

# **The extent of bullying and harassment in post-16 education**

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UCU Tackling Bullying conference

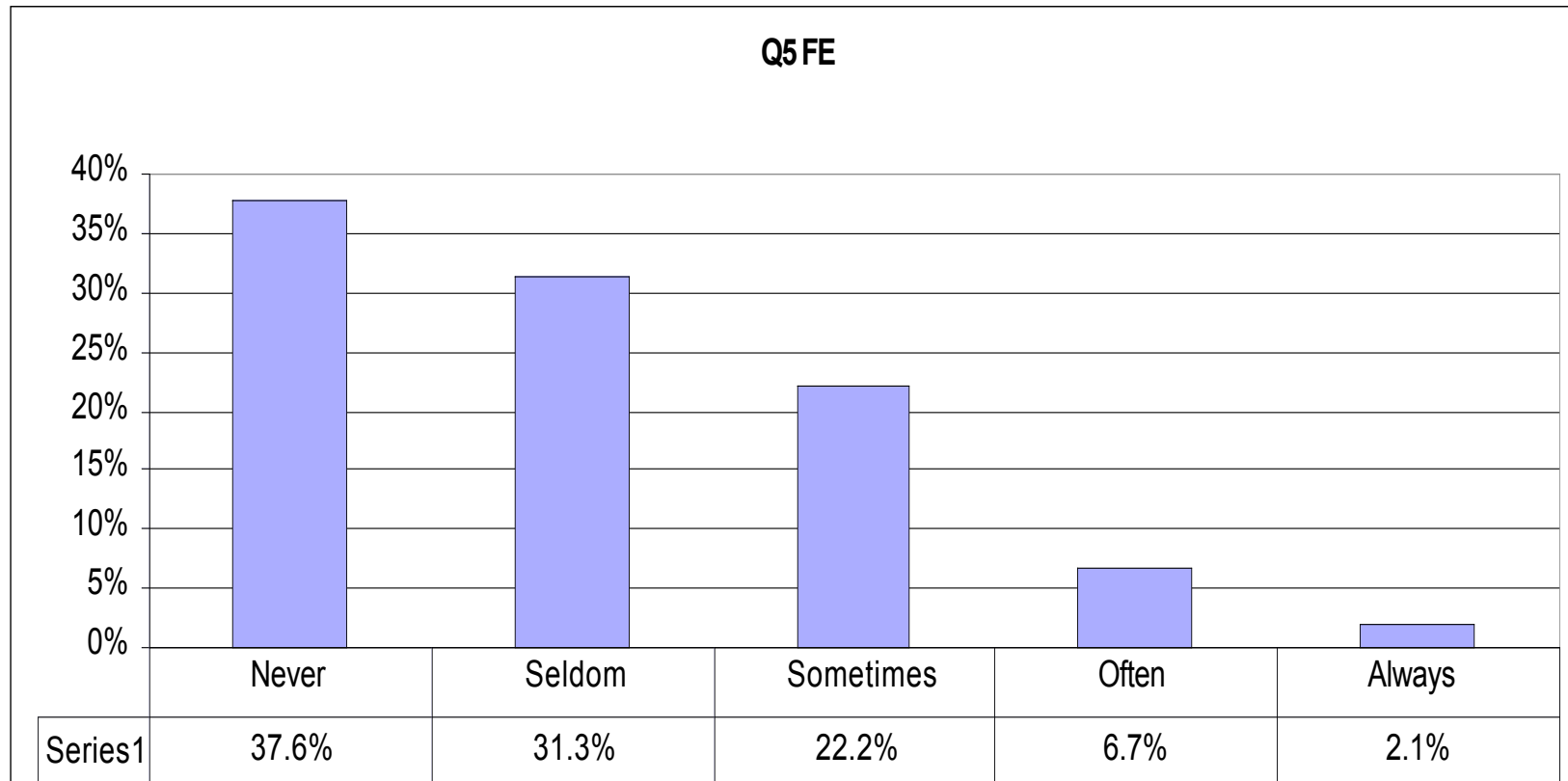
# Stress survey 2008

- UCU survey of members April-May 2008
- 14,270 respondents
- 3,190 were employed or principally employed in FE
- 9,740 in HE
- 60 in prison education
- 1,280 respondents did not identify the sector they principally worked in

