**Guide for Invigilator Training in disabled examination venues**

Improving the competency of invigilators working in examination settings that accommodate individuals with disabilities, including a module on a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) ensures good practice in all examinations. This module could cover essential topics such as understanding various disabilities, adapting examination environments, legal compliance, and empathetic communication. This training would not only improve the examination experience for disabled students but also enhance the overall professionalism and preparedness of the invigilators.

**1. Understanding the Role of Invigilators**

* **Fairness and Integrity:** Ensure that exams are conducted in a manner that is fair to all students.
* **Support for Disabilities:** Be aware of the different types of disabilities and the reasonable accommodations that may be required.

**2. General Principles**

* **Calm and Supportive:** Always maintain a calm demeanour and offer support to students. Actively listen to their needs and try to assist rather than dismiss.
* **Consultation:** When unsure about a request, consult with the chief invigilator or the exams office before making a decision.
* **Discretion:** Handle all interactions discreetly to maintain student dignity and confidentiality.

**3. Types of Disabilities and Their Impact**

* Understand how various disabilities (e.g., ADHD, autism spectrum disorders, sensory impairments) affect exam performance.
* Familiarise yourself with the effects of medications and how they can alter cognitive and physical abilities during exams.

**4. Reasonable Accommodations**

* **Types of Accommodations:** Know the common accommodations such as extra time, use of assistive technology, low-distraction venues, and provision of scribes or alternative format papers.
* **Implementation:** Ensure these accommodations are set up correctly and are ready to use as needed.

**5. Venue Setup**

* **Low Distraction Venues:** Understand the importance of such venues in reducing visual and auditory distractions. Be aware of the physical setup that minimises distractions.
* **Individual Venues:** Know the heightened responsibilities in these settings where the invigilator might be the only other person present besides the student.

**6. Handling Special Circumstances**

* **Distress or Anxiety:** Learn how to respond to signs of distress or anxiety in students during exams. Provide immediate support or call for assistance.
* **Physical Needs:** Allow for breaks, movement, or special equipment like magnifiers, coloured overlays, or earplugs as needed. Check examination list for any special arrangements for each student.
* **Food and Drink:** Recognise the needs that might warrant having food and drinks, such as diabetic conditions, and know how to verify these needs with the exams office. Check examination list for any special arrangements for each student.
* **Medical monitors:** Check examination list for any special arrangements for each student.

**7. Operational Protocols**

* **Start Times:** Ensure punctuality to avoid causing distress among students. A timely start is crucial for managing back-to-back exams.
* **Problem Solving:** Approach problems with the intent to understand and solve them rather than outright denial.

**8. Communication and Emergency Procedures**

* **Initial Contact:** Know who the chief invigilator and relevant disability service contacts are. Make them your first point of call in an uncertain situation.
* **Technology and Setup Issues:** Be prepared to handle or escalate issues related to venue setup and technology use, liaising with the Disability Service as needed.

**9. Continuous Learning and Feedback**

* **Training Updates:** Attend regular training sessions and updates on procedures and policies concerning exam invigilation and accommodations.
* **Feedback Mechanism:** Engage in feedback mechanisms to improve practices and accommodations based on student and staff experiences.

**10. Certification and Acknowledgement**

* **Certification:** Complete necessary training modules and assessments to become a certified invigilator.
* **Recognition:** Acknowledge the role of invigilators in creating a fair and inclusive examination environment.

By following this guide, invigilators will be well-equipped to manage examinations effectively, particularly in supporting students with disabilities. The goal is to ensure that all students are given a fair opportunity to perform to the best of their abilities in an environment that respects their needs.