**Guidelines for Providing Examination Papers in Alternative Formats**

To effectively support students who require examination papers in alternative formats, universities should establish comprehensive guidelines that address the needs of students with visual impairments and other reading difficulties. These guidelines will help ensure that all students have equitable access to examination materials, thus maintaining the integrity and fairness of the testing process. Here’s a structured set of guidelines universities can adopt:

**1. Assessment of Needs**

* **1.1 Student Registration**: Require students needing alternative formats to register with the university’s disability support services well in advance of examination periods.
* **1.2 Needs Assessment**: Conduct a thorough assessment of each registered student's specific needs to determine the most suitable format(s) for their examination papers, including electronic formats, enlarged print, tactile graphics, braille, or coloured overlays.

**2. Preparation of Examination Papers**

* **2.1 Enlarged Print**: Provide examination papers in enlarged print for students with low vision. The size and font should be determined based on individual student needs and recommendations from visual health professionals.
* **2.2 Tactile Formats**: Convert graphs, diagrams, maps, and other visual elements into tactile formats for students who are blind or have significant visual impairments. Ensure that these are clearly interpretable and appropriately detailed.
* **2.3 Braille Papers**: Produce braille versions of the examination papers for students who are fluent braille readers. This should include all text and, where practical, raised representations of graphs or diagrams.
* **2.4 Coloured Overlays**: Provide coloured overlays for students who require them to enhance readability due to visual strain or other reading difficulties.
* **2.5 Electronic Formats**: Offer examination papers in accessible electronic formats that are compatible with screen readers, magnification software, and other assistive technologies. Ensure that these formats are secure and comply with examination standards.

**3. Logistical Arrangements**

* **3.1 Early Preparation**: Begin the adaptation of examination papers into alternative formats as early as possible to allow sufficient time for quality assurance and necessary revisions.
* **3.2 Secure Distribution**: Establish secure processes for the distribution of examination papers in alternative formats to protect the integrity of the examinations. This includes ensuring that electronic formats are distributed in a manner that prevents unauthorised access.
* **3.3 Examination Venue Setup**: Arrange for appropriate examination venues equipped to handle the specific needs associated with alternative formats, such as power outlets for electronic devices, appropriate lighting for enlarged print, and suitable desks for tactile formats.

**4. During the Examination**

* **4.1 Proctoring and Support**: Train invigilators on the specific requirements and challenges associated with alternative formats. Provide immediate support during the examination to address any issues related to the use of these formats.
* **4.2 Technical Assistance**: For electronic formats, ensure that technical assistance is readily available to address any issues with software or hardware.

**5. Post-Examination**

* **5.1 Feedback Collection**: Gather feedback from students and invigilators on the effectiveness of the alternative formats provided. This feedback is crucial for making improvements in future examination cycles.
* **5.2 Review and Adjust**: Regularly review the procedures and technologies used for providing examination papers in alternative formats. Make necessary adjustments based on feedback, technological advancements, and changes in student needs.

**Conclusion**

These guidelines aim to provide a structured approach to delivering examination papers in alternative formats, ensuring that all students, especially those with visual impairments and reading difficulties, can compete on an equal footing. By meticulously planning and implementing these guidelines, universities can enhance the inclusiveness and fairness of their academic assessment processes