**Contracting** is coming to an agreement and establishing a contract about a code of behaviour for each session.

### Why do it?

- Young people take responsibility and ownership of their own and the group’s behaviour
- It helps engage peer pressure in a positive way which reinforces positive behaviour
- It empowers young people to question the behaviour of others in the context of an agreed contract
- If young people participate in the development of rules they are more likely to keep them
- The negotiating of a contract involves young people in key citizenship skills e.g.
  - Negotiating
  - Compromising
  - Decision making

Here are some examples of methods of contracting:

**Example 1:**

**Process:**

1. As a group brainstorm ways in which they can show respect for others etc.
2. Write suggestions up on a flipchart or blackboard
3. Discuss and agree on acceptable forms of behaviour
4. Draw up a set of agreed rules for a democratic classroom
5. Display on a noticeboard as a reminder

**Variation:**

- **In pairs:** Students make a list of rights and responsibilities
- **In fours:** Once completed each pair joins another pair and compare their lists
➢ **Whole class:** Put the examples on the board

Ask if there are any they disagree with/that should be included

Decide on the ones they wish to have as ground rules for their lessons

When the ground rules are agreed draw up a contract and let everyone (including the teacher) sign it

**For example:**

- People should listen to others when they are speaking
- There should be no put-downs

**Example 2:**

**Process:**

1. Everything is examined in the context of the question ‘Is this a just society?’

2. Establish basic concepts using ground rules

3. Do work on conflict – the project focuses on investigating differences

4. This work on conflict should be done using structured discussion

5. Remember the process is what is important

6. There is risk involved but a contract provides a safety net