



**TRAINING ADMINISTRATORS OF
GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION**

2019 Certification Guide

www.TAGME.org

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2019 ASSESSMENT CYCLE

Application submission – May 1 through June 15
Application review and notification - Rolling through June 30
Assessment scheduling – Upon application approval
Session 1 Assessment Completion – August 1 through Sept 15
Session 1 Retakes – September 16 through October 15
Session 2 Assessment Completion – October 16 through Nov 30
Session 2 Retakes – December 1 through December 31

The National Board for Certification of Training Administrators in Graduate Medical Education (TAGME) was established to advance the profession of those who manage residency and fellowship programs. By creating an assessment process that requires the demonstration of high-level of competence and expertise in GME program management, TAGME certification has set the standard for administrators, coordinators and managers since 2005. Successful attainment of the C-TAGME credential provides employers, colleagues and the public with the assurance that certified individuals possess the necessary knowledge, experience and skills to perform their duties in a professional and competent manner.

In the era of increased documentation and oversight in the GME genre, responsibilities and tasks performed by the training administrator are at an all-time high. Institutions, program directors and GME offices rely heavily on competent and thoroughly trained administrators. Unlike many other professions, there are no higher education academic courses of study offered through colleges or universities that directly address GME administrators. Nearly all of the required knowledge is derived from direct, on-the-job experience.

Since inception, the overarching goal of TAGME's assessment process has been to measure the training administrator's ability to quickly and accurately source relevant GME information and apply it appropriately to the residency or fellowship program and its trainees within the confines of their institutional policies and procedures. TAGME supports this mission with an open-book policy for all assessments.

VALUE OF C-TAGME

Achieving the C-TAGME credential is accomplished through a combination of experience, continuous education and successfully earning a passing assessment result. For those seeking to maintain the credential, demonstration of personal professional activities through leadership or scholarship are added qualifications.

TAGME certification exhibits the readiness of the GME professional to utilize the skills and knowledge necessary to perform the job at an optimum level. Embarking on the path towards TAGME certification should be viewed as a serious commitment to professional development and a dedication to life-long learning. However, additional and often overlooked benefits include:

- Through rigorous and comprehensive study preparation, improvement in skill level and content knowledge are assured.
- Preparedness for greater on-the-job responsibilities.
- Reflects achievement and commitment to goals.
- Recognition of certified vs. non-certified training administrators as a qualifying factor for promotion and/or higher salary.
- Enhances the training administrator/program coordinator image.
- Promotes visibility of the profession.

WHO SHOULD SIT FOR THE INITIAL TAGME ASSESSMENT?

TAGME welcomes all training administrators, program coordinators, GME managers, and administrative DIOs of ACGME accredited residency and fellowship programs who fulfill all eligibility requirements *at the time of application*. TAGME certification is valid for 5 years.

ADA COMPLIANCE

TAGME will provide reasonable assessment accommodations to a candidate whose documented disabilities or other qualifying medical condition(s) impedes their ability to take the assessment under standard conditions. Candidates with visual, physical, hearing or learning disabilities may request special testing accommodations. These modifications provided to qualifying candidates will be done to the extent that such accommodation does not fundamentally alter the assessment or cause an undue burden to TAGME or to the assessment administration site. Any excessive costs to meet the accommodation requirement will be the responsibility of the candidate.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

TAGME does not discriminate against any individual or entity based on religion, age, gender, race, disability, sexuality, military discharge status, ancestry, marital status or source of income. All persons applying are considered for candidacy based solely upon the information submitted to TAGME and are not required to be a member of any organization to apply for certification.

ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT

Potential candidates should review all information contained in this guide. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the eligibility requirements for Initial or Maintenance of Certification are met at the time of submission. **Incomplete applications, ineligible candidates or requests for application withdrawal will forfeit \$100.00 of the application fee.** Withdrawal requests must be made in writing, by the candidate, no less than 14-days prior to the first day of the selected testing session. Withdrawal requests made less than 14-days prior to the first day of the selected testing session will forfeit 50% of the application fee.

