

[SUBSCRIBE NOW >>](#)

[SIGN-IN/REGISTER >>](#)

S DENOTES SUBSCRIBER CONTENT

- [Home](#)
- [Search](#)
- [Current edition **S**](#)
- [Latest news](#)
- [Jobs](#)
- [Courses & conferences](#)
- [Archive **S**](#)
- [Funding opportunities **S**](#)
- [Statistics **S**](#)
- [Awards 2005](#)
- [Links](#)
- [Newsletters](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [Bookshop](#)
- [Site information](#)

SUBSCRIBER SERVICES

CURRENT EDITION



[Current Edition](#)

Lib Dems eclipse Labour on campus

Paul Hill
 Published: 29 April 2005

Labour's electoral dominance on Britain's campuses will come to an end amid a surge of support among academics and students for the Liberal Democrats according to two exclusive polls for *The Times Higher*.

An ICM Research poll of 500 academics reveals that the Lib Dems have taken a narrow lead over the Labour Party for the campus vote.

While Labour could count on the votes of about 65 per cent of academic party's share of the vote has now fallen to 41 per cent.

The Lib Dems - who hovered around the 22 per cent mark in 1992, 1995 and 1997 - have doubled their share of the vote to 44 per cent.

ICM puts the Tories on 10 per cent: giving them a higher share of the vote than the 7 per cent in 2001, but no better than in 1997.

One politics pundit predicted that the switch of allegiance could see the key "campus marginals" Bristol West and Cardiff Central, while the decaying Labour vote could see Selby and Lancaster and Wyre switch to the Tories.

"Longer-shot" targets such as Cambridge could also come into range for Labour, said Simon Henig of Sunderland University, co-author of *Politico's Guide to the General Election 2005*.

Some 44 per cent of academics said the Lib Dems had the best higher education policies, 21 per cent said Labour did and 4 per cent felt the Tories had the best. 75 of the 500 academics had yet to decide who to vote for.

A separate poll of 1,020 undergraduates, carried out by Opinionpanel F between April 22 and 25, gives the Lib Dems a 47 per cent share of the vote, up from 39 per cent in February.

Labour are down from 29 per cent to 23 per cent, only one point above the Tories. Three out of four students expect a Labour victory on May 5.

On a ten-point turnout scale - where ten is certain - 68 per cent of students and 62 per cent of academics ranked their likelihood of voting on May 5 between six and ten.

Charles Kennedy, the Lib Dem leader, said: "The Liberal Democrats' campaign is based on the ability to learn, not the ability to pay, not just with students and parents, but with those who work within our universities."

The Labour Party said that if students and academics valued public services, they should stick with Labour.

ICT SUPPLEMENT: NO. 5 **S**

Published April 29 2005

WHO GETS WHAT? **S**

Check out how much your vice-chancellor earns in our annual pay survey

BOLOGNA SUPPLEMENT **S**

Britain is finally waking up to the Bologna Process

LATEST STATISTICS **S**

Data published by The THES on a wide range of higher education issues.

TEXTBOOK GUIDES **S**

Comparative reviews of the most recent student textbooks.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES **S**

The latest research grants,

when and where to apply.

CLIMB THE CAREER LADDER

How to get promoted: a career guide for academics

STATISTICS

Data published by *The Times Higher* on a wide range of higher education issues.

TEXTBOOK GUIDES

Comparative reviews of the most recent student texts.

LATEST RESEARCH NEWS

Full text of all the important European announcements.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Supplements to the printed edition plus collections of articles.

"Labour is the only party committed to building and renewing our public way they need to thrive," a spokesman said.

Tim Collins, the Conservative education spokesman, said the party had but there was "more hard work to do between now and polling day".

Mr Collins added: "We'll be working hard for every campus vote by und message that only the Conservatives offer the scrapping of tuition fees academic standards and the long-term financial independence of our u

Kat Fletcher, president of the National Union of Students, said: "Educa as high on the campaign agenda as issues such as MRSA, health and Part of the reason for that is that both Labour and the Tories are on thir fees."

Ironically, in the week that 35 prominent scientists published a letter su the ICM poll suggests that Tony Blair and Gordon Brown's emphasis o investment has failed to convince most academics.

ICM found that 46 per cent of academics in medical faculties, 47 per ce and 58 per cent of those in engineering faculties will vote Lib Dem.

Labour remains the favoured party of academics in the arts (44 per cer scientists (48 per cent).

* ICM Research interviewed a random sample of 500 university lecture 11 and 21 by telephone.

THES Editorial ©2005 [TSL Education Ltd](#).
We welcome your [feedback](#). Please read our [privacy policy](#).