




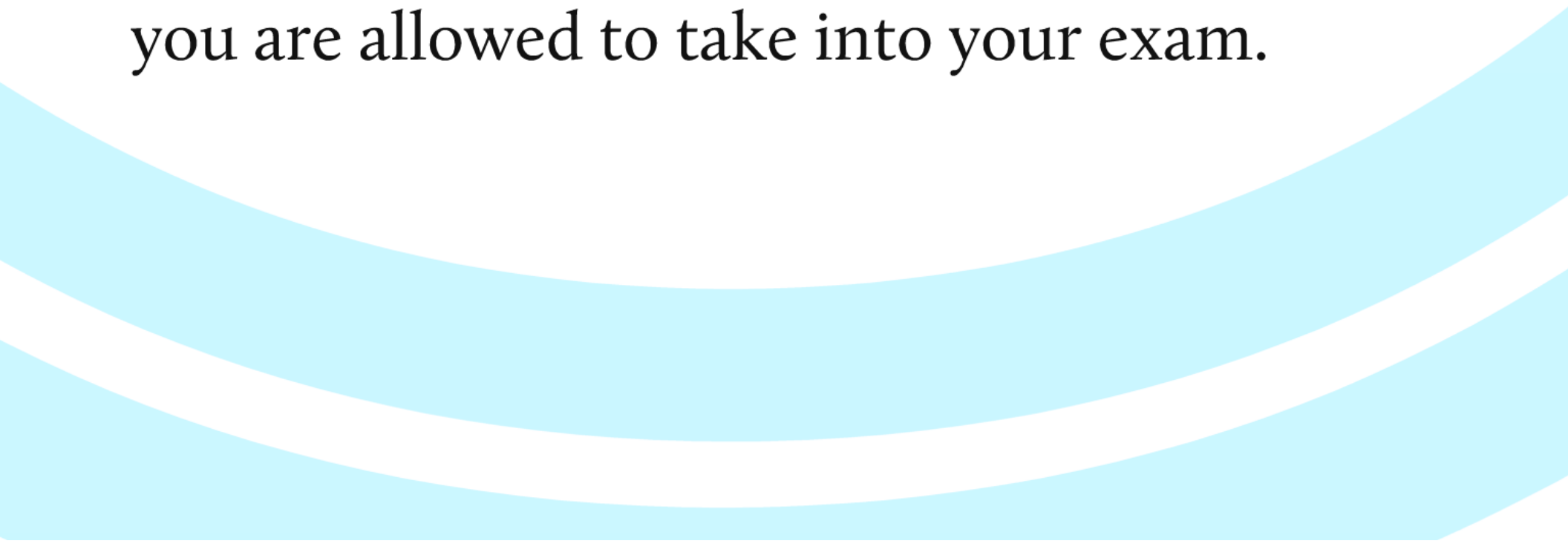
THE UNIVERSITY
of ADELAIDE

Maths Learning Centre
The University of Adelaide

WRITING AND USING A
CHEAT
SHEET



A "CHEAT SHEET" is a page of handwritten notes that your course rules explicitly say you are allowed to take into your exam.



THE PROCESS
OF WRITING A
**CHEAT
SHEET**

MAKING
A GOOD
**CHEAT
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THE
USEFULNESS
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**CHEAT
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USING
YOUR
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SHEET**

The story of our research

- Stats lecturer asked us to help the students use cheat sheets.
- Began to prepare a seminar for students:
 - Talking to staff...
 - ... they all have an opinion.
 - Internet search...
 - ... how to actually cheat.
 - ... how to cram the most on.
 - Talking to students...
 - ... helps them study.
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Survey results

How do they use their cheat sheets?

- Formulas, lists, procedures, definitions
- Worked examples, past exam questions
- Inspiration

How do they make their cheat sheets?

- Way to organise thoughts
- Distractor from other study

How useful do they find the cheat sheet?

- "Very useful" because had all the formulas
- Only "moderately useful" because they didn't use all of it all the time

How does it affect their stress?

- Reduced because it stopped worry
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THE USEFULNESS OF A CHEAT SHEET

FOR YOUR LECTURER

The moral is:
you really need to understand!
And no cheat sheet can do that for you!