2019 TAGME Assessment Registration Fees	
Initial Certification	\$ 350.00
Maintenance of Certification	\$ 350.00
Retakes	\$ 150.00
Retakes from 2018 attempts	No charge

TAGME assessments are computer-based objective evaluations consisting of multiple choice and short-answer questions. Candidates taking the Initial certification assessment will have up to 4 hours to complete approximately 175 questions; candidates taking the Maintenance of Certification assessment will have up to 2.5 hours to complete 100 questions. The assessments and retakes are administered during two sessions per year through a network of testing sites operated by our test delivery vendor, Assessment Systems.

ELIGIBILITY

Candidates must satisfy specific eligibility requirements to embark on their journey towards initial TAGME certification or to maintain the C-TAGME credential. It is the candidate's responsibility to fully comply with all procedures and deadlines to establish eligibility for the assessment(s). TAGME reserves the right to verify the information supplied by, or on behalf of, a candidate. If necessary, TAGME may request additional documentation from the candidate to clarify or support eligibility.

INITIAL CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

1. Must be currently employed as a GME professional of an ACGME, ACGME-I, or ACGME-AOA program *and* have completed **2** consecutive years in this role by the final day of the application period in the year you wish to apply.
 - It is permissible to change specialties or employers within the 2-year period if both roles were in GME *and* any employment gap during this time does not exceed 60 days. This also applies to medical and family leave absences.
 - If the 2-year employment period is not continuous *and* does not exceed a 60-day gap between employers, a letter from the former program stating dates of employment, job title/duties, and verification that your name was listed at ACGME.org as the Program Coordinator contact for that residency or fellowship. The letter should be uploaded with other required documents at the time application is made.
2. Within the preceding 3 years have obtained **15** Education Credits (EC) where the focus is GME or professional growth/development relevant to your current role. One hour of conference, meeting or education activity = one EC. *The majority of EC activities submitted must be GME focused.*
 - ECs may be accumulated through attendance at national, regional or state conferences/meetings; webinars, podcasts, or completion of online modules. *Note: National meeting attendance is not mandatory to meet this requirement.*
 - Leadership or professional development courses that improve your performance in a qualifying role are eligible. Non-GME related activities are subject to review by the Applications Committee.
 - All EC activities listed must be completed by the application submission date.
 - Institutional meetings, webinars or podcasts with GME or professional growth/development content may be included up to a maximum of **5** ECs.
 - It is permissible to obtain all ECs through attendance at national, regional or state conferences.
 - Routine coordinator meetings such as Milestones, APEs, CCCs, PECs, department committees, ranking, interviews, CLER visits, orientation, monthly or weekly GME institutional, etc. are not applicable as ECs.
 - In-person training conferences are eligible; ACGME Coordinator Workshops, Med-Hub/New Innovations/e*Value, AHME Institute, etc. and may be claimed as ECs.
 - Attendance at Grand Rounds or presentation by an outside speaker at your home institution may be eligible if the topic is GME or professional growth/development related.

- It is not necessary to supply a certificate of achievement or attendance for any EC claimed. Details regarding each EC (meeting/conference name, location, dates, session titles and speakers) must be recorded on your application.

MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION (MOC) CRITERIA

1. Must be currently employed as a GME professional of an ACGME, ACGME-I, or ACGME-AOA program *and* have completed **7** consecutive years in this role by the final day of the application period in the year you wish to apply.
 - It is permissible to change specialties or employers within the 7-year period if both roles were in GME *and* any employment gap during this time does not exceed 60 days. This also applies to medical and family leave absences.
 - If the 7-year employment period is not continuous *and* does not exceed a 60-day gap between employers, a letter from the former program stating dates of employment, job title/duties, and verification that your name was listed at ACGME.org as the Program Coordinator contact for that residency or fellowship. The letter should be uploaded with other required documents at the time application is made.
2. Within the preceding 5 years have obtained **20** Education Credits (EC) where the focus is GME or professional growth/development relevant to your current role. One hour of conference, meeting or education activity = one EC. Please refer to EC criteria outlined under Initial Certification for further information.
3. Completed **2** Personal Professional Growth (PPG) experiences within the immediately previous 5 years.
 - Qualifying PPG activities include:
 - Presentations (defined as a prepared talk or lecture to an audience on an aspect of GME or related professional development) at a national, regional, state, institutional or departmental level.
 - Peer-reviewed poster presentations or published manuscripts.
 - Have an active role on a committee or in an activity at the national, regional, state or institutional level. Examples of an active role could include Chair, President, Treasurer, Secretary, Board Member, etc.
 - Hold a leadership position at the department level that includes a title.
 - For active committee or leadership roles, provide the specific position held, the organization, and the dates served in that role.
 - For lecture/conference presentations or poster presentations, list title, meeting name, organization, location and date.
 - Routine activities related to your GME role are not eligible.
 - Oral presentations or poster presentations at the institutional level are eligible.
4. When considering the eligibility of activities towards the PPG requirement, ask yourself, “Am I the teacher?” If the answer is yes, it will likely be accepted.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

