reflection by way of the following processes.

- **Defining reflection:** engage students in clarifying what reflection is not and what it is, highlighting the key elements of reflection and giving examples.

A helpful way to initiate discussion on this is for students to collaborate with their peers and draw up their own comparison table. This table shows examples of what students may list and discuss.

Reflection is not:	Reflection is:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forced • right or wrong • good or bad • marked or graded • difficult • copying what someone else said • predictable • to be judged by others • only a summary of what happened • done to please someone else • a waste of time • only written • only discussion • only led by teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • honest • personal • done in many different ways • sometimes difficult • sometimes easy • sometimes creative • building self-awareness • necessary for learning • what I did, combined with how I felt • surprising • helpful for planning • done alone or with others • about thoughts, feelings, and ideas • adding perspective

- **Modelling reflection:** provide examples of what reflection can look like and ways it can occur.
- **Leading reflection:** engage students in diverse reflective practices that cater for different learning styles and personal preferences.
- **Sharing reflections:** share current and past student reflections (with the student's permission).
- **Provoking reflection:** provide a series of questions, statements or experiences that elicit thoughtful responses from students. If questions are provided as prompts, encourage students to rewrite the questions as they wish so that they are more personally meaningful.

Four elements of reflection

Four elements assist in the service learning reflective process. The first two elements form the foundations of reflection.

1. **Describing what happened:** students retell their memorable moments, identifying what was important or influential, what went well or was difficult, obstacles and successes.
2. **Expressing feelings:** students articulate emotional responses to their experiences.

The following two elements can expand perspective.

3. **Generating ideas:** rethinking or re-examining choices and actions increases students' awareness about themselves and their situations.
4. **Asking questions:** questions about people, culture, 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. Students can be encouraged to move forward and ask deeper questions. For example:

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?

Examples of words/phrases for thought: I think, know, believe, guess, wonder, hope, suggest.

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?

Examples of words/phrases for feelings: I am (happy, sad, frustrated, excited), or I feel (concerned, curious, tired, content).

Many different words are used to express thoughts; there are many words that express feelings. Encourage students to brainstorm words that describe thoughts and feelings.

Feedback on reflection

Following reflection, feedback from teachers, coordinators or peers is strongly recommended. Feedback provides acknowledgment, confirmation or clarification of students' understanding and insight, and opportunities for further development. Feedback can take many forms, for example as part of an informal or formal one-to-one or group discussion, paired peer conversation, or a written response (eg to a blog posting). Students may also suggest their own preferred method for receiving feedback.

Students may wish to keep certain reflections private. It is therefore recommended that students decide which of their reflections to share with others.

Time for reflection

Purposeful reflection is about quality rather than quantity. The topic of reflection and time spent engaging in reflective activity will depend on the individual student, as will the choice of method; meaningful reflection can also take place in groups.

When students identify moments worthy of reflection, they recognize and value reflection as a personal choice. Students should determine key moments during the learning process that inspire reflection. Otherwise, if a set number of reflections is required, reflection can feel like an obligation, which is contrary to the purpose of reflection in service learning. The following approaches may be helpful.

- Students can choose significant moments as the basis for reflection, for example when they:
 - are learning something new
 - have mastered a new skill
 - are confronted with a particular challenge
 - experience new or heightened emotions
 - succeed in realizing a particular achievement.
- Students reflect during or at the end of a service learning experience or series of service learning experiences, to identify important moments, discuss a possible learning outcome, recognize personal growth and achievements and plan for their next service learning experience.
- Students engage in group reflection with their peers to discover shared insights.
- Students reflect at the beginning, during and at the end of a series of service learning experiences. This enables students to deliberate on such elements as planning, opportunities, expectations, challenges, progress and personal growth.

Reflection offers students opportunities to understand the concept, process and value of learning. With experiences that add meaning and self-knowledge, students can adapt, adopt and integrate reflection into a lifelong practice.

Together with students, discuss what might prompt a person to want to reflect on their own and occasions when reflection might be useful. This changes the emphasis from being teacher-led to being student-initiated by choice. Note that reflection experiences in groups can be beneficial and that students could also plan ways to reflect with their peers.

The forms of reflection

The form that reflection takes must be the students' own choice to encourage more honest, forthcoming and expressive insights. Allowing students a degree of choice also helps to cater for differences in learning styles. By encouraging students to choose forms of reflection that are personal and enjoyable, reflection becomes a means for self-discovery. Students make connections, develop awareness of choices and consequences and acquire sensitivity to the experiences of self and others.

There are many different ways to conduct reflection. Student reflection may be expressed through a written paragraph, a dialogue, a poem, a comic strip, a dramatic performance, a letter, a photograph, a dance, a podcast, a video, a collage, a blog, or may use any other media or other forms of expression that students find most suitable for reflection.