So the EXAM can focus on THIS


- Main concerns:
- UNDERSTANDING CONCEPTS
 - SOLVING PROBLEMS

The CHEAT SHEET deals with THIS

- Means to an end:
- REMEMBERING facts, formulas and procedures

FOR YOU

- It saves you a lot of stress
- Helps you to study
- Safety net
- Don't have to waste energy on MEMORY
Can focus on UNDERSTANDING instead
Which is what the exam is about!



FOR YOUR
LECTURER

can do that for you:



So the EXAM can focus on THIS



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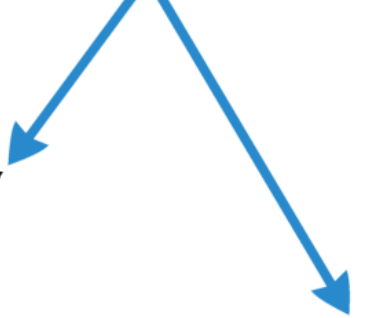
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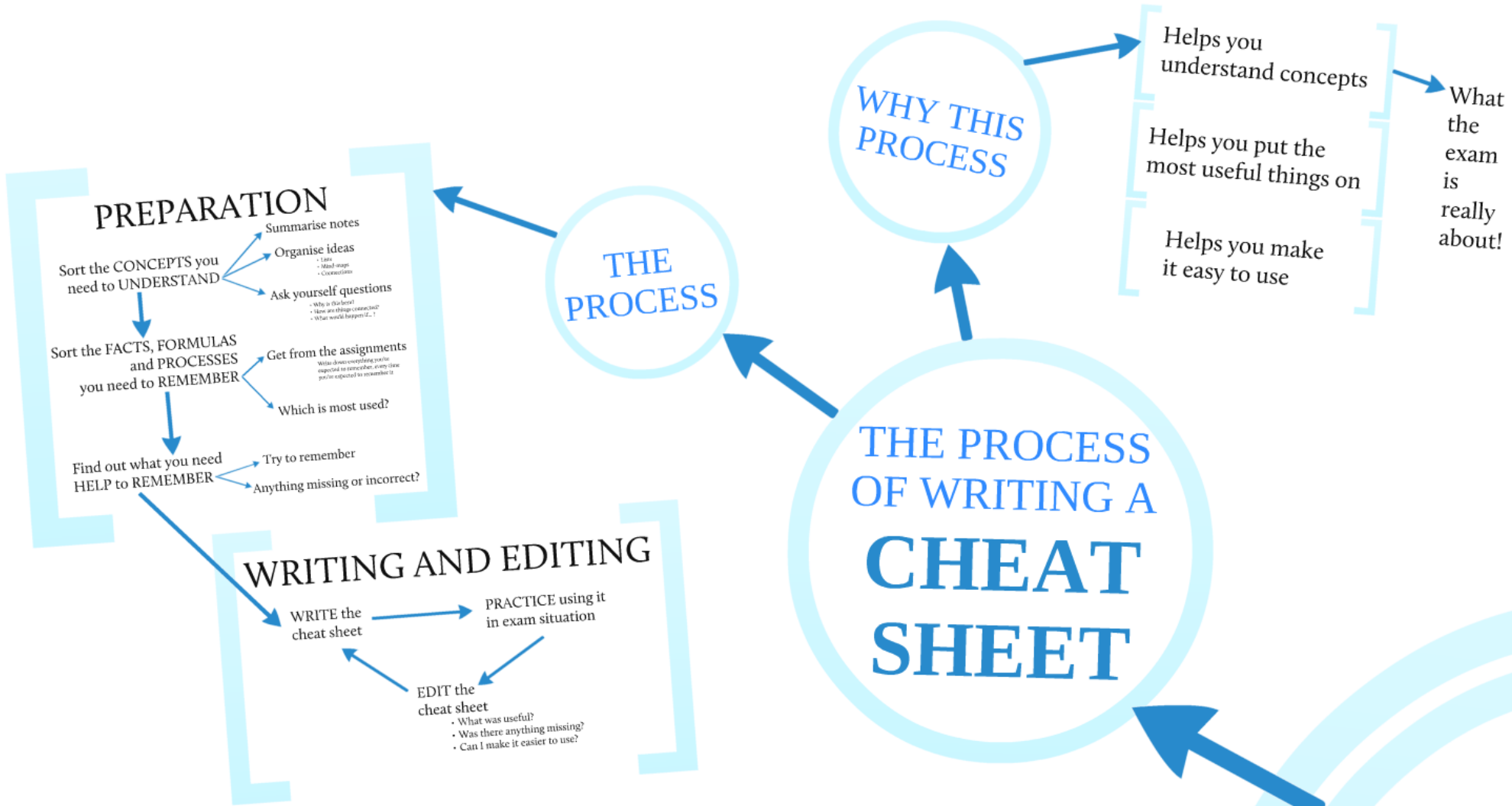
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M
The
WRITING
CH

