

IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME · CAS

CAS Experiences Portfolio

Watersports & Adventure — Summer 2026

Kitesurfing · Discover Scuba Diving · Tandem Skydiving

PREPARED FOR

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Oberoi International School

CAS Strand: Activity (primary)

Final-year Portfolio Component

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1. The thread that ties these together

Across the summer break of 2026, I set out to take on water-based and adventure activities he had long been drawn to but, for health reasons, had not previously been able to pursue in last two years. Rather than treating this as a holiday add-on, I made it the deliberate focus of the family's trip to Mauritius and committed real effort to it — most of all to learning to kitesurf, alongside multiple Discover Scuba dives, Snorkelling and a tandem skydive.

I used to very active in water sports, racket games and high impact sports activities. So of the specific call out for these would include:

- January 2021: Japalouppe Equestrian Centre (Camp 1): A ten days resident camp on the outskirts on Pune which covers (a) 45 mins riding lesson; and (b) learning sessions every evening covering presentations and demos about different topics about like horse breeds, markings, colours, grooming and horse behaviour
- October 2021: Japalouppe Equestrian Centre (Camp 2):
- March 2022: 8 days trip to Andaman & Nicobar Island to become a PADI certified Scuba diver. While I managed to complete the full 4 days course, however on the last day of training I suffered ear infection and couldn't take the test to earn certification. As part of the program, I did multiple Discover Scuba divers & snorkelling sessions. The training also involved survival skills in the event of an untoward accident while diving
- December 2022: 7 days trip to Thailand covering Phuket, Karabi and Phi Phi Island: I did multiple open sea snorkelling sessions, Discover Scuba in Karabi and also took water surfing (Look at video's for details)

However due to health reasons I had to complete stop my sporting activities. Doctors have strictly advised to stay away from high impact sports. Basic swimming was recommended from, which I have continued to the extend practically possible in Mumbai for last 3 years.

A quick background on the health background

- Pre-Diagnosis Phase (Oct 2021 – Dec 2023): experienced intermittent bilateral knee and joint pain from late 2021, initially managed by multiple orthopedic specialists as patellar tendinitis, Osgood-Schlatter disease, pes anserine bursitis, and flat-foot-related pain. HLA-B27 was found positive in May 2023. MRI periphyseal edema was noted from August 2023 but attributed to growth until a second opinion in January 2024 identified CRMO
- Diagnosis & Initial Treatment (Jan 2024): First consultation Dr. RK (SRCC) — CRMO formally diagnosed; whole body MRI (Dr. Aditya Daftary) showing 10-11 active lesions. Whole body MRI confirms CRMO — bilateral distal femoral, tibial, fibular, femoral greater trochanter, sacroiliac involvement
- Treatment Evolution & Disease Course:
 - o Jan–Mar 2024: Active disease; severe post-Zoledronate reaction (body ache, chills, 5 days); ALT spike to 307 (Mar 2024)
 - o Dec 2024: whole body MRI showed mixed picture — some improvement, some new lesions; RINBO score 5/10. MTX properly started as sustained course (36 units weekly SC) — first continuous course
 - o May–Jun 2025: MRI showed net improvement; Dr. Polly Ferguson (Iowa) confirms CRMO, reviews all imaging independently; MTX dose increased to 38 units

- o Dec 2025: Etanercept (biologic TNF-blocker) added; TB screening mandatory — IGRA positive, CXR & HR CT Chest clear; AKT initiated
- o Apr 2026: 5th metatarsal fracture (right foot) while playing badminton — non-displaced, slow healing

During the Summer break of 2026 (my last summer break as school student), I was wanted to challenge my limitation of physical adventure sporting activity and go back to enjoy diving and my love for water. The key idea for me for *deliberately moving beyond a personal limit*. I was looking at physical exertion and skill-building across all three experiences

As I now write to summarise my experience, I feel over whelmed with the experience. The strongest learning outcomes from this activity included

Learning Outcome	Description
LO1: strengths & growth	
LO2: new challenges & skills	• Scuba & Snorkelling are not new to me, but I felt like naïve while restarting these. It was a mental challenge to believe in myself & the process involved • Both Kitesurfing and Skydiving were new challenges for me. I had to learn new skills to be able to successfully perform these activities
LO3: initiating & planning	This was the most important aspect of the experience, where I realised the relevance of both taking initiative & planning well. • Initiate: I had to take the initiative to choose the location and also activities to be covered. My parents were right sceptical about nature of activities especially kite surfing • Planning: Kind of activities to be done, number of sessions and centre at which these should be done was carefully planned. While I wanted to push myself, I took care to not cross the line on “High Impact Sports”
LO4: commitment & perseverance	
LO5: collaboration	
LO6: global significance	
LO7: ethics of choices, incl. safety and respect for the marine environment	

2. Experience — Kitesurfing

The centrepiece of the cluster, and the activity that best demonstrates perseverance.

