



Gelephu Mindfulness City

THE STATUTES OF THE GELEPHU MINDFULNESS CITY,
KINGDOM OF BHUTAN

UNFAIR CONTRACT TERMS ACT 2026

Unfair Contract Terms Act 2026

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

PART 1

Section

Introductory

1. Scope of this Part
- 1A. Interpretation of this Part
 - Avoidance of liability for negligence, breach of contract, etc.*
2. Negligence liability
3. Liability arising in contract
4. Unreasonable indemnity clauses
 - Liability arising from sale or supply of goods*
5. “Guarantee” of consumer goods
6. Sale and hire-purchase
7. Miscellaneous contracts under which goods pass
 - Other provisions about contracts*
8. [Not in use]
9. Effect of breach
10. Evasion by means of secondary contract
 - Explanatory provisions*
11. “Reasonableness” test
12. Dealing as consumer
13. Varieties of exemption clause
14. [Not in Use]

PART 2

[Sections 15 to 25 relating to Scotland not in use]

PART 3

Miscellaneous

Section

26. International supply contracts
 27. Choice of law clauses
 28. Provision for sea carriage of passengers
 29. Saving for other relevant legislation
 30. Short title and transitional
- First Schedule — Scope of sections 2 to 4 and 7
- Second Schedule — Guidelines for Application of Reasonableness Test

In exercise of the powers under Article 4(2) of the GMC Royal Charter No. 1 of 2024, and with the assent of the Druk Gyalpo, the GMC Authority hereby makes the following Act:

An Act to impose further limits on the extent to which civil liability for breach of contract, or for negligence or other breach of duty, can be avoided by means of contract terms and otherwise.

PART 1

Introductory

Scope of this Part

1.—(1) For the purposes of this Part, “negligence” means the breach —

- (a) of any obligation, arising from the express or implied terms of a contract, to take reasonable care or exercise reasonable skill in the performance of the contract; or
- (b) of any common law duty to take reasonable care or exercise reasonable skill (but not any stricter duty).

(2) This Part is subject to Part 3; and in relation to contracts, the operation of sections 2 to 4 and 7 is subject to the exceptions made by the First Schedule.

(3) In the case of both contract and tort, sections 2 to 7 apply (except where the contrary is stated in section 6(4)) only to business liability, that is liability for breach of obligations or duties arising from things done or to be done by a person in the course of a business (whether his own business or another’s), and references to liability are to be read accordingly.

(4) In relation to any breach of duty or obligation, it is immaterial for any purpose of this Part whether the breach was inadvertent or intentional, or whether liability for it arises directly or vicariously.

Interpretation of this Part

1A. In this Part —

“business” includes a profession and the activities of any GMCA department or local or public authority;

“conditional sale agreement” means an agreement for the sale of goods under which the purchase price or part of it is payable by instalments, and the property in the goods is to remain in the owner (notwithstanding that the hirer is to be in possession of the goods) until such conditions as to the payment of instalments or otherwise as may be specified in that agreement are fulfilled

“court” means such judicial body that the Druk Gyalpo may designate for the purposes of that provision;

“goods” has the same meaning as in the Sale of Goods Act 2026;

“GMCA” means the Gelephu Mindfulness City Authority established under Article 3 of the Royal Charter;

“hire-purchase agreement” means an agreement, other than a conditional sale agreement, under which —

- (a) goods are bailed in return for periodical payments to the hirer; and
- (b) the property in the goods will pass to the hirer if the terms of the agreement are complied with and one or more of the following occur:
 - (i) the exercise of an option to purchase by the hirer;
 - (ii) the doing of any other specified act by any party to the agreement;
 - (iii) the happening of any other specified event;

“hirer” means the person who takes or has taken goods from an owner under a hire-purchase agreement or a conditional sale agreement and includes a person to whom the hirer’s rights or liabilities under the agreement have passed by assignment or by operation of law;

“negligence” has the meaning given to it by section 1(1);

“notice” includes an announcement, whether or not in writing, and any other communication or pretended communication;

“personal injury” includes any disease and any impairment of physical or mental condition.

Avoidance of liability for negligence, breach of contract, etc.

Negligence liability

2.—(1) A person cannot by reference to any contract term or to a notice given to persons generally or to particular persons exclude or restrict his liability for death or personal injury resulting from negligence.

(2) In the case of other loss or damage, a person cannot so exclude or restrict his liability for negligence except in so far as the term or notice satisfies the requirement of reasonableness.

(3) Where a contract term or notice purports to exclude or restrict liability for negligence, a person's agreement to or awareness of it is not of itself to be taken as indicating his voluntary acceptance of any risk.