**WHY THIS
PROCESS**

Helps you
understand concepts

Helps you put the
most useful things on

Helps you make
it easy to use

What
the
exam
is
really
about!

PREPARATION

Sort the CONCEPTS you need to UNDERSTAND

Summarise notes

Organise ideas

- Lists
- Mind-maps
- Connections

Ask yourself questions

- Why is this here?
- How are things connected?
- What would happen if... ?

Sort the FACTS, FORMULAS and PROCESSES you need to REMEMBER

Get from the assignments

Write down everything you're expected to remember, every time you're expected to remember it

Which is most used?

Find out what you need HELP to REMEMBER

Try to remember

Anything missing or incorrect?



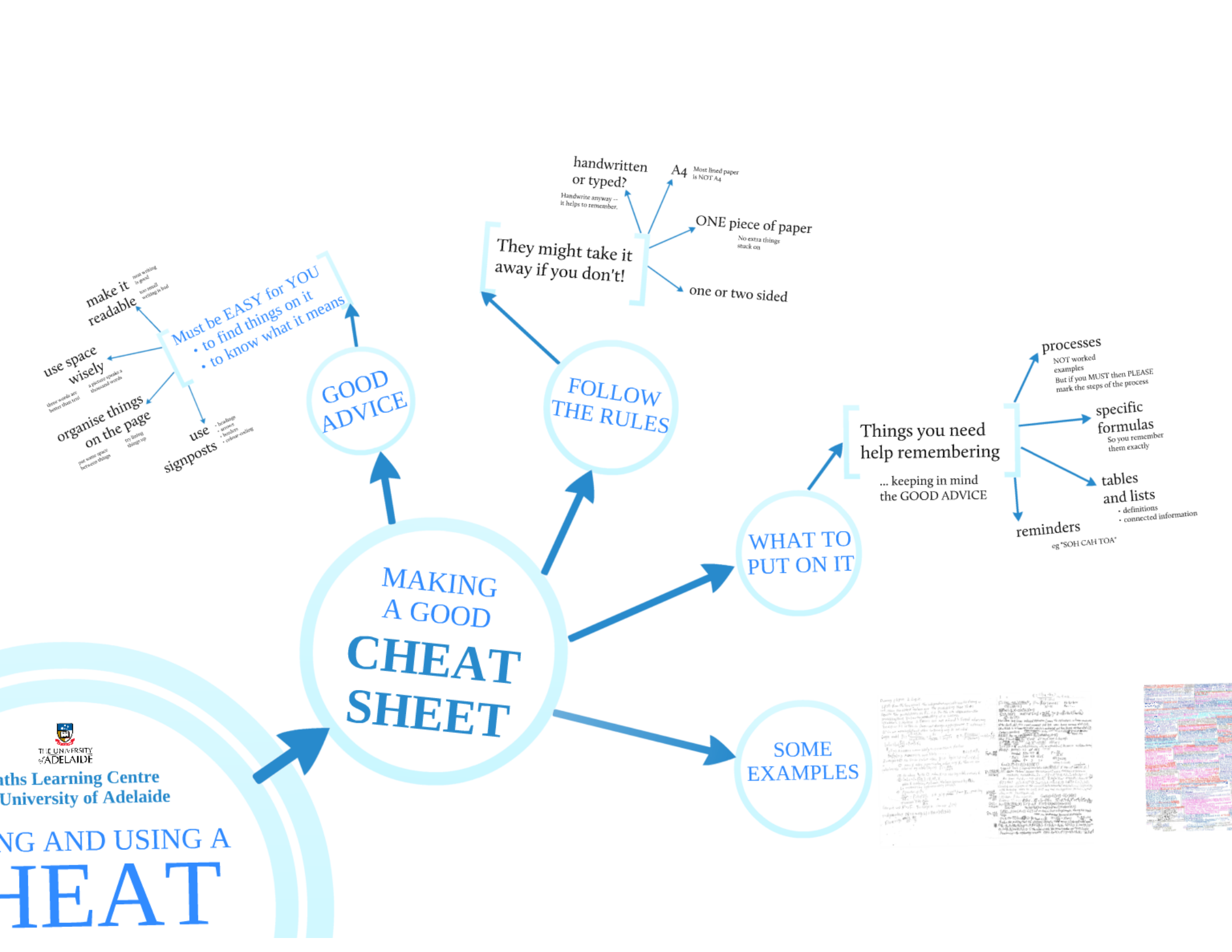
WRITING AND EDITING

WRITE the