Students should be able to identify forms of expression that have personal meaning and best enable them to explore their experiences. For example, students might:

- take photographs during a service learning experience and use these to reflect in writing
- compose a song describing what they gained from a service learning experience
- dramatize a poem to emphasize an aspect of a service learning experience.
- produce a short video summarizing a service learning experience
- form a group and create a poster highlighting aspects of a shared service learning experience.

Students find greater value and purpose when they apply their own interests, skills and talents when reflecting and discover that reflection can be internal and private or external and shared.

In groups, students can brainstorm all possible ways they could reflect. Ask them to incorporate things they enjoy doing (e.g. writing poetry or music, art, drama, dance, photography, conversation). Discuss which of these “ways to reflect” could be done alone or with others? Students could consider which might be best to facilitate reflection on:

- themselves—their thoughts, ideas, values, feelings, ethics, opinions, actions and hopes
- others—their peers, people they meet or interact with
- community—concerns, culture and values of their community (eg their school or where they live), to gain insights and wider understandings
- society and the world—concerns, culture and values of their society and/or the world, to gain insights and wider understandings.

Reflection and the service learning outcomes

Reflection is the primary evidence used by service learning coordinators to determine whether students have successfully attained the five service learning outcomes. However, it is important to note that not all reflections should or must discuss learning outcomes.

During service learning, students benefit from both structured and informal reflection when gathering evidence of the learning outcomes. For personal knowledge and growth as IB lifelong learners, best practice balances:

- structured and guided opportunities for students to reflect on their service learning experiences
- diverse informal ways for students to reflect on their service learning experiences.

The *CP Service Learning Teacher Support Material* (March 2016) offers an assortment of resources and strategies to assist with student understanding of the reflection process.

Service learning portfolio

Students are expected to maintain and complete a service learning portfolio as evidence of their engagement with service learning and their understanding and application of the five stages of service learning and achievement of the five service learning outcomes. The service learning portfolio can also reveal how students have developed the attributes of the IB learner profile. Indeed, the service learning portfolio is the **demonstration**, the fifth service learning stage, though students may also elect to participate in other forms of demonstration.

The service learning portfolio is used by students to plan their service learning programme, **reflect** on their experiences and provide evidence of their learning. The portfolio is regularly discussed during the three interviews between the student and coordinator, and likely at other times that the student and coordinator may meet more informally. Appropriate encouragement and advice is given, and can be documented and noted in the portfolio.

The service learning coordinator must ensure that students keep their service learning portfolio up to date and relevant, and will check the portfolio regularly. If any concerns arise, especially on whether students will successfully complete their service learning programme, these should be noted in the service learning portfolio and appropriate action taken at the earliest opportunity.

The service learning portfolio is used to showcase the students' service learning experience and participation and should be viewed as a source of pride for the students. To highlight its significance, students could have the choice of how the service learning portfolio is assembled, what they include and how it is shared. Individual student learning styles will dictate the type of portfolio that they use: digital, online, diary, journal, scrapbook or a combination of these. Students are encouraged to explore the different options available to them.

The service learning portfolio is a summation of the students' service learning. It could also be a valuable addition to a student's résumé or CV for a prospective employer or educational institution.

The service learning portfolio is not formally assessed by the IB. While the IB does not require any particular format for the service learning portfolio, a useful three-part structure could include the following sections: Profile, Experiences and Evidence. Each section would be intended to assist students to better understand their engagement with service learning, reflect on their experiences and provide evidence of their experiences.

Note: These three sections are offered only as an example of one way to organize a portfolio. There are many ways, and students should have a role in determining their most effective organizing structure.

Profile

In this section, students include their personal interests, skills and talents, areas for growth, plans and goals for their service learning programme.

At the start of service learning, students map their interests and abilities to identify possible service learning experiences. A consideration of how a student's personal value system aligns with the values expressed by

the IB, with a particular focus on the IB learner profile, could also be included when developing a student profile. Through an understanding of the service learning aims, students will be able to identify both short-term and long-term goals in their service learning programme.

Experiences

This section demonstrates that students have actively engaged in their individual service learning. It chronicles the students' journey in service learning, incorporating a variety of reflections, learning moments, personal achievements and how they have put the five stages of service learning into practice.

Students could reflect on their involvement with the service learning outcomes and may extend their thoughts to future ambitions within and outside the service learning programme. All throughout service learning, students can add their reflections regarding their ongoing personal development and self-awareness.

Evidence

In this section, students collect evidence of their involvement and achievements in service learning. This could include planning documents, letters, emails, certificates, acknowledgments of participation and achievements, photographs, videos and so on.

The service learning project

A service learning project is a collaborative, well-considered series of sequential service learning experiences aiming to meet an authentic and confirmed community need. There is no requirement for students in the CP to undertake a service learning project. However, service learning projects can be richly rewarding for the students.

The primary purpose of a service learning project is to ensure participation in sustained collaboration, the development of students' skills and the utilization of students' knowledge and understanding from their academic studies.

By undertaking a service learning project, students learn to:

- show initiative
- demonstrate perseverance
- develop skills such as cooperation, problem-solving and decision-making.

