



**TRAINING ADMINISTRATORS OF
GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION**

2021 Certification Guide

www.TAGME.org

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2021 ASSESSMENT CYCLE

- Application submission – April 1 through May 31
- Application review and notification - Rolling through June 30
- Assessment scheduling – Beginning July 5 (upon application approval)
- Assessment completion – July 7, 2021 – December 3, 2021
- Retake completion – Through December 17, 2021

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 GME, responsibilities and tasks performed by the training program 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 CERTIFICATION

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, director, administrative DIO, or other positions that directly and substantially support ACGME or ACGME-I 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 accommodations to assessment candidates 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 to the TAGME Applications Chair Applications@tagme.org by June 15, 2021.

2021 TAGME Assessment Registration Fees	
Initial Certification	\$ 350.00
Maintenance of Certification	\$ 350.00
Retakes	\$ 150.00

TAGME assessments are computer-based objective evaluations consisting of multiple choice and short-answer questions. Assessments will be provided in an online, live-proctored format on a computer of the candidate's choice, providing it meets specified system requirements, on a date and time convenient to the candidate. Appointments to complete the assessment are available 24/7 within the TAGME specified dates (see page 2). The candidate will have ample time prior to beginning the assessment to communicate with the live proctor, resolve any last-minute technology issues, and undergo a required full room scan. Be sure that your webcam/monitor can be rotated to view the entire room and workspace.

Assessment Type	# of Questions	Time Allowed
Initial certification	175	5 hours
Maintenance of Certification (MOC)	100	4 hours
Retake – Initial or MOC	125	4.5 hours

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-BOA program. Qualifying GME roles include residency, fellowship, or institutional coordinator/administrator (or similar title), manager, director, administrative DIO, or other positions that directly and substantially support accredited GME programs and activities.
2. Completed 2 consecutive years in this role by the date of application submission.
 - 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.
 - If the 2-year employment period is not continuous *and* does not exceed a 60-day gap between employers, verification from the former program or GME office stating dates of employment, job title/duties, and confirming that these duties were related to program support and/or administration of a program as outlined in the ACGME Common Program Requirements should be provided to Applications@tagme.org by the end of the application period. If not received by the deadline, the application will be considered incomplete.
3. Have obtained **20** Education Credits (EC) within the **previous 3 years** from the date of application submission. One (1) hour of a qualifying activity = one (1) TAGME EC. A minimum of 11 of the required 20 ECs must be directly focused on graduate medical education. The remaining ECs may be of a professional development/growth nature.
 - ECs may be accumulated through attendance at national, regional, or state conferences or meetings; institutional meetings; or institutional retreats.
 - Up to 6 ECs may be earned through webinars, podcasts, or completion of online modules.
 - Qualifying ECs typically arise from activities that occur outside the usual scope of your job duties and expectations. Examples of non-qualifying activities include attending or presenting orientation sessions, CCC meetings, APE/PEC meetings, routine GME meetings, routine program coordinator or program administrator division/department/institution meetings, or ACGME Self-Study or ACGME site visit activities.

- 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.
- 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.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, attendance at virtual conferences will be eligible to meet the EC requirements. Virtual conferences are not webinars but a conference that normally would have been held in-person.

MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION (MOC) CRITERIA

1. Hold a current TAGME certification. If the most recent certification has expired, apply as an Initial candidate.
2. Must be currently employed as a GME professional of an ACGME, ACGME-I, or ACGME-AOA program. Qualifying GME roles include residency, fellowship, or institutional coordinator/administrator (or similar title), manager, director, administrative DIO, or other positions that directly and substantially support accredited GME programs and activities.
 - Have completed 7 consecutive years in this role by the date of application submission.
 - 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.
 - If the 7-year employment period is not continuous *and* does not exceed a 60-day gap between employers, verification from the former program or GME office stating dates of employment, job title/duties, and confirming that these duties were related to program support and/or administration of a program as outlined in the ACGME Common Program Requirements should be provided to Applications@tagme.org by the end of the application period. If not received by the deadline, the application will be considered incomplete.
3. Within the **preceding 5 years** have obtained **25** 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.*

4. 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.
 - Active role in a committee at the national, regional, state or institutional level.
 - Leadership role at the department level.
 - Peer-reviewed poster presentations or published manuscripts.
 - For lecture, conference, or poster presentations, list title, meeting name, organization, location, and date on the application form.
5. 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.
 - Active role in a committee at the national, regional, state or institutional level.
 - Leadership role at the department level.
 - Peer-reviewed poster presentations or published manuscripts.
 - For lecture, conference, or poster presentations, list title, meeting name, organization, location, and date on the application form.
6. 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.

IMPORTANT: Presentations or posters scheduled for a conference/meeting in 2020 that was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic will be eligible to fulfill the PPG requirement. To qualify, the original acceptance email (showing applicant name, title of presentation or poster, date, and conference/meeting name) should be sent to Applications@tagme.org by **5/31/2021**. Indicate in the Details box on the PPG section of the application if you will be sending verification so your application can be flagged for processing.

