Supporting Picturehouse and McDonalds Strikes (NUS UK): motion discussed at Student Council on 25th January 2018

Note to Student Council: Edinburgh University Students’ Association is a registered charity and as such legally required to spend resources on its beneficiaries, this is often referred to as ‘students as students’. This means that although we can discuss matters and adopt political stances not relating directly to our members, we are restricted in the resources we can use on such matters. Organisationally, the National Union of Students is structured in such a way that allows them to campaign on these issues, which means we can submit motions we otherwise could not act upon.

NUS UK Conference resolves:
1. To actively support workers in struggle, including publicising and mobilising for the Picturehouse and McDonald’s strikes, encouraging students to join picket lines, demonstrations and to support the strike fund.
2. To launch a campaign to unionise and organise student workers, from postgraduate lecturers and nursing students to those working in fast food, as part of a campaign for a £10 per hour minimum wage and to ban zero hour contracts.
3. To work with the labour movement in fighting for the right to strike and picket effectively, including for political reasons and in solidarity with other workers.
4. To encourage student unions to deny Picturehouse access to Freshers’ Fairs and other marketing opportunities until they concede their staff's demands.

NUS UK Conference notes:
1. The Picturehouse and McDonald’s disputes which involve mainly young, low-paid workers on insecure contracts.
2. The September 2017 strikes at McDonald’s branches in Cambridge and Crayford for £10 an hour, secure contracts with guaranteed hours, and union recognition, as well as grievances over bullying from management.
3. This industrial action has already won pay rises for all McDonald’s workers and it will continue until their demands are met.* 4. That Picturehouse cinema workers are striking for the Living Wage, decent maternity and sick pay, and union recognition, as well as the reinstatement of four sacked union reps.
4. That Picturehouse often sells memberships and conducts marketing through Student Unions.


NUS UK Conference believes:
1. Many students have low paid jobs and zero hours contracts.
2. Joining a union, organising at work and going on strike is the most effective way to fight against inequality and for better pay and working conditions.

3. For these struggles to be effective, we must repeal all anti-trade union laws, including those introduced in the 1970s and 1980s, which make it harder for us to strike and picket effectively.

4. The National Living Wage should be replaced with a universal living wage of £10 per hour. This starts with supporting and spreading young workers’ struggles now.