Call for increased Edinburgh University Students’ Association and university support of the International Student Centre

What will we do?
1. Edinburgh University Students’ Association should ensure that the University of Edinburgh recognizes and supports the International Student Centre (hereafter referred to as the ISC), as one of the few existing spaces most directly serving international students at this university. This involves ensuring university support for the international student community by preserving the services provided by the International Student Centre.

What is the background to this?
1. The ISC has built up a community for international students at this university spanning 20+ years, and continues to support students through the organisation of trips, events, and the facilitation of a community of international students at this University - both past and current.
2. The ISC is been asked to vacate its current location, 22b Buccleuch Place, without being offered a viable alternative space. Effectively, this will result in shutting down most of the services currently provided to support and build the growing international community at the university.
3. The services that the ISC offers to the University have been consistently recognised by students as a key element to make their transition to and their time in Edinburgh better, as indicated by the the consistently high satisfaction rates on the International Student Barometer (96% for the year 2015/16). It is therefore important for the University to recognise the role of the ISC as a major contributant to the university experience of many students.
4. This is particularly relevant in relation to the university’s official commitment to increasing the international student numbers (for more details, see the Global Engagement Plan, the University Strategic Planning and Vision 2025). For this to be successful, it needs to be accompanied by the improvement of current services such as the ISC, rather than cuts.
5. The ISC Lounge represents the core of ISC activities and of its community of international students.
6. While other services do exist at the university with the intention of improving the experiences of international students, the goal and subsequent success over the past 20+ years - evidenced by our extensive alumni community - of facilitating a community of international students holds unique to the ISC.
7. For more information on the ISC, please go to https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5VhJUx5DW4gQUxDYjMwYmhQcUk/view?usp=sharing

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?
1. The university claims ‘#weareinternational’ and continues to call on more international students to matriculate while failing to put financial support and
recognition towards services by and for them - such as the ISC - and continuing to raise international student fees (from £12,650/£16,650 in 2012/2013 to £17,700/£23,200 in 2017/2018 for new entry oversees students - for more information see http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/fees/undergraduate_2017-2018.cfm?sorter=Programme_Name, http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/fees/undergraduate_2012-2013.cfm and http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-funding/tuition-fees/previous).

2. This is an organization that has proven valuable through its existence as well as through its potential to grow as a space for international students. The loss of the ISC would be a significant loss to the support system provided by the university for students.

3. The significant yearly increase in tuition fees for international students across various degree programs should be represented in an increase in services meant to support students at the University of Edinburgh.

Submitted with 20 student signatures