

Steele and Uni reach hush-hush settlement



TIGHT-LIPPED: University of Wollongong academic Dr Ted Steele has received a confidential settlement.

Picture: ADAM McCLEAN

By LISA SEWELL

Outspoken University of Wollongong academic Dr Ted Steele has been silenced.

After a long-running battle with university management, the National Tertiary Education Union has helped the maverick biological sciences professor secure a confidential settlement.

In a statement released by

the union late yesterday afternoon, the three parties claimed a satisfactory end to the dispute. The university sent out a similar statement.

"Associate Professor Ted Steele, the University of Wollongong and the NTEU have reached an agreement in settlement of the dispute between them," the statement said.

"All legal and disciplinary

procedures have been terminated as a result of the settlement. The details of the settlement remain confidential and all three parties have agreed to make no further public comment."

Dr Steele was dismissed in February 2001 following his public claims of soft marking practices at universities.

The Federal Court later ruled that the sacking was in

breach of the university's enterprise bargaining agreement. He was reinstated in April this year - with full back pay - but was subsequently charged with misconduct.

When contacted by the *Illawarra Mercury* late yesterday, Dr Steele was unable to comment on the nature of the settlement.

He could not disclose

whether he would continue to work at the university.

However, he said: "I'm relieved that this has finally come to a conclusion and I'm looking forward to getting on with my life.

"I will continue my research in evolution at the John Curtin School of Medical Research at the Australian National University, where I am a visiting honorary fellow. I will also be working from home."