cheat sheet

PRACTICE using it
in exam situation

EDIT the
cheat sheet

- What was useful?
- Was there anything missing?
- Can I make it easier to use?



make it
readable

neat writing
is good

too small
writing is bad

use space
wisely

three words are
better than ten!

a picture speaks a
thousand words

organise things
on the page

put some space
between things

try lining
things up

use
signposts

- headings
- arrows
- borders
- colour-coding

Must be EASY for YOU

- to find things on it
- to know what it means

GOOD
ADVICE



handwritten
or typed?

Handwrite anyway --
it helps to remember.

A4 Most lined paper
is NOT A4

ONE piece of paper

No extra things
stuck on

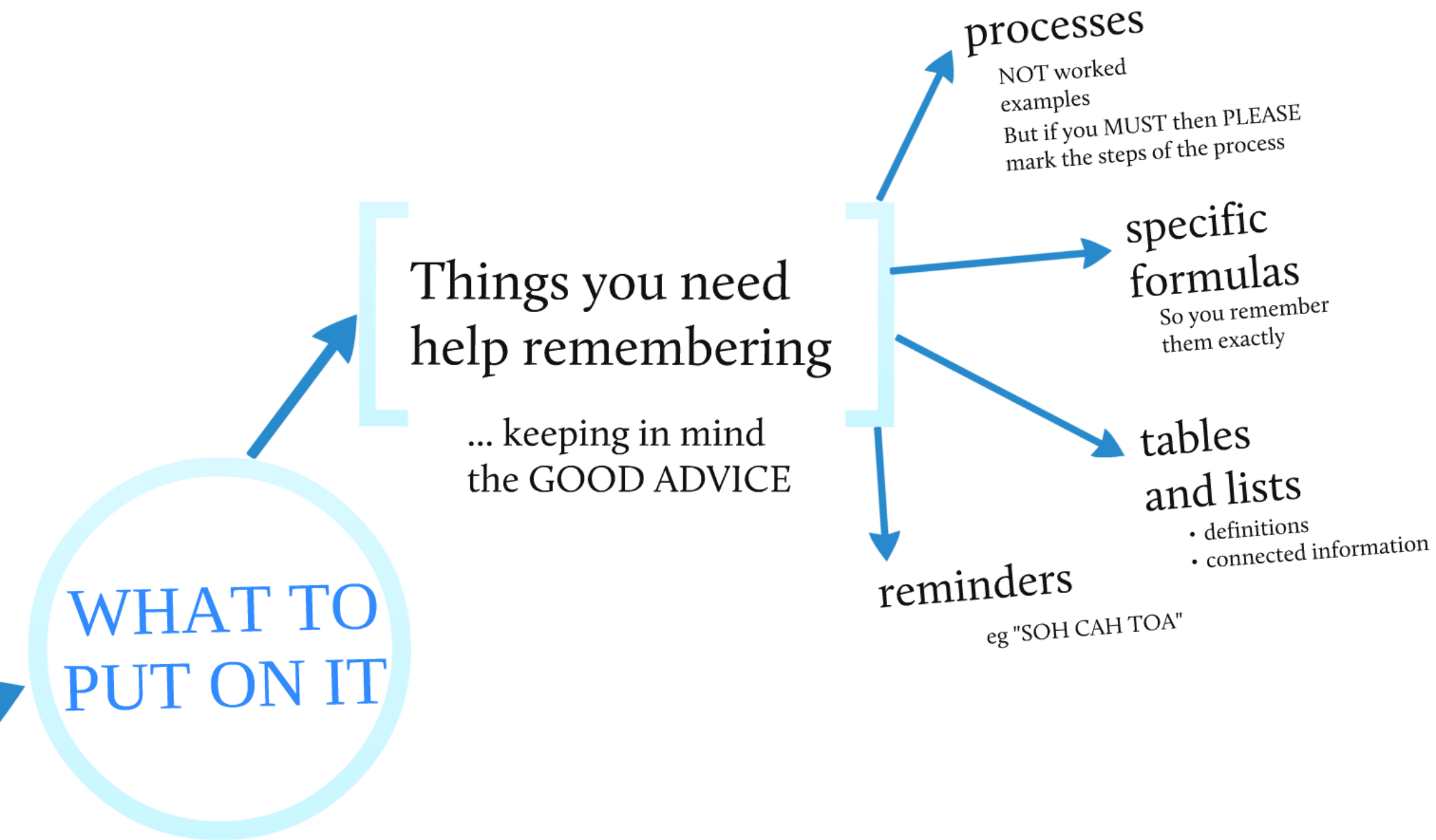
They might take it
away if you don't!