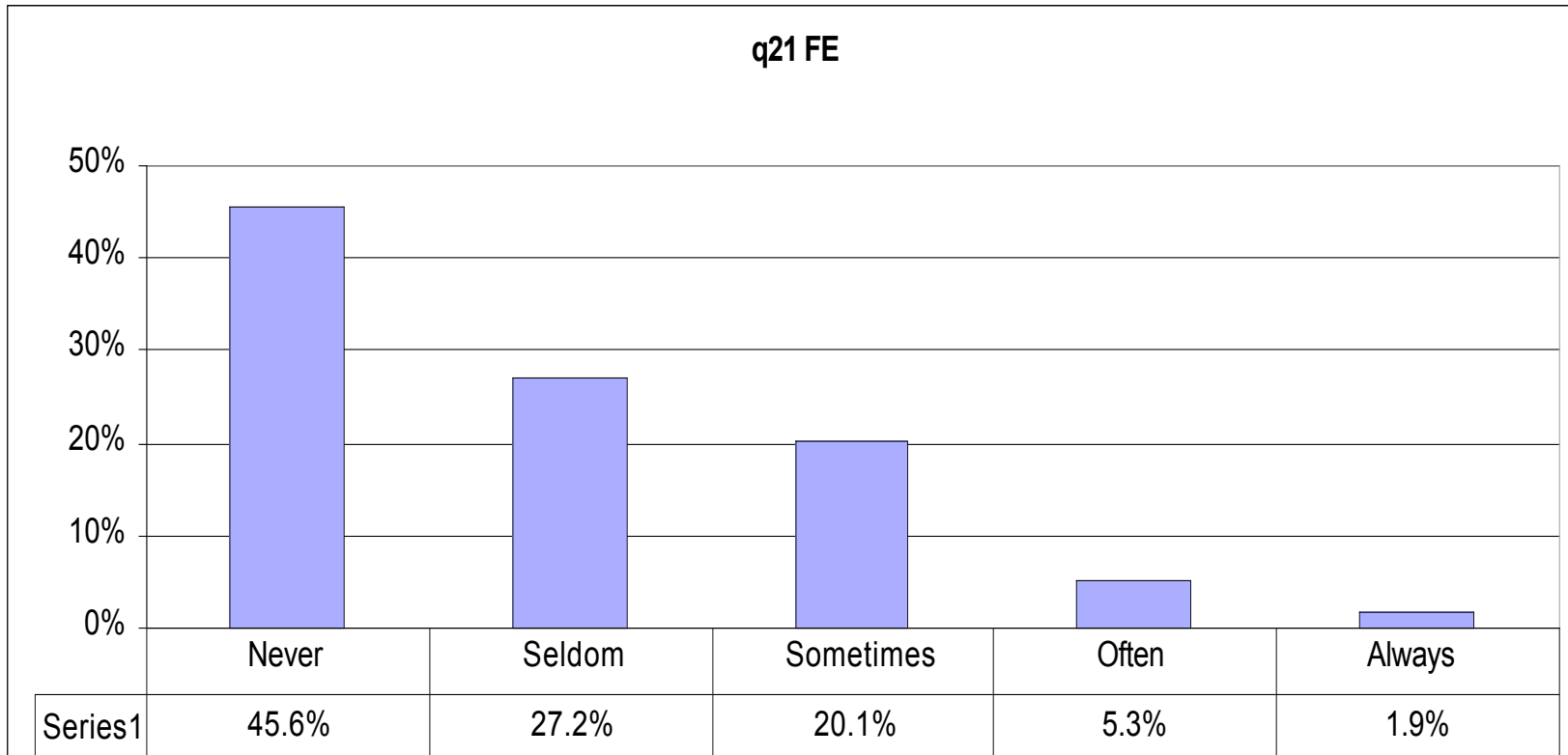
# Stress survey 2008

- Questions on bullying and harassment from the Health and Safety Executive's Management Standards Indicator Tool
- ACAS definition: 'Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour'. Harassment is legally defined as violating a person's dignity or creating a hostile working environment. It is illegal when on grounds of sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion/belief or age.