A service learning project offers students the opportunity to be responsible for a part or the entirety of a service learning project.

All service learning projects must use the five stages of service learning as a framework.

Where possible, service learning projects should involve working alongside community members with ongoing communication. If an external facilitator such as a non-government organization or a commercial provider is involved, care should be taken to ensure that the facilitator acts in accordance with the IB mission statement.

Students should include evidence of their service learning project in their service learning portfolio.

Collaboration

A service learning project involves collaboration between a group of students or with members of the wider community. Purposeful relationships between students and community members leading to sustainable service learning projects are potentially the most rewarding for all concerned. As community needs change, students' responses should also evolve to meet these new circumstances.

Students work as part of a team, with all members being contributors. Through collaboration students may discover the benefits of teamwork and of achievements realized through an exchange of ideas and abilities.

Working collaboratively also provides opportunities for individual students to enhance and integrate their personal interests, skills and talents into the planning and implementation of service learning projects.

When a service learning project initiated by one group is adopted by other students, the new students must ensure the need is authentic or make the necessary adjustments and ensure their contribution is relevant. Students should include evidence of their service learning project in their portfolio.

Local service projects

When planning for service learning projects, always consider the advantage of students conducting service learning projects locally. Local interactions allow for developing relationships, observing and participating in sustained change and meeting challenges through collaboration. From the local context, students can extend their thinking and knowledge to understanding global issues.

A local service learning project that includes interaction with and appreciation of diverse social or cultural backgrounds can increase international-mindedness and engagement with issues of global significance.

International service projects

International service learning projects are acceptable if clear goals and outcomes are established, understood and based on the expectation of compelling benefits expected for all stakeholders.

If a service learning project is conducted outside the local context, it is recommended that there is some form of continuation. For example, students could research the community served and educate themselves further about the issues involved, develop an advocacy programme for the served community, or develop greater awareness of a related need in their local community leading to some form of local action. This may inspire the next group of service learning students.

See service learning approaches for more information.

Important considerations

If students conduct a service learning project, they must take into account the opinions and expectations of others involved and focus on meaningful and authentic needs to ensure actions are respectful and reciprocal. Awareness of the possible impact and consequences of the students' actions should be part of the planning process.

For any service learning project it is important to ensure that there is:

- a genuine need for the service learning project, which has been stated and agreed upon by the potential partners
- if required, a liaison officer who has a good relationship with the community where the service learning project is based
- an understanding of the level of student participation that is feasible in the service learning project
- a clear assessment of potential risks to participating students
- approval from the school administration for the service learning project
- demonstration of how the five service learning stages were followed
- an evaluation of the benefits of the service learning project for all involved.

Service learning handbook

A service learning coordinator may provide students with a service learning handbook specific to the school. It would be of benefit to the student to have a school-based guide to service learning. Elements of this guide and documents from the *Service Learning Teacher Support Material* (TSM) can be helpful in assembling the handbook. It should explain programme elements and expectations, including responsibilities, to both students and their parents/guardians.

As the programme evolves, students can contribute their gained knowledge to this handbook for the benefit of future students.

The handbook could be printed, made available via a website or be part of a digital resource. It should be school-specific and include the elements of service learning as outlined in this guide.

Service learning interviews

There must be a minimum of three interviews between students and their service learning coordinator/adviser throughout the service learning programme. During the interviews, progress is discussed and encouragement and advice is given. The interviews should occur at least twice in the first year of the CP and once in the second year. Feedback from these interviews is recorded by the service learning coordinator.

The interviews are documented on a *Service learning progress Form* (see examples in the *Service Learning Teacher Support Material (TSM)*) or through some other appropriate method such as a digital log. If concerns arise, particularly with respect to successful completion of the service learning programme, these should be noted at the earliest opportunity and appropriate action taken.

The third interview is a summative discussion of the students' engagement in service learning and their achievement of the five service learning outcomes. It is recommended that a completion form is used (see examples in the *Service Learning Teacher Support Material*) or through some other appropriate method such as a digital log.

The interviews should also be documented in the student portfolio.

The first interview

This interview is conducted at the beginning of the CP. During this interview, the service learning coordinator/adviser ensures that students understand:

- the expectations of the service learning programme
- the service learning outcomes and how the students might achieve these outcomes
- the five service learning stages
- the students' interests and ideas for service learning experiences
- the design for students' service learning portfolio.

If students are already aware of service learning, the interview can be used to confirm their understanding and assist with any plans and ideas.

The second interview

This interview is normally held towards the end of the first year of the CP. During this interview, the service learning coordinator/adviser ensures that students:

- assess the progress being made in their service learning programme
- determine personal commitment to the chosen service learning experiences
- are engaging in the five stages of service learning
- are achieving the service learning outcomes.

The students' service learning portfolio is used as a reference in this interview and reviewed for evidence of achievement of any of the five service learning outcomes.

The third interview

This is the summative interview for service learning. It should occur near the end of the CP.