Liability arising in contract

3.—(1) This section applies as between contracting parties where one of them deals as consumer or on the other's written standard terms of business.

- (2) As against that party, the other cannot by reference to any contract term —
- (a) when himself in breach of contract, exclude or restrict any liability of his in respect of the breach; or
 - (b) claim to be entitled —
 - (i) to render a contractual performance substantially different from that which was reasonably expected of him; or
 - (ii) in respect of the whole or any part of his contractual obligation, to render no performance at all,

except in so far as (in any of the cases mentioned in this subsection) the contract term satisfies the requirement of reasonableness.

Unreasonable indemnity clauses

4.—(1) A person dealing as consumer cannot by reference to any contract term be made to indemnify another person (whether a party to the contract or not) in respect of liability that may be incurred by the other for negligence or breach of contract, except in so far as the contract term satisfies the requirement of reasonableness.

- (2) This section applies whether the liability in question —
- (a) is directly that of the person to be indemnified or is incurred by him vicariously;
 - (b) is to the person dealing as consumer or to someone else.

Liability arising from sale or supply of goods

“Guarantee” of consumer goods

5.—(1) In the case of goods of a type ordinarily supplied for private use or consumption, where loss or damage —

- (a) arises from the goods proving defective while in consumer use; and

- (b) results from the negligence of a person concerned in the manufacture or distribution of the goods,

liability for the loss or damage cannot be excluded or restricted by reference to any contract term or notice contained in or operating by reference to a guarantee of the goods.

(2) For these purposes —

- (a) goods are to be regarded as “in consumer use” when a person is using them, or has them in his possession for use, otherwise than exclusively for the purposes of a business; and
- (b) anything in writing is a guarantee if it contains or purports to contain some promise or assurance (however worded or presented) that defects will be made good by complete or partial replacement, or by repair, monetary compensation or otherwise.

(3) This section does not apply as between the parties to a contract under or in pursuance of which possession or ownership of the goods passed.

Sale and hire-purchase

6.—(1) Liability for breach of the obligations arising from —

- (a) section 12 of the Sale of Goods Act 2026 (seller’s implied undertakings as to title, etc.); or
- (b) any Act implying terms as to title, freedom from encumbrances, or quiet possession in relation to hire-purchase agreements,

cannot be excluded or restricted by reference to any contract term.

(2) As against a person dealing as consumer, liability for breach of the obligations arising from —

- (a) section 13, 14 or 15 of the Sale of Goods Act 2026 (seller’s implied undertakings as to conformity of goods with description or sample, or as to their quality or fitness for a particular purpose); or
- (b) any Act, or any term implied by law, as to the correspondence of goods with description or sample, or as to their quality or fitness for a particular purpose, under a hire-purchase agreement,

cannot be excluded or restricted by reference to any contract term.

(3) As against a person dealing otherwise than as consumer, the liability specified in subsection (2) can be excluded or restricted by reference to a contract term, but only in so far as the term satisfies the requirement of reasonableness.

(4) The liabilities referred to in this section are not only the business liabilities defined by section 1(3), but include those arising under any contract of sale of goods or hire-purchase agreement.

Miscellaneous contracts under which goods pass

7.—(1) Where the possession or ownership of goods passes under or in pursuance of a contract not governed by the law of sale of goods or hire-purchase, subsections (2) to (4) apply as regards the effect (if any) to be given to contract terms excluding or restricting liability for breach of obligation arising by implication of law from the nature of the contract.

(2) As against a person dealing as consumer, liability in respect of the goods' correspondence with description or sample, or their quality or fitness for any particular purpose, cannot be excluded or restricted by reference to any such term.

(3) As against a person dealing otherwise than as consumer, that liability can be excluded or restricted by reference to such a term, but only in so far as the term satisfies the requirement of reasonableness.

(3A) Liability for breach of the obligations arising under any Act implying terms about title freedom from encumbrances, or quiet possession in certain contracts for the transfer of property in goods cannot be excluded or restricted by reference to any such term.

(4) Liability in respect of —

- (a) the right to transfer ownership of the goods, or give possession; or
- (b) the assurance of quiet possession to a person taking goods in pursuance of the contract,

cannot (in a case to which subsection (3A) does not apply) be excluded or restricted by reference to any such term except in so far as the term satisfies the requirement of reasonableness.

Other provisions about contracts

8. [Not in use]

Effect of breach

9.—(1) Where for reliance upon it a contract term has to satisfy the requirement of reasonableness, it may be found to do so and be given effect accordingly

notwithstanding that the contract has been terminated either by breach or by a party electing to treat it as repudiated.