# I am subject to personal harassment at work (FE)



# I am subject to bullying at work (FE)



# **Bullying & harassment in FE: Relationships**

- **HSE scale: 1=low well-being; 5=high well-being**
- **HSE 2008 survey target group average: 4.13**
- **UCU members working in further education: 3.52**

# Bullying & harassment in FE

- *Two new line managers harassing me out of my job as they feel the need to exert control over a well functioning team; colleagues are afraid to openly support me for fear of 'being next' (lecturer)*
- *I was so badly bullied by a head of division I was off work sick twice for 3 months each time and was forced into accepting a change of job (lecturer)*

# Bullying & harassment in FE

- *Bullying is accepted as normal practice to talk about colleagues behind their backs, instead of discussing any problems one perceives directly (lecturer)*



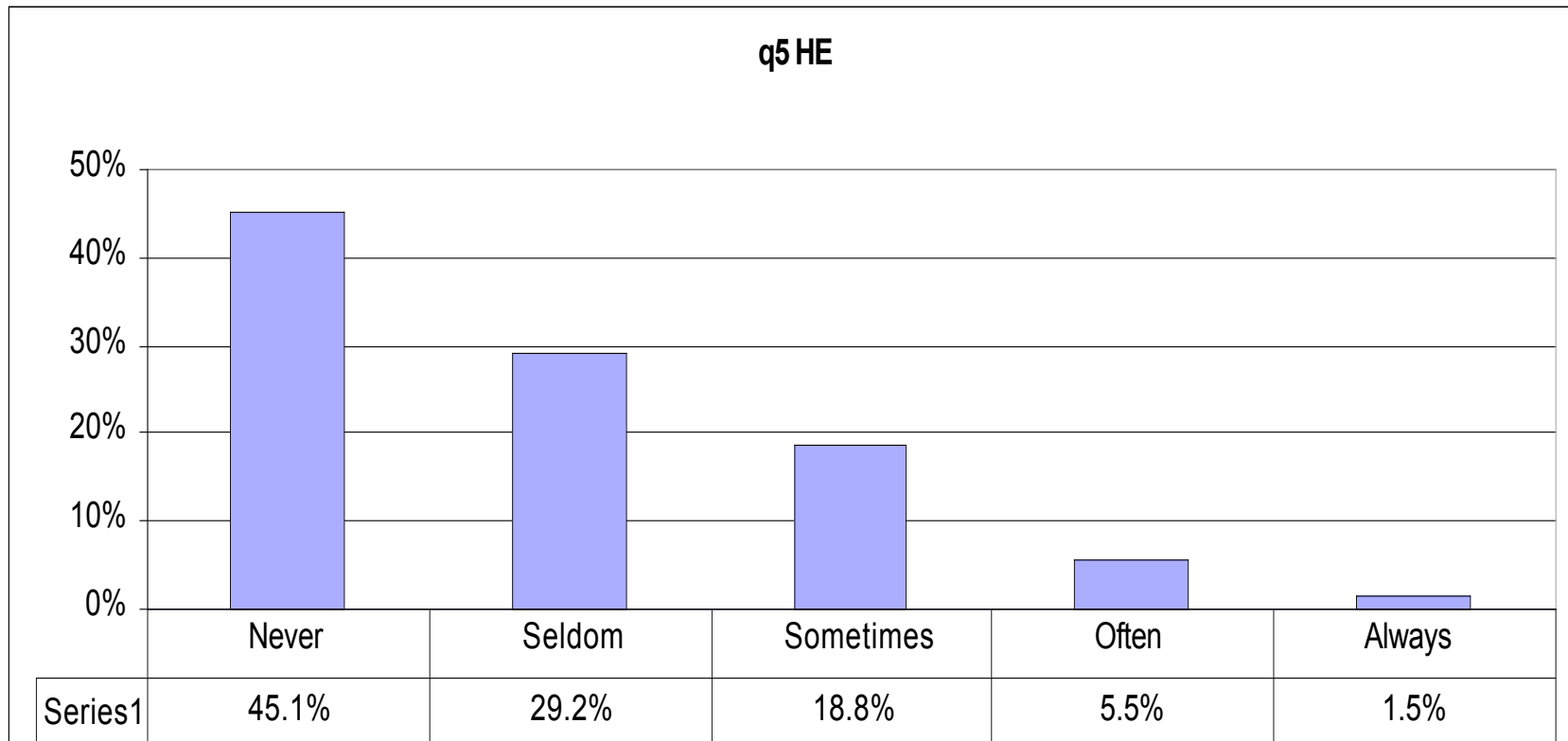
# **Bullying & harassment in FE – what to do about it**

