**Assistive Technology – Use of computer Examination Guidelines**

To create effective guidelines for universities that are implementing assistive technology and accommodations in examination settings, it's important to ensure that these guidelines are clear, equitable, and supportive of all students, especially those using assistive technologies. Here's a structured set of guidelines that universities can adopt:

**1. Pre-Examination Responsibilities**

* **1.1 Training and Familiarisation**: Ensure that students who require assistive technology are given comprehensive training and time to familiarise themselves with the software, and hardware they will use during examinations. This should include hands-on sessions and troubleshooting common issues.
* **1.2 Equipment Testing**: Test all assistive technologies and equipment prior to the examination date to confirm they are functioning properly. This includes checking software updates, hardware compatibility, and backup systems.
* **1.3 Accommodation Approvals**: Students must submit requests for any special accommodations or the use of personal equipment (e.g., specialized keyboards, own laptops) well in advance. These requests should be reviewed and approved by the disability services office.
* **1**.4 Visit the computer venue prior to examinations.

**2. Examination Setup**

* **2.1 Venue Arrangement**: Designate specific venues for students using computers and ensure these venues are quiet, accessible, and free from disturbances. Provide noise cancelling head phones if requested by student.
* **2.2 Technical Support**: Provide dedicated technical support at all examination venues where technology is used. This support should be readily available throughout the examination to address any technical issues promptly.
* **2.3 Examination Images**: Create tailored examination software images that restrict access to unauthorized resources such as the internet, external applications, and communications tools, while maintaining the necessary functions for the exam.

**3. During the Examination**

* **3.1 Regular Saving**: Instruct students to save their work frequently. Establish automatic background saving within the word processing software to minimise the risk of data loss.
* **3.2 Equipment Use**: Prohibit the use of unauthorized external devices unless previously approved. Students must rely solely on the equipment provided or approved by the university to ensure fairness.
* **3.3 Immediate Reporting**: Encourage students to report any difficulties to the invigilator immediately, without delay, to resolve issues as quickly as possible.

**4. Technical and Logistical Support**

* **4.1 Sufficient Hardware**: Ensure a sufficient number of workstations, including at least one backup workstation and necessary peripherals (e.g., printers), are available at the examination venue.
* **4.2 Power Supply and Data Security**: Confirm that all computers are fully charged and plugged in, and that they have been cleared of previous data to maintain examination integrity.
* **4.3 Contingency Plans**: Develop and implement robust contingency plans for equipment failures or other technical issues, including ready availability of backup equipment and immediate on-site technical assistance.

**5. Post-Examination Procedures**

* **5.1 Data Handling**: Establish clear guidelines for saving and submitting examination work. Specify whether students should save, print, or electronically submit their answers, and ensure compliance with data privacy regulations.
* **5.2 Review and Feedback**: Offer students and faculty the opportunity to provide feedback on the assistive technology and accommodation processes. Use this feedback to make continuous improvements.

**Conclusion**

These guidelines aim to provide a comprehensive framework that ensures all students, particularly those requiring assistive technologies, are given an equitable opportunity to demonstrate their academic abilities under standardized and fair conditions. By meticulously planning and executing these guidelines, universities can enhance the integrity and inclusiveness of their examination procedures.