In this interview the students:

- outline how they have achieved the learning outcomes for service learning
- review what has been enjoyable and personally gratifying
- discuss and evaluate their overall service learning programme experience
- reflect on personal growth.

The students' service learning portfolio is used as a reference in this interview. The interview may also provide the opportunity to discuss development of the service learning programme for future students based on the students' personal experiences.

Risk assessment

The IB and the learner profile attributes encourage students to be risk-takers; however, this does not mean that students or teachers should be encouraged to take unnecessary risks or place themselves in danger. The key to safely taking risks is having the ability to fully understand the nature of the risk being taken and how to limit potentially dangerous outcomes where necessary. As such, schools need to strike the right balance between protecting students from risk and allowing students to participate in service learning experiences.

When planning a service learning experience in which participants may be exposed to hazards, it is important that risks are identified and assessed.

The IB requires that schools always comply with the pertinent local health and safety laws and regulations both in and out of the classroom. In addition, the IB provides the following guidelines on assessing the potential risk of a service learning experience.

- Schools and teachers should ensure adequate systems are in place to assess and limit the risk of any service learning experience.
- The school should ensure the staff organizing and supervising service learning experiences are fully supported throughout the risk assessment process.
- In order to prevent risk assessment from becoming a barrier to service learning experiences, schools should develop risk assessment systems that are proportionate to the level of risk. Although service learning experiences must be properly planned and assessed, experiences presenting a lower risk level should be quicker and easier to assess and organize than higher-risk experiences.
- Where risks are identified, schools should ensure that all potential stakeholders (colleagues, students and parents) are informed both of the risk and any precautions or contingency plans that will be implemented in order to minimize the risk.

Resources

It is a condition of CP authorization that all members of the school community demonstrate a commitment to service learning. The school should provide the resources necessary to run a successful service learning programme. The extent of the resources will depend on the individual school's situation, including student numbers and local conditions. An effective service learning programme draws on the resources of the whole school community.

It should be noted, however, that while students may contribute to aspects of the organization and resourcing of service learning, they must not, for example, raise funds to provide a budget for the school's service learning programme.

Internal resources

School staff

Teachers and ancillary staff could contribute to the service learning programme in a variety of ways in addition to the roles of service learning advisers and supervisors. Subject teachers can use their academic subjects as a catalyst for service learning experiences. They may also have a particular skill, hobby or talent that will contribute to the students' involvement in service learning experiences. Teachers can also be encouraged to integrate service learning as a teaching method and be provided with supportive planning time and resources.

To ensure the importance and relevance of service learning in the school community, staff should be involved in the service learning programme. A school-wide understanding of the concept of service learning, the process and related terms establishes the foundation of a successful programme.

Students

Many students already have skills, knowledge and talents in many different areas, including their personal interests and academic studies. By drawing on these they can lead or make a valuable contribution to service learning experiences with other students in the school or in the local community.

Parents

With their wide range of occupations and interests, parents can be a useful resource for students. A survey of parents' interests, skills and talents can prove a valuable means to identify previously untapped resources. If parents are involved in the service learning programme, the service learning coordinator must ensure that the parents understand the key elements of service learning and their role.

In-school resources

Schools usually have a variety of useful places where events related to service learning can take place, such as playing fields, swimming pools, sports halls, gymnastics halls, auditoriums, assembly areas, art rooms, music studios, classrooms, laboratories, computer rooms, kitchens, cafeterias, technology workshops and gardens.

School newsletters and websites can be used to promote understanding of service learning and showcase student accomplishments.

External resources

Service learning encourages students to undertake a variety of diverse experiences in a number of different external contexts. The service learning coordinator should remind students that their service learning is more than an interaction with just one organization.

Organizations and agencies

Organizations can provide contacts for deepening student understanding about community issues, participate as partners in service learning plans, and serve as hosts for students to assist in meeting the organization's identified needs. Examples of these are:

- non-government organizations
- social services, health services and government offices
- schools and universities
- local commerce and industry
- community groups
- youth groups, sports clubs, drama, music and art groups
- embassies and consulates.

Press

Local and national press could also be utilized as a resource. Coverage of students' service learning experiences in the local or national press can strengthen awareness of service learning in the local community and recognize the involvement and contributions being made by students. This may encourage other organizations to propose or support ideas for the school's service learning programme.

Roles and responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities of the school

The school must allocate sufficient resources to support the service learning programme. This includes the appointment of the service learning team. The service learning team consists of a service learning coordinator and, in larger schools, service learning advisers and/or service learning supervisors to support both the service learning coordinator and the students. Allocating time for the professional development of the service learning team should be a priority.

The school should ensure that:

- the service learning coordinator is acknowledged and recognized in the school
- the service learning programme is represented as a valued opportunity for students
- there is a school-wide commitment to the service learning aims and learning outcomes
- time is allocated for the administration of the service learning programme
- time is allocated for the explicit teaching of reflection and other elements of the service learning stages
- students and staff understand all aspects of the service learning programme
- parents are fully informed about the service learning programme and student progress
- service learning opportunities are identified for students in the event that they are unable to do this themselves
- long-term relationships with communities are developed for service learning opportunities
- there are opportunities for students to choose their own service learning experiences
- there is time for students to receive guidance and feedback from service learning coordinators and/or advisers
- achievements are demonstrated in service learning
- support is given to the service learning coordinator to complete service learning risk assessments.