TAGME's online application portal can be accessed at: www.TAGME.org. When accessing the application portal for the first time, candidates should **Create an Account** using the link provided directly under the Sign In button. After creating your account and verifying the email address provided, candidates may then continue with application completion.

COMPLETE THE APPLICATION

The application consists of several sections. After selecting the desired assessment, the next screen will present a menu of items to complete. Follow the screen prompts as directed. It is important to complete all required fields. Incomplete applications will be denied.

IMPORTANT: Due to the complexities of institutional email security measures, primary communication from TAGME will be to candidate's *personal* email account. Omission of this information will result in automatic application denial. Personal email addresses are used solely for communications related to certification and are not (will not) ever be shared, sold, rented or otherwise disseminated to entities external to TAGME. Free personal email accounts are available from many providers including, but not limited to, Gmail, Yahoo, and Outlook.

SUBMIT REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Candidates applying for Initial or MOC certification should download and complete the **Education Credits Form** and the **Supportive Verification Form**. These are available in the application portal (upper left menu next to the TAGME logo, under Documents), or also found on the About the Assessments page of TAGME's website. It is not required for Retake candidates to submit these documents.

Once completed, the **Education Credits** and **Supportive Verification** forms should be combined into one (1) PDF file to upload into the application portal. Failure to provide both documents will result in a delay to review and approve the application; if not received prior to the final day of the application period will render the candidate ineligible to complete registration for the current assessment cycle.

PAY THE ASSESSMENT FEE INVOICE

Upon registration, candidates will receive an Invoice to remit payment for the assessment. Credit card payments may be made through TAGME's Paypal link found on the About the Assessments page at www.TAGME.org. **IMPORTANT:** Be sure to include the Invoice number from the registration confirmation email.

Personal checks, money orders, and institutional checks will be honored and can be mailed to:

Karen Mulcahy, C-TAGME
TAGME President
c/o ALGH – Division of Cardiology
1775 Dempster St., Parkside B-01
Park Ridge, IL 60068

Institutional checks must be postmarked by the final day of the application period. Institutional payments for multiple candidates must include names or will be returned. Checks should be made payable to TAGME. Candidates will not receive application approval to move forward with assessment scheduling until payment is received. Returned checks will incur a \$50.00 fee.

ASSESSMENT SCHEDULING

Upon approval of application, supportive documentation, and successful payment processing, candidates can expect to receive an email with detailed information to schedule the Initial, MOC or Retake Assessment during the established sessions. Availability at testing facility sites may vary by dates and times within each assessment period. Appointments are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Candidates will be presented with multiple choices for available locations and dates based upon information provided. **Failure to schedule an assessment within the published sessions offered during the same year the candidate's application is approved will result in forfeiture of the entire application fee.** Scheduling requests will be confirmed via email.

RESCHEDULING or CANCELLING THE ASSESSMENT APPOINTMENT

Candidates needing to reschedule their original confirmed assessment appointment location, date or time may do so for a \$50.00 fee (each occurrence). The rescheduled appointment must occur during the established assessment sessions in the same calendar year that the candidate's application is received/approved.

Candidates seeking to cancel a confirmed assessment appointment will receive a refund of 50% of the application fee if the cancellation request is received prior to the scheduled appointment. No refund will be processed for cancellation requests received after the confirmed assessment appointment.

RESCHEDULING/CANCELLATION EXCEPTIONS

A personal or medical emergency that occurs within 7 days of your assessment appointment will be taken into consideration if a reschedule or cancellation is necessary. The emergency may apply to yourself, spouse/significant other, child or parent. Documentation (i.e., physician's note, ED forms, obituary, or other relevant verification) of the occurrence should accompany the written request and *must be received by TAGME prior to the original assessment appointment*. Requests with accompanying documentation will be reviewed by TAGME's Executive Committee with the decision communicated via email to the candidate within 30 days. Requests for refunds or extensions received without supportive documentation will not be considered and the full assessment fee will be forfeited.

