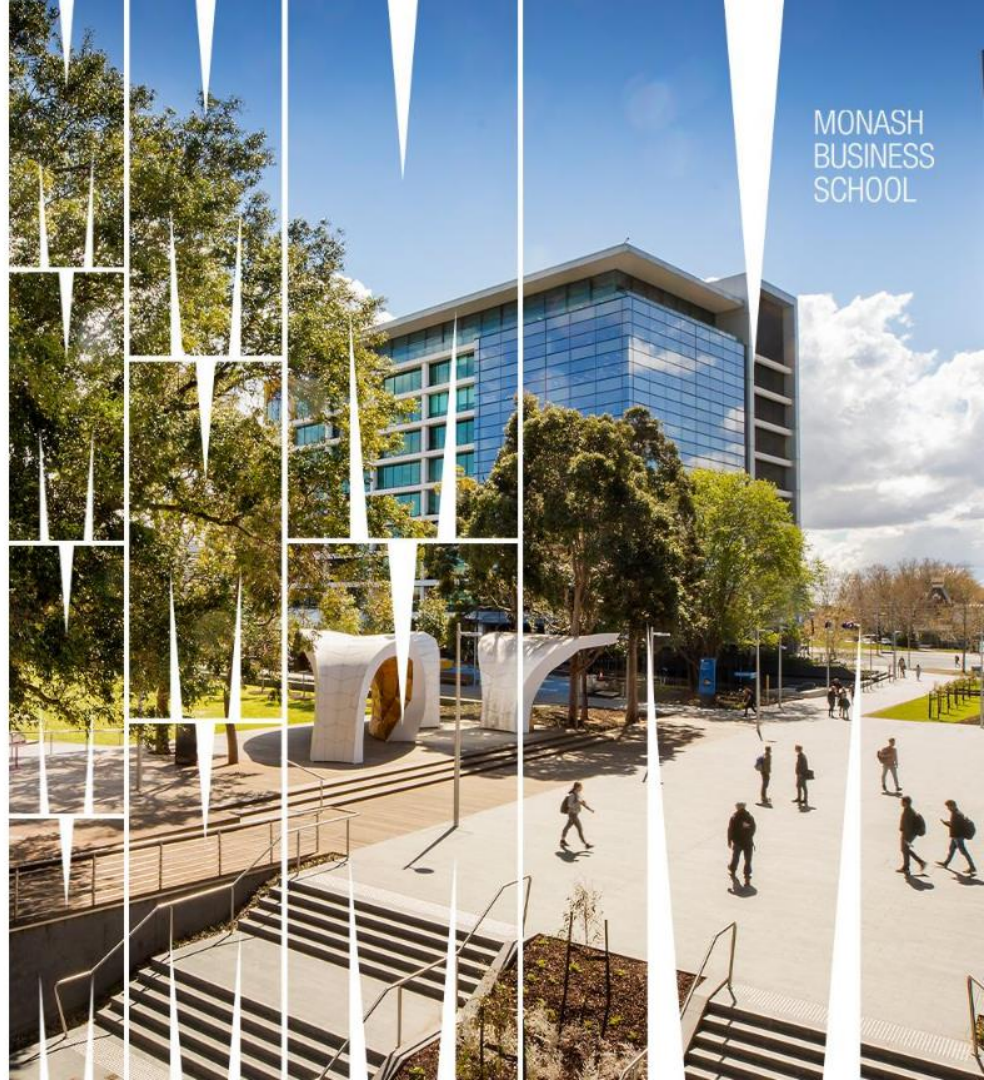


Higher education at the crossroads – what the parties promise for election 2025

Andrew Norton



Unusually a higher education related matter will be a major election issue

- Labor proposal to cut HELP debt by 20% - Lib oppose
- Labor proposal to lift repayment threshold from \$56K to \$67K – Lib unclear
- Labor proposal to base repayment on income above the threshold, not all income as now – Lib unclear



Similarities between Labor & the Coalition

- Both have lost confidence in university governance and management
- Both support more intense regulation of the sector
- Both support a more transactional approach to funding
- Both will reduce international student numbers
- Both will work within a tight federal budget



Australian Tertiary Education Commission – Labor Yes; Coalition No

- For Labor, a better resourced enforcer for their higher education agenda
- For the Coalition, unnecessary extra bureaucrats



Creating more student places – Labor incoherently Yes; Coalition Maybe

- Labor proposing ‘effectively demand driven funding’ for equity/under-represented students
- Labor proposing caps on domestic enrolments
- Coalition talking about meeting aspirations, but no clear policies



Needs based funding – Labor Yes; Coalition Unknown

- Per student additional funding for low SES and Indigenous students
- Per student funding for students at regional campuses (as opposed to regional students)
- When last in office, the Coalition tilted funding to regional over low SES



Crossbench views

- Teals & Greens active on student debt related issues
- Likely to be sympathetic to equity issues