Activity	Learn-to-kitesurf course (multi-session)
Provider	Kite At North, Grand Gaube / Rahul
Location	Kite At North kitesurfing school & Lodge, Nelson Road, Grand Gaube, Mauritius [Located off the beaten track in Northern Mauritius]
Dates	June 7, 2026 & June 11, 2026, Summer 2026, 2 sessions, ~5-6 hours
Strand	Activity
Learning outcomes	LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4 (LO7 — water-safety judgement)
Evidence to attach	Session photos/video, instructor confirmation, a short skills-progression note (kite control → body-drag → water start)

Description

Kitesurfing demands that you manage a powered kite, the board, the wind window and the water all at once — and it has a famously steep, humbling early learning curve. I committed to structured lessons over two days, progressing through kite control on land, body-dragging in the water, and working toward his first water starts. Once on the water, I had to make quick decisions about steering, balancing, and adjusting to changing wind conditions. This improved my ability to remain calm under pressure and make decisions independently.

Model reflections — to personalise

June 7, 2026 — Session 1 *Strand: Activity · LO1, LO2, LO3*

The sessions started with preparing ourselves for kite surfing, which included getting into fitting body suits, identifying the right kite type (size of kite depending on wind speed) and learning how to untangle the kite harness and connecting it with kite & handle

I went in quietly confident and the wind humbled me within ten minutes. I had assumed my arms would do the work, so I kept over-gripping and steering the kite too hard, which sent it crashing every time. Rahul kept repeating that it's the harness and small inputs, not muscle — and I realised I was fighting the kite instead of reading it.

What struck me is how much of this is mental. For 1st 45 minutes, I've framed myself as someone whose body sets the limits. Today the limit was actually my impatience, not my body — a distinction I want to keep testing. The emotions were changing very fast — there would be instance where I would feel that my kite along with me would fly away with wind drifting me far away from the Rahul and next moment I would struggle against the wind and arms being pulled out. I was particularly worried about not inflicting any sort of injury given the complications with long recovery scenario.

Kite surfing was unlike any sport I had previously attempted. It required me to trust the instructor, learn unfamiliar equipment, and perform in an unpredictable environment. Successfully riding the board gave me confidence that I can learn challenging skills through effort and practice.

Before this experience, I had never controlled a power kite or ridden a board on water.

Through instruction and repeated practice, I learned how to launch and steer the kite safely, maintain balance on the board, and coordinate my movements. This significantly improved my coordination, balance, and overall physical fitness

June 11, 2026 — First water start *Strand: Activity · LO2, LO4 — the breakthrough*

Today it finally connected: the kite pulled, I let the board come up, and for 30 seconds I was actually riding before I went down. After hours of crashing, that short ride meant more than it probably should have.

The honest reflection is about perseverance. One the first evening I genuinely wanted to stop — as I was struggling to get onboard. What kept me going was reframing each crash as data rather than failure, the way I do when a robot run fails and we debug it. The same patience I'd apply to an ESP32 sketch turned out to apply to my own body.

Kite surfing proved much more challenging than I expected. I frequently lost balance, crashed into the water, and struggled to coordinate the kite and board simultaneously. By remaining patient and continuing to practice, I gradually improved. This experience taught me the value of perseverance and resilience when learning a complex new skill.

This is also the experience that most directly answers the health reason that had previously kept me out of the water. I'm not pretending the limit is gone — but now I believe that CRMO is not the end of world — but I proved to myself that with the right preparation and pacing, it doesn't have to be the end of my sports aspirations.

Safety was a major part of the training. I learned how to assess wind conditions, use safety release systems, wear appropriate protective equipment, and respond to emergencies. This helped me appreciate the importance of preparation and risk management in outdoor activities.

3. Experience — Discover Scuba Diving

Activity	Discover Scuba Diving (introductory dive with certified instructor)
Provider	Emperor Diving Center, Mauritius
Location	Coin de Mire, Mauritius
Dates	June 10, 2026, Summer 2026
Strand	Activity (with marine-awareness touching LO6/LO7)
Learning outcomes	LO1, LO2, LO7 (LO6 — marine ecosystems, lightly)
Evidence to attach	Dive briefing / Discover Scuba confirmation, photos, a note on what was observed underwater

Description

I was going to dive after a gap of three years and it almost felt like I was doing this for 1st time. A first descent under the supervision of a certified instructor, learning to equalise, manage buoyancy and — the strangest part — simply trust a regulator to breathe underwater. Beyond the skill, it was a feeling of looking at a living reef ecosystem is craved for. Through scuba diving, I developed technical diving skills, learned to remain calm in an unfamiliar environment, gained a greater appreciation for marine ecosystems, and understood the importance of safety, teamwork, and environmental responsibility

Model reflection — to personalise

June 10, 2026 — First & Second descent *Strand: Activity · LO1, LO2, LO4, LO7*

The hardest moment was the first full breath underwater — every instinct said don't, and I had to consciously override it. Buoyancy was the real skill: too tense and I rose, too relaxed and I sank, and finding the still middle felt a lot like the calm you need before a robotics match.