Roles and responsibilities of the service learning coordinator

It is essential that the school appoints a service learning coordinator, who acts as a mentor to the students and advises on their service learning programme. The service learning coordinator has a critical role and is key to the success of service learning in the school.

The service learning coordinator:

- educates others about service learning and oversees the effective implementation of service learning experiences.
- works directly with students, staff, service learning advisers and, if available, service learning supervisors.
- is responsible for reporting the progress of students to the CP coordinator.

The service learning coordinator is also ultimately responsible for determining whether students have met the service learning outcomes at the end of the CP, and for reporting as required by the *Handbook of procedures for the Career-related Programme*.

The service learning coordinator has two specific areas of responsibility.

1. Implementation and advancement of the service learning programme to:
 - familiarize students, colleagues, parents and the wider community with the process of service learning
 - promote the importance of service learning to students, colleagues, parents and the wider community
 - assist teachers who are interested with the integration of service learning into their academic classes
 - identify safety issues (risk assessment and child protection)
 - develop a school-specific service learning handbook and resources
 - administer the service learning budget
 - manage service learning records and reports
 - periodically engage in interviews with students
 - report on student progress to school and parents
 - promote and publicize student achievements in service learning
 - develop and maintain service learning policy statements
 - provide leadership for the service learning team
 - provide professional development and supervise service learning advisers where appropriate
 - inform and work with service learning supervisors where appropriate
 - ensure consistency across the service learning programme through ongoing contact with service learning advisers and supervisors
 - inform and work with outside providers on their involvement in service learning experiences
 - report completion/non-completion of service learning to the IB on IBIS.
2. Working directly with the students (if there are no service learning advisers) to:
 - educate students on all aspects of the service learning programme
 - educate students on the meaning and purpose of the service learning outcomes
 - assist students with clarifying and developing the attributes of the IB learner profile
 - support students in understanding ethical concerns and international-mindedness
 - develop purposeful reflection skills through individual interviews, group discussions and teaching strategies (see the Service Learning TSM for examples)

- provide feedback on student reflections
- assist students in identifying personal and group goals
- meet with a service learning student regularly to discuss goals and achievements
- provide ongoing guidance and support to students
- monitor the range and balance of experiences undertaken by individuals
- advise and monitor progress towards meeting the service learning outcomes
- periodically review students' service learning portfolios
- meet with service learning students in three formal documented interviews.

Roles and responsibilities of the service learning adviser

A team of service learning advisers under the guidance of the service learning coordinator is highly recommended in schools with a large number of students. This is because working with individual students on their service learning takes time and requires personal knowledge of the students.

It is essential for the service learning adviser to be aware of the importance of service learning in the CP and to be familiar with all elements of service learning.

When service learning advisers are appointed, they provide the vital ongoing contact for students in place of the service learning coordinator.

It is essential for service learning advisers to have sufficient contact time with students. The adviser's responsibilities are the same as the two specific areas of responsibility of a service learning coordinator outlined above.

Roles and responsibilities of the service learning supervisor

The service learning supervisor assists, offers guidance and oversees the students' service learning experiences when needed.

A supervisor may not be necessary if students are able to undertake a service learning experience without assistance. Students should take responsibility for their own service learning experiences where possible and be provided with opportunities to report on their own attendance and participation.

The school should consider the nature of the experience and decide whether a supervisor is required to guide and assist the students, to ensure safety and to provide feedback on student involvement to the school.

Service learning supervisors can be:

- teachers
- non-teaching members of the school or wider community
- volunteers with the skills and/or knowledge of the service learning experience being undertaken.

Service learning supervisors should:

- be familiar with the relevant elements of the service learning programme
- be responsible for student safety and risk-management procedures
- provide students with guidance, support and feedback on the service learning experience
- encourage reflection
- comment on the students' engagement with the service learning experience if required.

Roles and responsibilities of the student

Throughout the CP, students undertake a variety of service learning experiences. Students reflect on service learning experiences at significant moments throughout service learning and maintain a service learning portfolio. Using evidence from their service learning portfolio, students will demonstrate achievement of the five service learning outcomes to their own satisfaction and to the service learning coordinator's satisfaction.

Students are expected to:

- approach service learning with an open mind and willingness to participate
- develop a clear understanding of service learning expectations and the purpose of service learning
- explore personal values, attitudes and attributes with reference to the IB learner profile and the IB mission statement
- determine personal goals
- discuss plans for service learning experiences with the service learning coordinator and/or service learning adviser
- understand and apply the five service learning stages
- take part in a variety of experiences, some of which are self-initiated
- become more aware of personal interests, skills and talents and observe how these evolve throughout the service learning programme
- understand the reflection process and identify suitable opportunities to reflect on service learning experiences
- demonstrate accomplishments within their service learning programme
- communicate with the service learning coordinator/adviser and/or service learning supervisor in formal and informal meetings
- conduct themselves appropriately and ethically in their choices and behaviours.