one or two sided

FOLLOW
THE RULES

LE

T
h



USING YOUR CHEAT SHEET

BEFORE THE EXAM

Practise exams with your cheat sheet

- Good to practise exams anyway!
- Helps to learn where things are
- Helps to improve your cheat sheet

READING TIME

Use it to help you focus

Decide which part of your CHEAT SHEET goes with each EXAM QUESTION

HEADINGS on the cheat sheet help with this

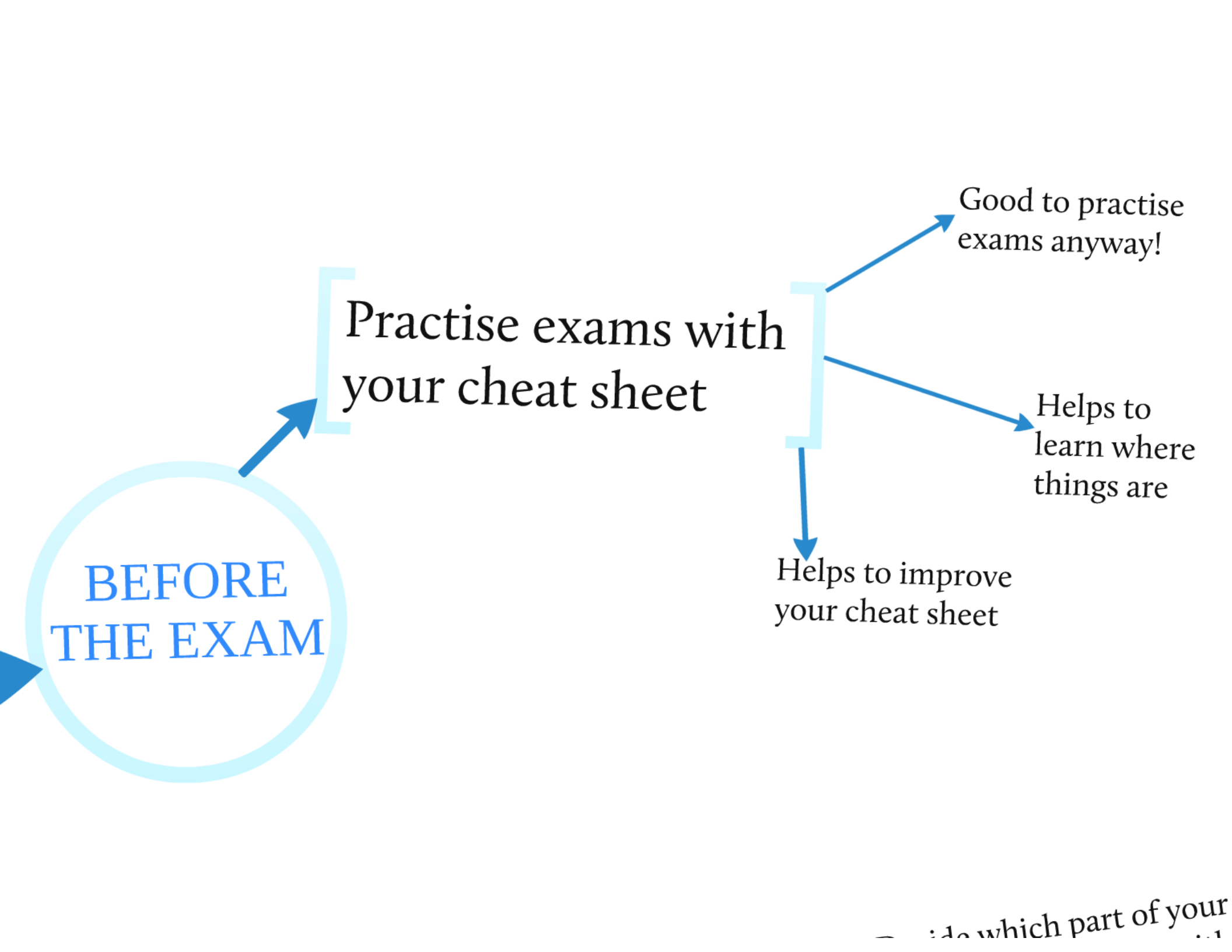
Decide which FACTS, FORMULAS and PROCESSES go with each QUESTION PART

