What is it?

Your abstract should be a short summary at the beginning of the thesis that sums up the research, summarises its separate sections and outlines the contribution.

What should it include?

Your abstract should answer the following questions:

1. What is the reason for writing the thesis?
2. What are the current approaches and gaps in the literature?
3. What are your research question(s) and aims?
4. Which methodology have you used?
5. What are the main findings?
6. What are the main conclusions and implications?
7. What is the contribution that the thesis makes?

What should you avoid?

- Don't repeat the title in the abstract
- Don't cite references
- Don't be vague – the abstract should be a self contained summary of the research, so don't introduce ambiguous words or complex terms
- Avoid lengthy background information
- Don't mention anything that isn't discussed in the thesis
- Avoid overstatements
- Don't spin your findings, contribution or significance to make your research sound grander or more influential that it actually is

How can you make it great?

- Give a good first impression by writing in short clear sentences
- Use keywords from the document
- Respect the word limit
- Focus on four or five essential points
- Don't try to explain everything
- Edit it carefully to make sure every word is relevant (you haven't got room for wasted words) and that each sentence has maximum impact

How does it relate to other chapters?

It summarises the most important points from each of the chapters.

Notes:

Created by Dr. Maximilian Lemprière