Using the simple present

The tense of a verb tells us when the action was done. The action can be done in the past, present or future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yesterday</td>
<td>Today</td>
<td>Tomorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worked late</td>
<td>I work late</td>
<td>I shall work late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am working late</td>
<td>I am working late</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When do I use the present tense?
There are two types of present tense: the continuous present and the simple present. The simple present is explained here.*

Use the simple present form of a verb when:

- The action takes place now.
  eg I want you to help me now.
- The action is something that happens regularly.
  eg I walk the dog everyday.
- You are describing things that are generally true.
  eg Train travel is expensive.

NOTE: When ‘he’, ‘she’ or ‘it’ is doing the action, remember to add ‘s’, ‘es’ or change the ‘y’ to ‘ies’. For example:

- I like football, we like football, he likes football.
- I always try hard, we always try hard, she always tries hard.
- I watch a lot of films, we watch a lot of films, he watches a lot of films.
- I seem ok, we seem ok, it seems ok.

*For more information about the continuous present, see the factsheet ‘Using the continuous present’.