In many schools, as students develop skills through service learning experiences, they become more adept at taking on roles and responsibilities assigned previously to adults at their school. For example, students often identify new community contacts and establish new partnerships and can host events for community partners. Students can also develop skills in making presentations to teachers, students, community partners and parents about service learning—the process and the benefits.

Assessment

The nature of assessment in the service learning strand of the CP core is to be determined by the school. Assessment is intended to go beyond a review of student reflections to a deeper exploration of the elements of the service learning programme for continual development.

The assessment can capture multiple voices of those involved within the school and within the community. It can be a blend of the following dynamic forms of inquiry:

- interviews
- reviews of student reflections (students select what can be shared)
- pre- and post-experience questionnaires
- discussions with community/external partners
- student presentations.

The aim is to improve the service learning experience for all involved and also to strengthen the teaching methods used for the future.

The assessment can focus on:

- **Student learning:**
 - Did student learning advance in both content knowledge and skills?
 - Was student initiative taken?
 - Have the students gained deeper understanding of an issue or cause of local or global significance?
 - Was reflection used as a means for self-discovery and understanding the larger context of community and society?
 - Did the students identify a method of reflection they enjoy and do by choice?
 - Could the students differentiate between *cognitive* and *affective* growth?
- **Impact of service:**
 - Is there evidence of reciprocal benefits for all involved?
 - Were students able to articulate and verify a need?
 - Have new and ongoing relationships been formed?
 - What change is apparent from student action?
- **The process:**
 - Were the five stages implemented to advance student learning?
 - Can the students articulate how this process can assist with other aspects of their development in and out of school?

- What can be improved?
- Did the students develop collaborative abilities?
- What are further opportunities for youth leadership?

Student voice is a critical part of the assessment and self-evaluative process. Schools report to the IB whether each student has satisfactorily completed service learning.

Monitoring progress

The school administration must ensure that the service learning coordinator and service learning adviser (if applicable) has sufficient contact time with students. This includes:

- allocated time for information sessions to:
 - introduce the service learning programme to staff and students
 - ensure that service learning is properly understood
 - distribute and discuss relevant materials such as the service learning handbook
 - give updates on service learning initiatives, and recognize and celebrate service learning achievements
- three formal interviews with service learning students during the two years of the CP
- regular and sufficient informal meetings with service learning students, both individually and as a group, throughout the two years of the CP.

It is recommended that schools develop student leadership so students become leaders and role models for others in their service learning programme. It is recommended that students meet regularly to be supportive of their peers. This creates opportunities for shared understanding, peer reflection and the possibility of mutual support.

Progress and supervision

The principle that students should “own” their personal service learning programme implies that they should be trusted to fulfil the commitments that they have made, unless they show themselves unworthy of that trust. Nevertheless, some students have difficulties, for instance when planning or initiating their service learning experiences, or understanding the expectations of the service learning programme, or in working through difficult situations, and may benefit from additional relevant skill development and/or supervision. The service learning coordinators can only offer help and support if they are aware of these circumstances.

Documenting progress

Service learning should be included in a student’s school report providing a record of a student’s progress in service learning. This can take many different forms, yet should be considered as a means of communicating to students, parents and post-secondary institutions the student’s engagement with service learning.

At the conclusion of the CP, it is recommended that schools provide students with a summative statement of their service learning achievement, which may contribute to post-secondary applications.

Completion of service learning

Successful completion of service learning is a requirement for successful completion of the CP. Students must be able to demonstrate achievement of the five service learning outcomes.

Schools are required to report to the IB whether students have satisfactorily completed the requirements for service learning. A school's provision for service learning will be monitored by the IB.

Course review

Teachers and coordinators must continually and collaboratively review the delivery of the four core components to ensure relevance and links between them.

Teachers should also seek to improve understanding of the core components among all school staff and discuss opportunities for connections between the written curriculum and the core components.

Resources

Teachers, coordinators and students can develop a list of employers, companies, and organizations that can contribute towards the delivery and experience of the core component (eg by providing guest speakers or providing authentic materials). The school community should continually investigate and document new opportunities for the development of resources.

Raising awareness

Schools should work with the wider school community (potentially including students) so they can collectively identify areas of the programme that need strengthening, and recognize and celebrate achievements. To achieve this, the school could:

1. organize events to highlight and celebrate students' experiences and achievements
2. invite alumni to speak to students about their careers
3. invite students from other IB schools to share their experiences
4. provide information on the school website and in school newsletters, newspapers and magazines
5. formally recognize students' achievements (eg through award ceremonies).

