



FUSE TEST CENTER GUIDELINES

For applicants within the U.S. and Canada



FUSE TEST CENTER STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

For applicants located in the U.S. and Canada only. SAGES is not accepting FUSE applications from international institutions at this time

The FUSE exam is a high-stakes, validated exam, given under strict parameters to preserve the integrity of the exam. FUSE Test Centers are responsible for providing access to the FUSE exam to all qualified test-takers, both their own faculty/residents and to any qualifying candidates from other facilities/institutions. Depending on the geographic region and the population of surgeons, a Test Center may have a significant number of external test candidates.

Applicants must be able to provide documentation as to how they meet each of the following standards and the corresponding criterion:

Standard 1: Staff (FUSE proctors and support staff)

Standard 2: Equipment and Resources

Standard 3: Institutional Support

Standard 4: Guidelines for maintaining Test Center status

Standard 5: Test Center Volume/Capacity and Geographical Area Demographics

Standard 1: Staff

Criterion 1.1: Each test center applicant must employ at least 1 FUSE trained proctor

- Test Center applicants must submit proctor candidate(s) at the time of application. Application approval is conditional upon the proctor candidate(s) successful completion of the formal proctor training and evaluation process.
- While it is not recommended for clinicians to become FUSE proctors, it is a requirement that at least 1 proctor / proctor candidate from each applying institution is NOT an active clinician.
- Initial proctor training will be done remotely via an online training website. If further proctor training is needed (due to staff turnover, etc) existing FUSE Test Centers can schedule new/additional proctor candidates for the online SAGES FUSE proctor training course. The application fee and any expenses associated with participating in the course are the responsibility of the test center. Only the successful completion of a SAGES FUSE proctor training course can certify a candidate as an FUSE trained proctor.

Criterion 1.2 Eligibility for proctor-candidates

- Proctor candidates must be able to dedicate up to 5% FTE to FUSE related activities, in addition to FLS and FES responsibilities if applicable.
- Proctor candidates should have basic knowledge and experience in using the current version(s) of Microsoft Windows, Microsoft Office, Internet Explorer, Adobe reader, and an email program.
- Proctor candidates must be directly employed by the test center institution on a full-time basis.



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- Proctor candidates should have some background in training and education
- Proctor candidates must be fluent in English
- Proctor candidates must be able to communicate effectively with the FUSE Champion faculty member at the institution.
- Proctor candidates must have control/access to all the technology, and space necessary for conducting FUSE testing.

Criterion 1.3 FUSE Champion

- Each test center applicant institution must employ at least 1 surgeon (attending/faculty) who is willing to be the institutional FUSE Champion. The faculty member filling this role must be an active SAGES member. Faculty member must also be able to successfully pass the FUSE exam once it is available at their institution or when/if testing is offered at a regional testing event (must be certified within 3 months of test center opening).
- The FUSE champion should be involved in the training of the residents, medical students, or other attending surgeons at the applying institution.

Standard 2: Equipment and Resources

Criterion 2.1 Each test center applicant must provide at least 1 computer for FUSE testing, however a second computer is suggested.

- Computers can be laptops or desktops, with mouse
 - Processor: 1 GHz or higher required
 - RAM: 1 GB or greater required
 - Operating System:
 - Windows 7
 - Window 8 (desktop mode only)
 - Video: 256 colors (minimum) video display set to 1024 x 768 resolution
 - Monitor size: minimum of 15" CRT or Flat screen
 - Laptops must be connected to an outlet power source and not powered by battery alone
 - Internet Access: DSL, T1, or cable
 - Installed applications: Internet Explorer 9.0 or higher or Google Chrome
 - Installation of Adobe Acrobat Reader: <http://get.adobe.com/reader>
 - Installation of Java Runtime Environment (JRE):<http://java.sun.com/javase/downloads/index.jsp#jre>)
 - Installation of Adobe Flash Player: <http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>
 - All software applications except Webassessor must be CLOSED prior to the launch of a Kryterion exam.
- To avoid interruption during a Test Session, it is important that all test computer settings for the "Windows" updater are set for manual updates. You can do this by going to the "Control Panel" on the test computer and



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clicking "Automatic Updates" on the menu. Select the option that is labeled "Turn off Automatic Updates." Once this is done, it will be necessary for you to establish a regular schedule for manually downloading and installing Windows updates.

