**Verb Tenses Transcript**

**Slide 1: Introduction**

This is a presentation on verb tenses. Sometimes although you would have put in a lot of effort to complete your assignments, you don’t get good grades because your tutor is not able to understand the discussion you have put forth. Often this can be the result of incoherent arguments brought about by the incorrect use of verb tenses. This presentation draws your attention to why the incorrect use of very tenses can create confusion for your reader and strategies that could help you figure out which verb tense you need to use in your writing.

**Slide 2: Copyright notice**

**Slide 3: Verb tenses**

Look at the screenshot on this slide. Are you familiar with this type of feedback from your tutor? Do you know what your tutor means when they write ‘Tenses’ with an exclamation mark in the margin of your assignment? Do you wonder if you would have obtained higher marks if the tenses were correct? Look at the following slide to obtain a better understanding of what your tutor means when they give you similar feedback for your writing.

**Slide 4: Confusion created by inappropriate tense use**

Study the text on this slide. The writer begins by saying what they intend to do in their discussion. They have used the future time reference and verb tense. Then they continue with the present verb tense when they say ‘Socrates is right to call himself’. The next sentence in this text uses the past time reference and verb tense: ‘Socrates dialogues were’ and in the same sentence they say, ‘they seek definitions of abstract ideas’, which then refers to the present time reference. If you continue to read this paragraph, you will notice that the writer has jumped from one time reference to another by using different verb tenses. This has created a lot of confusion for the reader. The reader has to constantly pause to process what the writer is referring to. The ideas do not seem to be coherent or cohesive.

**Slide 5: Tenses and time reference**

There are three main time references in the English language: the past, present and future. It is important for the writer to know which time reference they are referring to so that their discussion flows. Once the writer is clearer about this then they would be able to use the appropriate verb tenses to communicate their message. Each of the three time references are further divided into four categories, the simple, continuous, perfect and perfect continuous. Look at the examples provided in this slide to see the verb tense form for each of these categories.

**Slide 6: How to figure out the appropriate tense**

In order to identify which verb tense to use, you need to begin rationalising. Ask yourself which time reference you are referring to. For example, are you writing about something that happened in the past? If you are then you have to use the past time reference. The next question you need to ask is was the event completed in the past or was it ongoing while something else was happening. Was the event completed in the past before something else happened? Or did the event happen in the past and was ongoing but was completed before something else. Be clear about what you are referring to and you will realise that you are able to refer to different events in the same paragraph without getting confused or confusing your readers.

On this slide you will see how the writer of the essay who received the ‘Tenses’ feedback from their tutor rationalised their verb forms.

**Slide 7: The revised versions**

On this slide you will see two examples of the writer’s revised versions of their earlier essay. You will notice that the writer has used different time references and verb tenses in their short paragraph. The meaning, however, comes across clearly and the reader is able to follow the discussion without any problems. The rationalisation the writer used in the previous slide as resulted in a more coherent and cohesive discussion.

**Slide 8: Verb tense examples: Present**

On this slide you will see some examples for the different tenses in the present time reference and rules for their usage. The simple present is used to describe an event that happens all the time, regularly, habitually or to state a fact or the truth. The continuous present can be used for an event that is currently happening or to express intention for the immediate future. The present perfect describes something completed at an unspecific time. Although the action describes an event completed in the past, the effect continues into the present. The continuous perfect describes an event that began in the past and is still happening in the present and may possibly continue in the future.

**Slide 9: Verb tense examples: Past**

This slide presents examples of different tenses in the past time reference and rules for their usage. The simple past is used to describe an event that happened in the past. The continuous past is used to describe an event that happened in the past at the same time as something else. When referring to an event that happened in the past and was completed before something else, the past perfect is used. The continuous past perfect is used when describing an event in the past at the same time as something else. The past perfect is used to refer to an event that happened in the past and was completed before something else. When describing an event that began in the past and was ongoing but was completed before something else, the continuous past perfect is used.

**Slide 10: Verb tense examples: Future**

On this slide you will see examples of different tenses in the future time reference and rules for their usage. The simple future is used to refer to an event that has not happened but will happen in the future. The future continuous tense is sued to describe a continuous action or event that will be happening in the future. For describing an event that will happen and be completed in the future before another future event, the future perfect tense is used. The future perfect continuous is used to refer to an ongoing event that will happening in the future and would be still continuing for a specified time.

There are two things that you need to do before you start writing: 1) Be clear about the time reference you are making and 2) identify the verb tense that belongs to that time reference. Once you have rationalised these two aspects then you would be able to write coherently.

Slide 11: Reference

The information communicated in this presentation has been adapted from the following text.