- *All accusations of bullying (even unofficial) recorded on a person's HR file.*
- *Strong action against harassment.*
- *I would also prefer not to be ridiculed and embarrassed on a regular basis in the work place.*
- *More positive feedback and a general ethos cross-college of really valuing highly competent, well-qualified staff.*

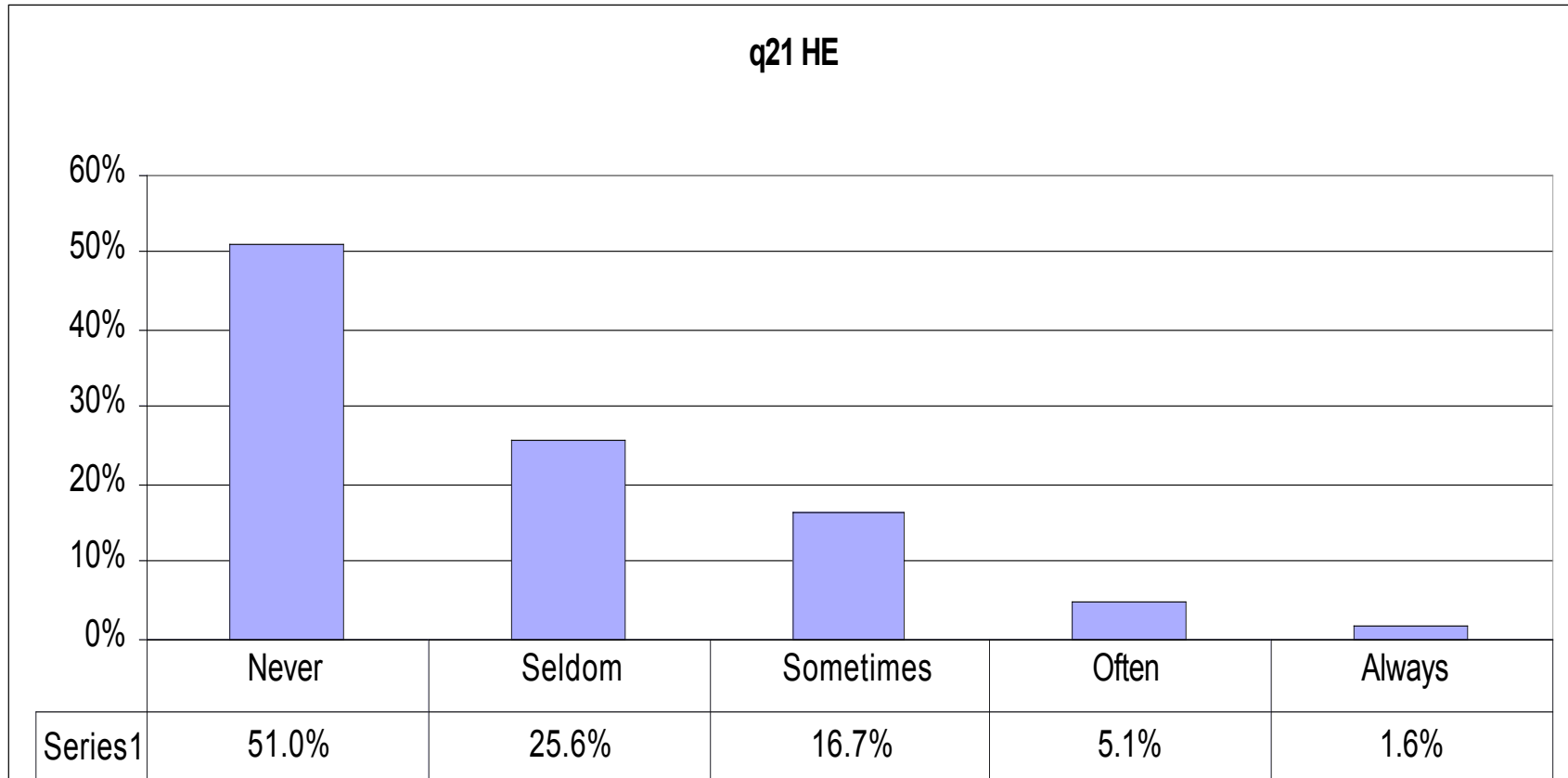
# **Bullying & harassment in FE – what to do about it**