Networking

Teachers are encouraged to use the forum on the online curriculum centre to develop networks with other schools, share resources and exchange advice. Students could also be assisted in contacting students from other schools to collaborate or share ideas.

Programme evaluation

Every five years, schools engage in a programme evaluation and self-study process to assess the implementation of their Career-related Programme. The school's implementation of each core component is evaluated as part of this process. Schools submitting their programme evaluation self-study will be required to provide evidence that the planning, organization and delivery of each core component meets the individual core components requirements.

Please see the *Programme evaluation guide and self-study questionnaire: Career-related Programme* for more detailed guidance about the process and the evidence that must be submitted.

Learning diversity

Some students may find it difficult to participate due to a physical, medical or psychological condition. The principle in all such circumstances is to focus on what students **can** do, not on what they cannot. It must be remembered that the school plays a vital part in defining students' future lives, including the development of their interests and talents.

In IB World Schools, all students in the IB programmes should have meaningful and equitable access to the curriculum. The IB document *Programme standards and practices* calls for schools to be organized in ways that value student diversity and respect individual learning differences. This is a key aspect of becoming more internationally minded and is an important goal of all IB programmes.

Schools must ensure that equal access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are provided to candidates with learning support requirements and that these arrangements are in line with the IB documents *Candidates with assessment access requirements* and *Learning diversity in the IB programmes: Special educational needs within the IB programmes*.

Schools can contact their regional office for advice.

Teacher support material

Service learning teacher support material (TSM) has been developed to provide additional resources for service learning programmes.

Refer to the TSM for examples of service learning programmes, teaching strategies and further clarification of service learning, the service learning stages and many topics discussed in this guide.

Examples of service learning

For all of the following examples, the five stages of service learning could be easily followed. For example:

- In collaboration with the local community, a group of students produce a mural celebrating the community's cultural heritage for a public building. They link this work to their studies in art class. To prepare, students research the role of public art and look at examples of murals produced in other communities.
- After learning how to test water in a science lab, students collaborate with a local non-profit organization to regularly take water samples in a nearby polluted waterway. To prepare, students learn about the local history of industry. Their documented findings are used for a news report and presented to the local city council.
- Students join a community organization to design an eco-friendly garden for a neighbourhood. They advance their knowledge about local ecosystems and gain grant-writing skills.
- Through knowledge gained from their academic studies in science, students embark on a public awareness campaign regarding diabetes types 1 and 2. They interview and consult local health authorities then work in groups to determine appropriate outreach for different sectors of their community, with consideration of culture and language.
- In response to learning about a local endangered lizard in biology, students develop a plan with two community targets: radio public service announcements for drivers to be more aware of lizards on the road, and a colouring book for younger children to become animal stewards.
- Students studying history identify a need to promote teen involvement in museum events. Drawing upon their related academic studies, they partner with the museum's communication specialist to develop and submit a plan for using social media to promote awareness. Upon approval, students design web resources, provide a timeline of activities and participate in promoting and hosting an inaugural event.
- While studying psychology, students partner with a community-funded youth development organization that supports younger adolescents to stay in school. They learn about adolescent behavioural development and strategies to mitigate problems, along with skills such as conflict resolution, leadership and team building. They lead workshops to advance student competencies.
- After studying issues in global politics, students select several international organizations and examine how they provide information or services in response to these issues. Based on their findings, they select an organization to support and host a community learning event to share information about the issue and the selected organization.

Understanding the service learning outcomes

The service learning coordinator, advisers and supporting staff, as well as the students, must share a common understanding of the language and meaning of each service learning outcome. Coordinators, advisers and supporting staff should be aware that each student may have a unique way of meeting the service learning outcomes, and should avoid comparing the accomplishments of different students. Recognizing each student's unique service learning journey is essential when referring to the service learning outcomes.

Learning outcome descriptors

Each of the five learning outcomes has been provided with a descriptor to provide guidance on the learning outcomes. However, students may gain stronger understanding of service learning outcomes if they are explained through the use of more specific **descriptors**. The service learning coordinator and students can discuss each service learning outcome and design descriptors specific to the school and students.

The following chart shows examples of descriptors for each service learning outcome. These descriptors are only suggestions. They can be adapted and edited, and more may be added. Further, not all descriptors must be met. The service learning coordinator decides with the students whether the service learning outcome has been achieved.

Service learning outcomes	
Learning outcome 1	Identify own strengths and develop areas for growth
Descriptor	Students are able to see themselves as individuals with various abilities and skills, of which some are more developed than others.
Suggested descriptors	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is aware of his/her own strengths and weaknesses • is open to improvement and growth opportunities • is able to propose activities according to his/her own interests and talents • is willing to participate in different service learning experiences • is able to undertake a thoughtful self-evaluation • is able to see him/herself as an individual with various abilities and skills, some more developed than others.