For verifiable issues regarding extreme weather conditions or the testing site becoming unavailable due to technical failures, power outage, etc., candidates will be allowed to reschedule the assessment appointment in the next established assessment session with no additional fee charged, provided adequate documentation is submitted within 5 days of the original appointment.

PREPARING FOR THE ASSESSMENT

Although each TAGME certification assessment is completed under an “open-book” policy, it is critical that candidates are able to demonstrate a high-level of familiarity with and an advanced understanding of the knowledge required to successfully manage accredited graduate medical education programs.

Questions for all assessments are sourced from the Resources List available at www.TAGME.com. It is strongly advised that candidates study these documents in detail and become comfortable accessing the information quickly and accurately. Printed copies of Resource List files are admissible into the testing session. PDF versions of the Resource List files will also be available onscreen within the secured assessment session. Candidates will not be allowed to access the internet or email during the test session to retrieve or view the Resource List files.

The entire body of knowledge required to successfully attain TAGME certification is contained within the Resource List files and represent the entire scope of relevant study materials. *There is no other published study guide or handbook that TAGME endorses or recommends for certification preparation.*

ON ASSESSMENT DAY

It is strongly recommended that you familiarize yourself with the testing center location and parking options prior to the day of your assessment. Plan to arrive to at the location of your assessment 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment. Candidates arriving more than 30 minutes beyond the confirmed assessment appointment will not be admitted.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Upon arrival at the test center location, **a printed copy of your assessment appointment confirmation along with one form of government-issued photo identification must be presented to be admitted to the assessment session.** The identification must be current and include your signature. Without acceptable identification and printed confirmation of assessment appointment, candidates will not be admitted to complete the assessment, will forfeit the entire application fee, and will need to re-apply and pay the full registration fee.

ASSESSMENT DAY DO'S AND DON'T'S

- DO leave plenty of time for travel to the assessment site location. Be sure to factor in parking if not immediately available at or adjacent to the building.
- DO leave your cell phone, tablet, laptop or pager at home. None of these devices will be allowed in the assessment test location *for any reason*.
- DO bring reference materials to assist in your assessment completion. Items from TAGME's Resource list (www.TAGME.org) will be also available as PDFs during the assessment session.
- DO bring a light jacket or sweater as the testing sites are air-conditioned.
- DON'T bring any pens, pencils or other writing implements into the session.
- DON'T attempt to copy or duplicate assessment questions in any way.
- DON'T tamper with computers or any equipment within the assessment location.

- DON'T create a disturbance or attempt to engage in conversation with others. Each site may be utilized for other testing purposes simultaneous to your assessment appointment.
- DON'T bring beverages, snacks, or smoking materials into the assessment site. They are not be allowed.
- DON'T ask questions regarding the content of the assessment of the site proctor.

SCORING

Results of your assessment will be shown on-screen immediately following completion of the assessment. Formal acknowledgement will be emailed to the candidate within 30 days.

Successful candidates will also receive the official TAGME certificate and membership pin. Use of the C-TAGME credential is permitted throughout the subsequent five-year period or until the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) term has ended.

Due to the open-book nature of the assessment, TAGME is unable to provide scoring information by component or content-area.

RE-TAKING THE ASSESSMENT

Candidates for Initial certification or first-attempt MOC that do not meet or exceed a score of 80% may apply to retake the assessment. An abbreviated application form and \$150.00 retake fee must be submitted prior to scheduling the subsequent attempt. Full instructions will be included in the acknowledgement email.

APPEALING THE ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

An appeal of the failed assessment may be made in writing by the candidate to TAGME within 10 days of the attempt. The appeal will be investigated by members of the Executive Committee and reviewed at the next regularly scheduled meeting or ad hoc session. Upon determination of the appeal status, the candidate will be notified of the outcome in writing within 14 days.

CONFIDENTIALITY MATTERS

All candidates attempting Initial or MOC are review and adhere to the TAGME Confidentiality Policy contained in the original application materials . Failure to do so may result in actions up to and including suspension or permanent revocation of certification.

Information supplied on applications, related correspondence or specific exam scores will not be released by TAGME without express written consent from the candidate.

Successful candidates will be recognized for their achievement at TAGME's web site.



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