(2) Where on a breach the contract is nevertheless affirmed by a party entitled to treat it as repudiated, this does not of itself exclude the requirement of reasonableness in relation to any contract term.

Evasion by means of secondary contract

10. A person is not bound by any contract term prejudicing or taking away rights of his which arise under, or in connection with the performance of, another contract, so far as those rights extend to the enforcement of another's liability which this Part prevents that other from excluding or restricting.

Explanatory provisions

“Reasonableness” test

11.—(1) In relation to a contract term, the requirement of reasonableness for the purposes of this Part is that the term shall have been a fair and reasonable one to be included having regard to the circumstances which were, or ought reasonably to have been, known to or in the contemplation of the parties when the contract was made.

(2) In determining for the purposes of section 6 or 7 whether a contract term satisfies the requirement of reasonableness, regard shall be had in particular to the matters specified in the Second Schedule; but this subsection does not prevent the court or arbitrator from holding, in accordance with any rule of law, that a term which purports to exclude or restrict any relevant liability is not a term of the contract.

(3) In relation to a notice (not being a notice having contractual effect), the requirement of reasonableness under this Act is that it should be fair and reasonable to allow reliance on it, having regard to all the circumstances obtaining when the liability arose or (but for the notice) would have arisen.

(4) Where by reference to a contract term or notice a person seeks to restrict liability to a specified sum of money, and the question arises (under this or any other Act) whether the term or notice satisfies the requirement of reasonableness, regard shall be had in particular (but without prejudice to subsection (2) in the case of contract terms) to —

- (a) the resources which he could expect to be available to him for the purpose of meeting the liability should it arise; and
- (b) how far it was open to him to cover himself by insurance.

(5) It is for those claiming that a contract term or notice satisfies the requirement of reasonableness to show that it does.

Dealing as consumer

12.—(1) A party to a contract “deals as consumer” in relation to another party if —

- (a) he neither makes the contract in the course of a business nor holds himself out as doing so;
- (b) the other party does make the contract in the course of a business; and
- (c) in the case of a contract governed by the law of sale of goods or hire-purchase, or by section 7, the goods passing under or in pursuance of the contract are of a type ordinarily supplied for private use or consumption.

(2) But on a sale by auction or by competitive tender the buyer is not in any circumstances to be regarded as dealing as consumer.

(3) Subject to this, it is for those claiming that a party does not deal as consumer to show that he does not.

Varieties of exemption clause

13.—(1) To the extent that this Part prevents the exclusion or restriction of any liability it also prevents —

- (a) making the liability or its enforcement subject to restrictive or onerous conditions;
- (b) excluding or restricting any right or remedy in respect of the liability, or subjecting a person to any prejudice in consequence of his pursuing any such right or remedy;
- (c) excluding or restricting rules of evidence or procedure,

and (to that extent) sections 2 and 5 to 7 also prevent excluding or restricting liability by reference to terms and notices which exclude or restrict the relevant obligation or duty.

(2) But an agreement in writing to submit present or future differences to arbitration is not to be treated under this Part as excluding or restricting any liability.

[Not in use]

14. [Not in use]

PART 2

[Sections 15 to 25 relating to Scotland not in use]

PART 3

Miscellaneous

International supply contracts

26.—(1) The limits imposed by this Act on the extent to which a person may exclude or restrict liability by reference to a contract term do not apply to liability arising under such a contract as is described in subsection (3).

(2) The terms of such a contract are not subject to any requirement of reasonableness under section 3 or 4.

(3) Subject to subsection (4), that description of contract is one whose characteristics are the following:

- (a) either it is a contract of sale of goods or it is one under or in pursuance of which the possession or ownership of goods passes; and
- (b) it is made by parties whose places of business (or, if they have none, habitual residences) are in the territories of different States.

(4) A contract falls within subsection (3) only if either —

- (a) the goods in question are, at the time of the conclusion of the contract, in the course of carriage, or will be carried, from the territory of one State to the territory of another;
- (b) the acts constituting the offer and acceptance have been done in the territories of different States; or
- (c) the contract provides for the goods to be delivered to the territory of a State other than that within whose territory those acts were done.

Choice of law clauses

27.—(1) Where the proper law of a contract is the law of GMC only by choice of the parties (and apart from that choice would be the law of some country outside GMC) sections 2 to 7 do not operate as part of the proper law.

