

International School of Tallinn  
Service as Action Student Handbook



## IST Mission

IST mission is to support the holistic development of every individual to become responsible global citizens and independent life-long learners by providing a rigorous inquiry and multicultural learning environment.

### **Our Promise**

To foster a desire for life-long learning through academic rigor and a network of global citizens.

## IST Vision

To create a global community that values inquiry, critical and creative thinking, open and entrepreneurial mindedness, and acts with tolerance and compassion.

A cohesive community of students in grades 1-12, faculty, staff, parents, and alumni.

An outstanding faculty that is continually embracing best pedagogical practices.

Enhanced knowledge and skills in math, science, and technology—preparing students for a changing technological future.

Students who strive to become entrepreneurial leaders in their desired fields.

## 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.

**“Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For indeed that's all who ever have.” - Margaret Mead**

At IST meaningful service-learning is integral to our mission and philosophy. It creates opportunities for age-appropriate awareness and transformation of self and others through sustainable, reciprocal relationships built with communities and individuals in local and global contexts.

Service learning is an ideal way to help our IST community fulfill its mission as we work across our PYP, MYP and DP programmes to develop learners who value the opportunities for lifelong personal growth, social responsibility and global citizenship that service learning brings. We believe service learning offers all members of the IST community the chance to engage meaningfully with real life contexts and challenges that transform how they see themselves and their world



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## Service as Action and the IB Learner Profile

The Learner Profile is integral to all levels of the International Baccalaureate. Through engaging with the research, planning, action and reflection embedded in meaningful service learning, ISS students of all ages can become:

**Inquirers:** As they seek to understand in depth the social and historical systems or contexts that create inequalities amongst and between groups and communities around the world, and find ways in which they can make meaningful contributions to filling these gaps and working towards equality and sustainability at home and abroad.

**Knowledgeable:** As they deepen their factual and contextual understandings of the world they live in and their roles as its global citizens, and share these understandings with others using a range of formal and informal methods.

**Thinkers:** As they learn in age and developmentally appropriate ways to analyze and challenge their own assumptions and biases, to critically evaluate ideas and solutions and to question the systems they live in from a range of perspectives.

**Communicators:** As they express questions, opinions and responses to global and local issues and offer proposals and solutions in spoken, written and visual formats to a range of audiences.

**Principled:** As they engage with service-learning projects with integrity and honesty, and ethical approaches to working with communities in need that recognize the dignity and rights of all human, animal and plant members of the planet.

**Open-Minded:** As they critically appreciate their own privilege as international students while also respecting and valuing the knowledge and realities of indigenous and developing communities around the world, and respecting and valuing the contributions and talents of their peers in working towards making a difference in local and global contexts.

**Caring:** As they develop and show empathy and compassion in understanding the realities faced by communities in need around the world, and as they engage with service activities with positive and caring attitudes that highlight working in relationships of trust and solidarity with others less fortunate than them.

**Risk Takers:** As they challenge themselves to live and work in unfamiliar and uncomfortable surroundings and situations, to remain resourceful and resilient in the face of change and uncertainty, and to step beyond their comfort zones in expressing ideas, questions and solutions that challenge others' biases or assumptions and allow them to engage with difficult realities.

**Balanced:** As they recognize and strive to sustain a sense of interdependence and interconnectedness with other people and the world in which we live, and continually work towards deepening their understanding of how to use their privilege as international students as a force for social change.

**Reflective:** As they thoughtfully consider the world as a historical and social system that has created inherent inequalities, and continually strive to understand and enhance their potential within that system to be agents of change and transformation through a process of self-reflection, evaluation and goal setting

## **Service as Action**

**" IB learners strive to be caring members of the community who demonstrate a personal commitment to service, and to act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and the environment."**

(MYP Principles into Practice)

Action is a key component in constructivist models of education, including the kind of teaching and learning common to all IB programmes.

### **Service is a Subset of Action**

IB learners strive to be caring members of the community who demonstrate a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment. IB World Schools value service with others as an important way to engage in principled action across a range of overlapping local and global communities. Through responsible action, tightly connected with sustained inquiry and critical reflection, young people and adults can develop the kinds of attributes described by the learner profile that are essential for success in future academic pursuits and for adult life.

The MYP aims to help students develop their personal understanding, their emerging sense of self and their appropriate responsibility in their community. In the IB continuum, this continues with the service component of the DP's CAS requirements (Community, Action, Service), in which students continue to increase their awareness of their own strengths and areas for growth, undertake new challenges, plan and initiate activities, work collaboratively with others, show perseverance and commitment, engage with locally and globally significant challenges and consider the ethical implications of their actions.

As students become more aware and acquire a better understanding of the context, and of their responsibilities, they become empowered to make choices about how to take thoughtful and positive action. This action will be different from student to student and from context to context.

The action may involve students in:

- feeling empathy towards others
- making small-scale changes to their behaviour
- undertaking larger and more significant projects
- acting on their own and collaboratively
- taking physical action
- suggesting modifications to an existing system to the benefit of all involved
- lobbying people in more influential positions to act.