DURING THE EXAM

Use it to help you finish

Helps not to miss anything
LISTS and PROCESSES help with this

Helps when you're stuck
Might give inspiration



BEFORE
THE EXAM

Practise exams with
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Helps to improve
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... which part of your ...

improve
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READING
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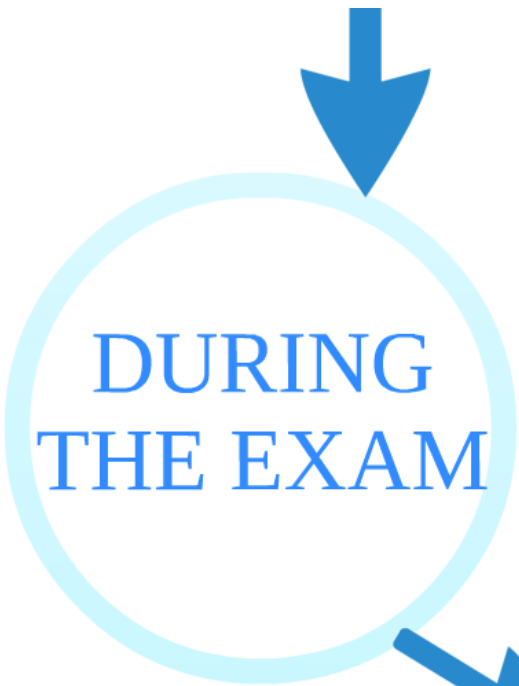
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HEADINGS on
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Help-



Use it to help
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LISTS and
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SOME RESEARCH

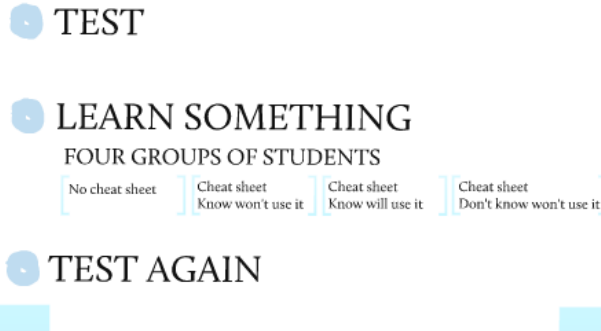
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T. N. Dowell and G. W. Cundiff, "The Cheat-Sheet: Efficient Coding Device or Indispensable Crutch?", *The Journal of Experimental Education*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (1979) 39-46



The loser is: Cheat sheet
Don't know won't use it

The winner is: Cheat sheet
Know won't use it

Take from that
what you will



T. N. Dorsel and G. W. Cundiff, "The Cheat-Sheet: Efficient Coding Device or Indispensable Crutch?",
The Journal of Experimental Education, Vol 48, No 1 (1979) 39-42



TEST



LEARN SOMETHING

FOUR GROUPS OF STUDENTS

[No cheat sheet

] [Cheat sheet
Know won't use it

] [Cheat sheet
Know will use it

] [Cheat sheet
Don't know won't use it]



TEST AGAIN



The loser is: [Cheat sheet
Don't know won't use it]

The winner is: [Cheat sheet
Know won't use it]