(2) This Act has effect notwithstanding any contract term which applies or purports to apply the law of some country outside GMC, where (either or both) —

- (a) the term appears to the court, or arbitrator or arbiter to have been imposed wholly or mainly for the purpose of enabling the party imposing it to evade the operation of this Act; or
- (b) in the making of the contract one of the parties dealt as consumer, and he was then habitually resident in GMC, and the essential steps necessary for the making of the contract were taken there, whether by him or by others on his behalf.

Provision for sea carriage of passengers

28.—(1) This section applies to a contract for carriage by sea of a passenger or of a passenger and his luggage.

(2) A person is not precluded by this Act from excluding or restricting liability for loss or damage in such circumstances and to such extent as may be prescribed by order made by the designated officer by reference to a term of the contract so prescribed.

(3) In this section, “designated officer” means a person appointed by the Druk Gyalpo as the officer designated for the purposes of this Act.

Saving for other relevant legislation

29.—(1) Nothing in this Act removes or restricts the effect of, or prevents reliance upon, any contractual provision which —

- (a) is authorised or required by the express terms or necessary implication of an enactment; or
- (b) being made with a view to compliance with an international agreement to which GMC is a party, does not operate more restrictively than is contemplated by the agreement.

(2) A contract term is to be taken for the purposes of Part 1 as satisfying the requirement of reasonableness if it is incorporated or approved by, or incorporated pursuant to a decision or ruling of, a competent authority acting in the exercise of any statutory jurisdiction or function and is not a term in a contract to which the competent authority is itself a party.

(3) In this section —

“competent authority” means any court, arbitrator or arbiter, GMCA department or public authority;

“court” means such judicial body that the Druk Gyalpo may designate for the purposes of that provision;

“enactment” means any legislation (including subsidiary legislation) of GMC and any instrument having effect by virtue of such legislation;

“GMCA” means the Gelephu Mindfulness City Authority established under Article 3 of the Royal Charter;

“statutory” means conferred by an enactment.

Short title and transitional

30.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Unfair Contract Terms Act 2026 and comes into operation on 15 June 2026.

(2) Nothing in this Act applies in relation to a contract made or liability for loss or damage suffered before the commencement of this Act.

FIRST SCHEDULE

Section 1(2)

SCOPE OF SECTIONS 2 TO 4 AND 7

1. Sections 2 to 4 do not extend to —

- (a) any contract of insurance (including a contract to pay an annuity on human life);
- (b) any contract so far as it relates to the creation or transfer of an interest in land, or to the termination of such an interest, whether by extinction, merger, surrender, forfeiture or otherwise;
- (c) any contract so far as it relates to the creation or transfer of a right or interest in any patent, trade mark, copyright, registered design, technical or commercial information or other intellectual property, or relates to the termination of any such right or interest;
- (d) any contract so far as it relates —
 - (i) to the formation or dissolution of a company (which means any body corporate or unincorporated association and includes a partnership); or
 - (ii) to its constitution or the rights or obligations of its corporators or members; and
- (e) any contract so far as it relates to the creation or transfer of securities or of any right or interest in securities.

2. Section 2(1) extends to —

- (a) any contract of marine salvage or towage;
- (b) any charterparty of a ship or hovercraft; and
- (c) any contract for the carriage of goods by ship or hovercraft,

but subject to this, sections 2 to 4 and 7 do not extend to any such contract except in favour of a person dealing as consumer.

3. Where goods are carried by ship or hovercraft in pursuance of a contract which either —

- (a) specifies that as the means of carriage over part of the journey to be covered; or
- (b) makes no provision as to the means of carriage and does not exclude that means,

then sections 2(2), 3 and 4 do not, except in favour of a person dealing as consumer, extend to the contract as it operates for and in relation to the carriage of the goods by that means.

4. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 2 do not extend to a contract of employment, except in favour of the employee.

SECOND SCHEDULE

Section 11(2)

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATION OF REASONABLENESS TEST

The matters to which regard is to be had in particular for the purposes of sections 6(3) and 7(3) and (4) are any of the following which appear to be relevant:

- (a) the strength of the bargaining positions of the parties relative to each other, taking into account (among other things) alternative means by which the customer's requirements could have been met;
- (b) whether the customer received an inducement to agree to the term, or in accepting it had an opportunity of entering into a similar contract with other persons, but without having to accept a similar term;
- (c) whether the customer knew or ought reasonably to have known of the existence and extent of the term (having regard, among other things, to any custom of the trade and any previous course of dealing between the parties);
- (d) where the term excludes or restricts any relevant liability if some condition is not complied with, whether it was reasonable at the time of the contract to expect that compliance with that condition would be practicable;
- (e) whether the goods were manufactured, processed or adapted to the special order of the customer.