Presentations or posters presented at virtual conferences or meetings will be eligible to fulfill the PPG requirement.

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 blue Register button and then continue with the Apply button to launch the application form.

COMPLETE THE APPLICATION

The application consists of several sections. After selecting the desired assessment, the next screens 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.

IMPORTANT: Be sure to enter you name on the application form exactly as it appears on your valid, government-issued picture ID that must be shown to the online live proctor during the secure check-in process just prior to the start of your TAGME assessment. Access to the assessment will be denied if the government issued picture ID does not match the name on your application! If a name change occurs between the date of application submission and the scheduled assessment, email Applications@tagme.org at least 7 days prior to the test appointment.

All Initial and MOC applications require a Supportive Verification Form (SVF) be completed by the Program Director, GME office or DIO. A link within the application will generate a brief verification confirming the applicant's stated length of employment and duties within the qualifying role. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure their SVF is completed by their recommender so the application can be processed. The applicant is notified when the verification step has been completed and will then need to login back into the application portal to finalize submission. The verifier should return the SVF by the 6/15/2021.

After initial review, further or clarifying information may be requested by the Applications Committee. Should this occur, additional time will be provided to the applicant to respond. If the candidate does not comply with the request by the specified date, the application will be considered incomplete and will be withdrawn for the current certification year.

PAY THE ASSESSMENT FEE

The final step in the application process is to pay the assessment fee. A link is provided within the application directly to TAGME's secure PayPal account. A personal PayPal account is not required. Major credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover) are accepted, as are debit cards.

TAGME does not accept institutional checks, personal checks, money orders, or cash.

ASSESSMENT SCHEDULING

Upon approval of application, supportive documentation, and successful payment processing, candidates can expect to receive an email on or about July 5, 2021 containing detailed information to schedule the Initial, MOC or Retake Assessment. Assessment appointments will be available 24/7 from July 7, 2021 through December 3, 2021.

RESCHEDULING or CANCELLING THE ASSESSMENT APPOINTMENT

Candidates needing to reschedule their original assessment appointment may do so up to 48 hours prior without penalty. Reschedule requests within 48 hours prior to the confirmed appointment will be assessed a \$50.00 change fee. The rescheduled appointment must occur during the same calendar year or the original exam session.

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.

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.org. 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 documents are admissible during the testing session. PDF versions of the Resource List files will also be available onscreen within the secured assessment browser. 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

At the scheduled assessment time, candidates will log into the testing system using the unique login and password provided in the email confirming the assessment appointment. Candidates will confirm their demographic information, read, and attest to the exam admission requirements, and be directed to the live online proctor portal.

The candidate will next be connected with the proctor and complete a series of pre-assessment security prompts. A room scan will be required before the exam can begin so please be sure that your webcam can be rotated to view the entire room and workspace. Communication with the proctor may occur throughout the entire test session utilizing the computer's microphone and webcam. Candidates will be asked to share their screen so the proctor can monitor activity during the session. A valid, government-issued photo ID (**exactly matching the candidate's name used in the registration process**) will then be presented to the proctor.

The proctor will also review with the candidate some general rules for the assessment:

- Candidate must be alone in the room and visible at all times
- One 10-minute bathroom break is allowed (clock will not stop)
- No writing implements or note-taking allowed

- Printed versions of the Resource Documents (listed at TAGME.org) are allowed
- No phones, tablets, smartwatches, or additional computers in the room

The computer being used for the assessment will then undergo a brief system requirements check. These requirements will be sent to the candidate in advance with the test scheduling confirmation email.

Just prior to launching the exam, the candidate will have the opportunity to access a short demo to become familiar with the assessment environment. When complete, the candidate will begin the test.

The proctor will be immediately available at any point for non-content related questions or technical issues. The proctor will also monitor the on-screen activity and any actions taken by the candidate. All assessment sessions will be recorded and available to TAGME. Should the proctor witness any activities by the candidate that conflicts, either actual or potential, with the assessment rules previously agreed to, the proctor will immediately end the test session and notify TAGME.

SCORING

Results of your assessment will be shown on-screen immediately following completion of the exam and emailed to the candidate. Results will show either PASS or FAIL. Candidates are encouraged to print (or PDF) this results screen to serve as documentation for institutional reimbursement or verification purposes. No further access to the results screen is available either to the candidate or TAGME after the assessment session has ended.

Successful candidates will receive their official TAGME certificate and membership pin within 4-6 weeks of the test date. Use of the C-TAGME credential is permitted immediately and throughout the subsequent five-year period or until the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) term has ended.

RE-TAKING THE ASSESSMENT

Candidates for Initial certification or first-attempt MOC that do not meet or exceed a score of 80% may apply for a one-time retake assessment. All retakes must occur by **12/17/2021**. 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. Regardless of the appeal outcome, no additional scoring information will be disclosed.

CONFIDENTIALITY MATTERS

All candidates attempting Initial or MOC should 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 and related correspondence will not be released by TAGME without express written consent from the candidate. Successful candidates may be recognized for their achievement at TAGME's web site.