Service requires that students are able to build authentic connections between what they learn in the classroom and what they encounter in the community. When connected to classroom learning, the experience of service offers opportunities to apply concepts, both skills and knowledge, as students explore the community in its complexity, gain personal insight, develop existing and new skills, and grow in confidence and responsibility as they become “actors” in the “real world” beyond school. Guided or classroom learning that leads to action addressing an authentic community need is most meaningful when allowing for student initiative that incorporates their interests, skills and talents. The process also provides a structured time for both formal and informal reflection on the service experience. When the service experience has meaning and purpose for all involved, participating in reflection is also seen as rewarding. By reflecting on their service experience, students may gain a greater awareness of the community and world they live in, and their role and responsibility in improving the lives of themselves and others.

## Service as Action Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes are the objectives which the student participating in the Service or the Action aim to meet. These will help to determine the quality of the Service or Action.

**I. Undertake new challenges:** A new challenge may be an unfamiliar activity, or an extension to an existing one.

**II. Plan and initiate activities:** Planning and initiation will often be in collaboration with others. It can be shown in activities that are part of larger projects, for example, ongoing school activities in the local community, as well as in small student-led activities.

**III. Work collaboratively with others:** Collaboration can be shown in many different activities, such as team sports, playing music in a band, or helping in a primary classroom.

**IV. Show perseverance and commitment in their activities:** At a minimum, this implies attending regularly and accepting a share of the responsibility for dealing with problems that arise in the course of activities.

**V. Engage with issues of global importance:** Students may be involved in international projects but there are many global issues that can be acted upon locally or nationally (for example, environmental concerns, caring for the elderly). Creating awareness videos for sustainability would qualify as meeting this learning outcome.

**VI. Consider the ethical implications of their actions:** Ethical decisions arise in almost any activity (for example, on the sports field, in musical composition, in relationships with others involved in service activities). Evidence of thinking about ethical issues can be shown in various ways, including reflections and conversations with advisers.

**VII. Develop new skills:** As with new challenges, new skills may be shown in activities that the student has not previously undertaken, or in increased expertise in an established Area.

**VIII.\* Awareness** (In Managebac)

These learning outcomes identify the substance of students' self-reflection on service as action. All of these learning outcomes are closely associated with IB learner profile attributes and ATL skills. Through their participation in service, students can become more confident, self-regulated learner

## Types of Service and Action

- **Direct service:** Students have interaction that involves people, the environment or animals. Examples include one-on-one tutoring, developing a school garden, or teaching dogs behaviours to prepare them for adoption.
- **Indirect service:** Though students do not see the recipients during indirect service, they have verified that their actions will benefit the community or environment. Examples include redesigning an organization's website, writing original picture books to teach a language, beach cleaning activities, planting trees etc.
- **Advocacy:** Students speak on behalf of a cause or a matter of concern to promote action on an issue of public interest. Examples include initiating an awareness campaign on hunger in the community, breast cancer awareness campaign, performing a skit/play on relevant Real-Life Situation example; replacing bullying with respect, or creating a video on sustainable water solutions.
- **Research:** Students collect information through varied sources, analyse data and report on a topic of importance to influence policy or practice. Examples include conducting environmental surveys to influence their school, contributing to a study of animal migration patterns, or compiling the most effective means to reduce litter in public spaces.

## Service Planning at IST

### **Student (self) initiated activities**

The school strongly recommends service activities initiated by the students. If the student participates in such self-initiated activity and he/she wishes to document it, he/she must keep a record of every interaction had through this service. The student could then choose to write one meaningful reflection per activity. Each activity is expected to address one/some learning outcome(s). Students, who undertake very impactful and meaningful activities and have documented it by the required process, will be selected and given an opportunity to present it in an assembly.

### **School planned service activities**

Students participating in activities planned by the school should sum up their experience in the form of a meaningful reflection at the end of activity. Each activity is expected to address one/some learning outcome(s).

### **Service from curriculum:**

As part of the unit-initiated service, students and teachers may come up with an action in response to a community's need. With guidance from the teacher, the student will, for such a unit, undertake the service activity.

The student needs to upload a **meaningful** reflection on the action taken as an individual/ group for that subject area. For any alternate activity, the student must seek approval for the activity from the concerned subject teacher. Each activity is expected to address one/some learning outcome(s).

## The Service-Learning Cycle

Students should follow the service-learning cycle phases when completing their service activities and projects. While some activities might not lend themselves to all of the steps, students should be aware of and make an effort to address them.

### **1) Investigation**

Create an inventory of student interests, skills, and talents; research information about the topic through varied approaches (surveys, interviews, direct observation, personal experiences) and

increase knowledge of the issue; identify an authentic need to be addressed.

### **2) Preparation**

Find out what needs to be done and set goals; create an action plan of what needs to be done, including a timeline, required resources and allocation of responsibilities.

### **3) Action**

Execute the plan through direct service, indirect service, advocacy, and/or research.