- FUSE proctors must either have administrator privileges for these computers, or provide a letter of support from the responsible IT department that they will support online testing sessions.

Criterion 2.2 Each applicant must have appropriate space for FUSE testing

- Space must be no less than 700 square feet
- The space must house all of the aforementioned equipment
- Space must be made available *exclusively* for FUSE testing whenever an exam is scheduled to take place (i.e. proctors/ FUSE champion must have access to reserve the space and no other events can be taking place in the space at the same time)
- Space must be quiet and separate from any common areas to minimize disruptions or distractions.

Standard 3: Institutional Support

Criterion 3.1 Applicant institutions will have support from hospital and/or academic administrators for becoming and maintaining FUSE Test Center status

- Applicants must provide a letter of support from the medical school and/or departmental / hospital administration for the staff time, funds, and space utilized to become and maintain FUSE Test Center status.

The letter must be submitted to the FUSE office prior to proctor training.

Standard 4: Guidelines for maintaining Test Center status

Criterion 4.1 Each Test Center must administer (at a minimum) 20 standard FUSE exams (does not include retake exams) every two years they are an active FUSE Test Center.

- Each proctor must administer at least 5 standard FUSE exams per 12-month period in order to maintain proctor status

Criterion 4.2 Proctors can only administer the FUSE exam at the FUSE Test Center they are employed by.

- FUSE exams must be administered in the space designated for FUSE Testing in the Test Center's application. Test Centers cannot conduct any FUSE testing activities outside of their institution without written permission by SAGES.
- FUSE testing that occurs outside of a FUSE approved Test Center must be coordinated by the SAGES/ FUSE staff.

Criterion 4.3 Proctors will participate in FUSE program update sessions (conference calls, webinars)



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- All proctors from each Test Center must participate in the scheduled update sessions (multiple dates and times will be offered)
- Sessions will occur no more than semi-annually

Criterion 4.4 Proctors will keep the SAGES office updated with the most current contact information

- SAGES must be notified immediately if any proctor's employment at that Test Center is terminated or suspended.
- If a Test Center loses all of its FUSE proctors, the Test Center will be temporarily shut down (probation) until at least 1 new staff member from the institution successfully complete a FUSE proctor training course. The temporary shut down will last no longer than 18 months. If new staff members at the test center are not trained by then, the test center will be permanently closed.
- If a Test Center loses their FUSE champion, a new FUSE champion must be selected within 6 months.

Criterion 4.5 Proctors/Test Centers cannot disclose proctoring information to anyone who has not received proctor training.

- Proctors/Test Centers cannot use FUSE materials or test for non- FUSE testing activities, including research, without prior written approval from the SAGES FUSE program office.
- At no time can the FUSE exam be utilized for training or practice. It is for testing purposes only.

Criterion 4.6 Proctors/Test Centers cannot charge test-takers for administering the FUSE exam

- FUSE Test vouchers are sold and distributed by SAGES. Proctors cannot accept payments from test candidates on behalf of SAGES at any time.

Criterion 4.7 Test Centers must post a schedule in Webassessor, the SAGES online test administration program

- Test Centers must post enough appointment times to accommodate 5 test-takers (at a minimum) per month.
- Schedules must be posted at least 3 months (90 days) in advance.

Criterion 4.8 Test Centers who do not comply with the aforementioned criteria may lose their test center status and will be closed or placed on probation temporarily

- Terms of the probationary period will be determined by the SAGES office and is dependent upon the offense.
- If a Test Center is shut down for any reason, the test center must wait at least 18 months before reapplying for test center status.



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- Test Centers that are reapplying after being shut down will be treated just as if they were a new applicant will be required to go through the entire process again (after the 18 month waiting period).

FUSE Test Center Application Approval Process

Applications are reviewed by select members of the FUSE committee and the FUSE directors on a rolling basis. Notices regarding application approval, denial, or pending status will be sent out within 6 weeks of submission.