

D+

Even Malcolm Turnbull's friends won't give him an 'A'.

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[Note that references in square brackets are from a version of this one on the web but not published]

One of the interesting aspects of *AFR Weekend's* survey on Malcolm Turnbull is the people who chose not to participate. Not one sitting Liberal or National MP in a state or federal parliament we approached would rate Malcolm Turnbull's first year.

Gay marriage supporters Warren Entsch and Dean Smith – Liberal MPs who are presumably natural Turnbull supporters – stayed mum. Even those who see themselves as personal friends of the prime minister, such as NSW state Liberal MP Bruce Notley-Smith, were too timid to rate the PM.

That was a shame for Turnbull because he seems short of fans: not one person gave him an A grade, and there were only a handful of Bs. It looks like no one, not even his allies, want to be seen boosting a prime minister who is graded D, E or even F by half of those surveyed. (Responses were evenly split between Bs and Cs, and Ds, Es and F's) [On a weighted average his score is D+].

The sample was biased. AFR Weekend didn't approach people obliged to boost or criticise Turnbull on partisan grounds. That ruled out Labor and Greens politicians, union leaders and federal Coalition ministers.

We did include people from the left, though. Climate Change activist Tim Flannery says he hopes Turnbull can defeat the conservatives in his own party and be more assertive on climate change policy. Historian Stuart Macintyre attacks Turnbull's support for the "cargo cult" of science and technology training.

About 30 per cent of our list asked not to be linked to their comments.

They include Melbourne University Press chief executive Louise Adler, who is a friend of Tony Abbott and has published many political books; [Kim Williams, a former head of News Corp Australia and son-in-law of former Labor prime minister Gough Whitlam;] and Christine Forster, Abbott's sister and the Liberal Party candidate for mayor of Sydney.