Scuba diving required concentration and discipline. I had to carefully monitor my breathing, stay aware of my surroundings, and follow safety instructions at all times. This experience improved my self-management skills and taught me the importance of staying composed under pressure. Being underwater for an extended period was initially intimidating. I had to adapt to a completely different environment where normal movement and communication were not possible. Overcoming these challenges helped me build confidence in my ability to remain calm and learn new skills

What stayed with me afterwards wasn't the adrenaline but the reef itself — the whole idea of an active ecosystem on the ocean floor & observe live corals is extremely fascinating. I am particularly intrigued with the sunlight on ocean floor, brightness of some of the corals. Seeing how much life depends on that fragile structure, and how easily a careless fin-kick could damage coral, made the instructor's "look, don't touch" rule feel less like a rule and more like an ethic (LO7).

If I take any of these experiences further into a collaborative CAS Project later, this is the natural seed: marine conservation isn't abstract once you've breathed next to a reef.
[Optional: note any project idea this sparked.]

4. Experience — Tandem Skydiving

Activity	Tandem skydive (with certified tandem master)
Provider	Skydive Mauritius
Location	Sugar Estate (Airstrip, Skydive Road Z.I MU, Riviere du Rempart 30107, Mauritius)
Dates	June 8, 2026, Summer 2026
Strand	Activity
Learning outcomes	LO1, LO2, LO4, LO7
Evidence to attach	Skydive Mauritius booking #5831, jump certificate / video, a short reflection on managing fear

Description

A tandem jump is a single, concentrated confrontation with fear: the climb, the open door, the step into freefall, and then the canopy ride down. The skill here is less physical than psychological — choosing to commit despite every instinct to refuse. Through skydiving, I challenged myself to overcome fear, developed confidence in high-pressure situations, learned the importance of preparation and risk management, and gained a deeper understanding of my ability to adapt and grow through new experiences

Model reflection — to personalise

June 8, 2026 — The jump *Strand: Activity · LO1, LO4*

The fear didn't arrive at the door the way I expected — it arrived on the climb, in the slow minutes with nothing to do but think. I noticed myself wanting to find a reason to call it off, and recognised that exact feeling from the evenings I nearly quit kitesurfing.

Once we left the plane the fear simply... had no room left. Freefall was too total to be afraid in. The lesson I'm taking isn't "be fearless" — it's that fear is loudest in anticipation and quietest in action, which is useful to know the next time my health or my nerves try to talk me out of something. Leading up to the jump, I experienced nervousness and anticipation. Through the experience, I learned how to manage my emotions, stay focused, and remain calm despite the intensity of the situation. This helped me better understand my personal strengths and areas for growth.

Skydiving required me to overcome hesitation and trust the process despite the natural fear associated with jumping from a great height. Completing the experience demonstrated that growth often comes from embracing challenges rather than avoiding them.

Before the jump, I learned about safety protocols, equipment checks, body positioning, and emergency procedures. This showed me that even activities that appear extremely risky can be made much safer through preparation, training, and disciplined adherence to procedures.

As a tandem skydiver, I relied on my instructor's expertise and experience. This taught me the importance of trusting skilled professionals and working collaboratively to achieve a common goal safely

5. Learning-outcome coverage

Experiences don't each need to hit every outcome — the **portfolio as a whole** must evidence all seven. This cluster carries LO1–LO4 and LO7 strongly; the matrix below is honest about where coverage is light.

Experience	LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4	LO5	LO6	LO7
Kitesurfing	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	—	~
Discover Scuba	✓	✓	~	—	~	~	✓
Tandem Skydive	✓	✓	~	✓	✓	—	✓

✓ clearly evidenced ~ lightly touched — not claimed

6. Evidence checklist

Attach to ManageBac alongside each experience. Variety (photo, confirmation, short note) is encouraged over volume.

Evidence item	Status
Kitesurfing — session photos / short video	☐
Kitesurfing — instructor or school confirmation	☐
Kitesurfing — skills progression note (control → drag → water start)	☐
Scuba — Emperor Diving Center confirmation / dive briefing	☐
Scuba — underwater or post-dive photo + observation note	☐
Skydive — Skydive Mauritius booking #5831 + certificate/video	☐
Each experience — a personalised written reflection (own words)	☐
Optional — one short audio or video reflection for variety	☐

Student: Varish [Surname] Signature / date: _____

CAS Coordinator / Supervisor: _____ Date: _____