

# The Australian

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## Tertiary plans sway poll intentions

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- From: **The Australian**
- August 18, 2010 12:00AM

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### **POLITICAL strategists obviously see few votes in higher education.**

But in a new poll 28 per cent of respondents said policies on universities will be a significant factor in their voting intentions.

It comes as the public still waits for Tony Abbott to unveil his higher education policy and as the sector seeks further commitments from Labor that Julia Gillard's expansion agenda will be backed up by sufficient funding to underpin quality.

The survey of 1548 voters by pollsters Nielsen was commissioned by peak body Universities Australia. It also found that 58 per cent of respondents believed government should be funding at least 50 per cent of university costs, up from 44 per cent at present.

Labor has set out an expansion agenda to be funded largely by future commitments.

The Coalition has signalled restoring full-fee undergraduate places, but it is unclear how that would work in an uncapped system.

Ross Milbourne, vice-chancellor of the University of Technology Sydney and chairman of the Australian Technology Network, said: "We acknowledge that the current government has been a strong supporter of higher education, but in the campaign process there has been little of any substance from either party".

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