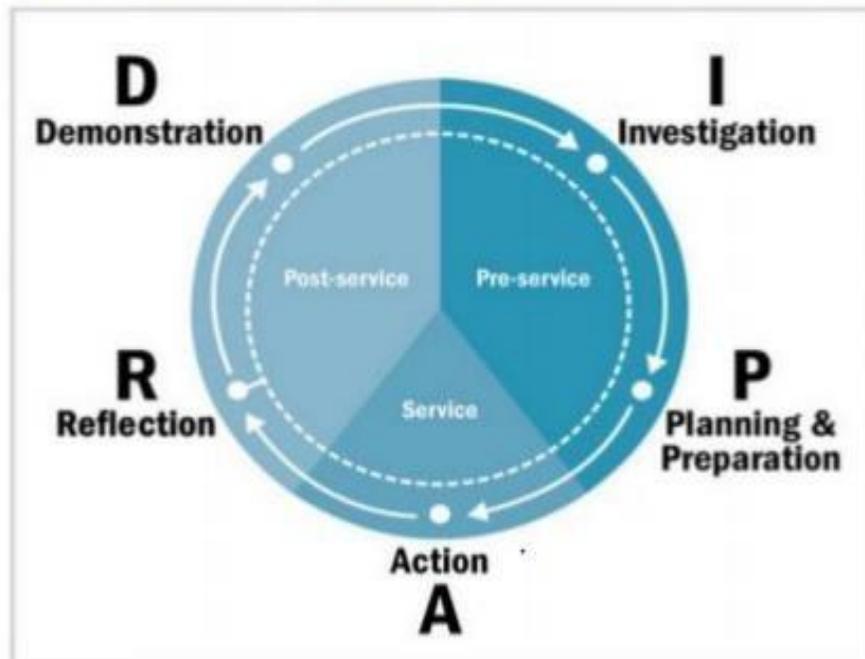
### **4) Reflection**

This is an ongoing process that should be documented on ManageBac. Note down thoughts, feelings, and experiences related to the activity.

### **5) Demonstration**

This encompasses the entire service-learning experience, beginning with the investigation, and including what has been learned, the process of learning, and the service accomplished. Sharing this with an audience educates and informs others.

## A principled action process



Globally Conscious

## Learning Outcomes Progression Grid for Service

MYP Learning Outcomes for Service	Minimum expectation	
	MY1, 2 and 3	MY4 and 5
Become more aware of own strengths and weaknesses: the activity will make student aware of own strengths and weaknesses	I am aware of my own strengths and weaknesses	I can reflect on own strengths and weaknesses
Undertake challenges that develop new skills: the activity will enable students undertake challenges that develop new skills	With guidance, I can undertake challenges that develop new skills	With minimal guidance, I can undertake challenges that develop new skills
Work collaboratively with others: through the activity, students will work collaboratively with others	I can participate in collaborative activities	I can appreciate the importance of collaborative activities and plan such activities
Persevere in action: the activity will give an opportunity to students persevere in action	With teacher support, I persevere in action and am committed	I persevere in action independently and am committed
Consider ethical implications of their actions – the activity will help students to consider ethical implications of their	I can recognize that there will be ethical implications	I can propose solutions to ethical issues

## Service as Action Ideas

School	Local	National/International
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize a celebration or school event (UN Day, mother tongue day, trivia night, talent show)</li> <li>• Peer tutoring or buddy reading</li> <li>• Helping at school events (Halloween, school disco, spring festival, end of year art show)</li> <li>• Participate in a student organization like the student council</li> <li>• Run an after school club (sport or language etc.)</li> <li>• Library assistant</li> <li>• School improvement projects</li> <li>• Start an environmental initiative at school</li> <li>• Anti-bullying campaigns</li> <li>• Organize break time activities</li> </ul>	<p>Volunteer locally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become an assistant coach for younger players in a sports club</li> <li>• Help neighbors</li> <li>• Visit nursing homes</li> <li>• Church projects</li> <li>• Music School events</li> <li>• Organize a food or clothing drive for a good cause</li> <li>• Teach a language</li> <li>• Participate in local clean city projects</li> <li>• Animal rescue</li> <li>• Local library assistant</li> <li>• Trash collecting/City cleaning programme</li> </ul>	<p>Fundraising for an organization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission Africa</li> <li>• Kræftens bekæmpelse</li> <li>• Red Cross</li> <li>• Etc</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize an event for an international day- e.g. Earth Day, Movember, etc</li> <li>• Create a global campaign</li> <li>• Participate in an international organization event (Amnesty International, Care, Oxfam, etc.)</li> <li>• Participate in Model UN</li> <li>• Organize garbage / beach clean-ups</li> <li>• Recycling programs</li> <li>• Volunteer at cultural events in or out of town (culture crew etc)</li> </ul>

### Invalid SA activities

Service activities require action and must be a service to the community. The following is a list of activities, which would not fit into the SA criteria:

- An activity for which a student is personally rewarded, either financially or with some benefit (unless this benefit is passed on in full to a worthy cause)
- All forms of duty within the family, i.e., no party planning for cousins or babysitting.
- Work experience that only benefits the student (joining a music group or sports team as a participant... though it is acceptable if it entails a leadership role!).
- An activity where there is no leader or responsible adult on site to evaluate and confirm student performance.

## References

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- Service handbook of Chotiram International school.
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- Service as Action in IB Programme
- HoutBay International School