Service learning outcomes	
Learning outcome 2	Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a service learning experience
Descriptor	Students can articulate the five stages from investigating and conceiving an idea to executing a plan for a service learning experience or series of service learning experiences. Students may show their knowledge and awareness by building on a previous service learning experience, or by launching a new idea or process, or by advancing the work of others. This may be accomplished in collaboration with other participants.
Suggested descriptors	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is able to articulate the service learning stages including <i>investigation, preparation, action, reflection</i> (ongoing) and <i>demonstration</i>, moving from conceiving an idea to carrying out a plan for a service learning experience or series of service learning experiences • demonstrates knowledge and awareness by building on a previous service learning 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 service learning experience • shows a responsible attitude towards service learning planning • is able to develop a coherent action plan taking into account the aim or purpose of the service learning experience, and detailing the activities and resources involved.
Learning outcome 3	Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively
Descriptor	Students are able to identify and critically discuss the benefits and challenges of collaboration gained through service learning experiences.
Suggested descriptors	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 challenges of collaboration gained through service learning experiences.

Service learning outcomes	
Learning outcome 4	Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance
Descriptor	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.
Suggested descriptors	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 service learning experiences addressing global issues in a local, national or international context • develops awareness and responsibility towards a shared humanity.
Learning outcome 5	Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions
Descriptor	Students show awareness of the consequences of choices and actions in planning and carrying out service learning experiences.
Suggested descriptors	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognizes ethical issues • is able to explain the social influences on ethical identity • takes into account cultural context when making a plan or ethical decision • identifies what he/she needs 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 service learning experiences.

Working with cross-cultural communities

Service learning experiences offer a means for students to develop cultural awareness and sensitivity. In all cases, interactions with diverse communities must be approached as partnerships that emphasize a shared humanity. Service learning students should always strive for appreciation of the richness of diversity rather than perceiving any cultural or social group as deficient.

With all service learning experiences, adults involved must ensure that students have a contextual understanding for their experiences; this might include cultural, religious, economic and linguistic awareness, as well as an understanding of physical and learning support requirements.

Optimally, interactions within the community should further intercultural and social awareness and sustained relationships.

When service learning students are identifying needs towards which service will be directed, they are expected to build foundations of mutually respectful relationships through prior communication and interviews with the community or individuals concerned. This approach maximizes potential benefits to the recipients and the learning opportunities for the students. Ideally, such prior communication and interview will be face-to-face and involve the students directly.

All service must evolve beyond doing **for** others to engaging **with** others in a shared commitment towards the common good. This collaborative approach maximizes benefits for all. Meaningful service requires:

- understanding the complexities of issues such as poverty, illiteracy, aging, isolation, health or environmental sustainability that underlie an identified need
- verifying the need for the service
- interacting with individuals or groups in the community during all stages of the service experience in a way that aligns with their rights and dignity.

It is desirable that students show initiative in developing the service learning experience as appropriate to the situation and their abilities. When engaged in sustained or long-term service, for example with a service learning project, students must understand the current need for these service learning projects, in addition to verifying how their actions will benefit others, and demonstrating initiative in an aspect of the service learning project.

Diversity in values and beliefs

The IB values the diversity of IB World Schools and supports the rights of individuals and communities to exercise their values and beliefs. Students can, therefore, undertake service learning experiences through participation in faith-based, cultural or political events.

For example, students can:

- assist in organizing a faith-based charity event or learn to play a musical instrument for faith-based celebrations
- participate in the campaign activities of a human rights advocacy group
- work with a dance or music group, which may facilitate an opportunity for deeper understanding of cultural traditions.

Students' personal engagement with faith-based, cultural or political events can add great value to individual service learning programmes. In principle, service learning coordinators should support students who wish to develop service learning experiences based on their personal values and beliefs.

Some events, however, may contradict the values of the IB mission and/or the requirements of service learning. It is the role of the service learning coordinator to guide students to determine the appropriateness of an experience for service learning.

Students should be encouraged to explore the ideas and values represented by the event or organization that they are considering for service learning, and how they align with the IB's mission and the requirements of service learning.

Students can be empowered to make principled decisions in collaboration with the service learning coordinator by responding to relevant questions. A list of appropriate questions can be developed by the service learning coordinator. For example:

- How is the event a service learning experience?
- What attributes of the learner profile can be emphasized in the proposed service learning experience? What may be left out? Why?
- Will the event or organization increase your understanding of language, culture, other perspectives and/or international-mindedness?
- Does the event or organization respect the differences of other individuals and groups?
- What are the stated goals of the organization with which you would be undertaking the service learning experience? How do these goals relate to the mission statement of the IB or the attributes of the IB learner profile?
- Does the event have the potential to impact the environment?
- How have you considered the legal or health and safety implications of your service learning experience?

References

The service learning stages were adapted from:

Kaye, CB. 2010. *The Complete Guide to Service Learning: Proven, Practical Ways to Engage Students in Civic Responsibility, Academic Curriculum, & Social Action*. (Second Edition). Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA. Used with permission of Free Spirit Publishing Inc. All rights reserved.

International Baccalaureate Organization. January 2014. *Programme standards and practices*. Cardiff, UK. IB Publishing.