- *Whistleblowing procedures for when staff are bullied into passing students*
- *Not to have to listen to Curriculum managers shouting at staff in the corridor in front of students.*

# I am subject to personal harassment at work (HE)



# I am subject to bullying at work (HE)



# **Bullying & harassment in HE: Relationships**

- **HSE scale: 1=low well-being; 5=high well-being**
- **HSE 2008 survey target group average: 4.13**
- **UCU members working in higher education: 3.57**

# Bullying & harassment in HE

- *Lack of support from my line manager which eventually became harassment and resulted in my dismissal (although the official reason was redundancy) (academic-related)*
- *I have been bullied and have received counselling for this. I am now on regular medication (lecturer)*
- *Our head of department bullies staff who speak their mind (and treats those who are quiet "nicely"). Bullying takes the form of higher teaching loads (teaching loads are kept secret in my department), less resources for research, and unreasonable requests (lecturer)*

# Bullying & harassment in HE

- *Age discrimination in the form of open comments about it “being time for me to retire”, comments in front of students and in staff meetings about my age (lecturer)*
- *Although I have managed to “keep my head down” and therefore do not suffer from direct bullying or intimidation, I see its affects on others within the organisation. This is extremely upsetting and frustrating as I feel I am powerless to do anything about it (lecturer)*

# **Bullying & harassment in HE – what to do about it**

- *The HE sector has become quite a harsh environment. It seems to equate business like with harassment and taking away peoples work responsibility by centralising processes and placing lower grade staff on a metaphorical production line. It isn't rocket science, but happy workers are productive workers*
- *Recognising the ethnic minority staff and dealing with any harassment and bullying issues related to it*



# **Bullying & harassment in HE – what to do about it**

- *Effective institutional action on bullying and harassment*
- *Line managers trained to recognise harassment & inappropriate behaviour, how to best deal with harassment and how to support colleagues suffering from harassment.*
- *acknowledgement of the importance of our contribution to the working of the university*

# **Bullying & harassment in HE – what to do about it**

- *Bullying and harassment has to be taken seriously in Higher Education where it seems to be on the increase. The ... College should listen to employees and the Union representatives and take the complaint seriously and take steps to reprimand the perpetrator regardless of the fact that he/she is a Professor and senior academic. The bullying and harassment I have suffered ... nearly destroyed my life purely because no-one was willing to take any steps to do anything ...*

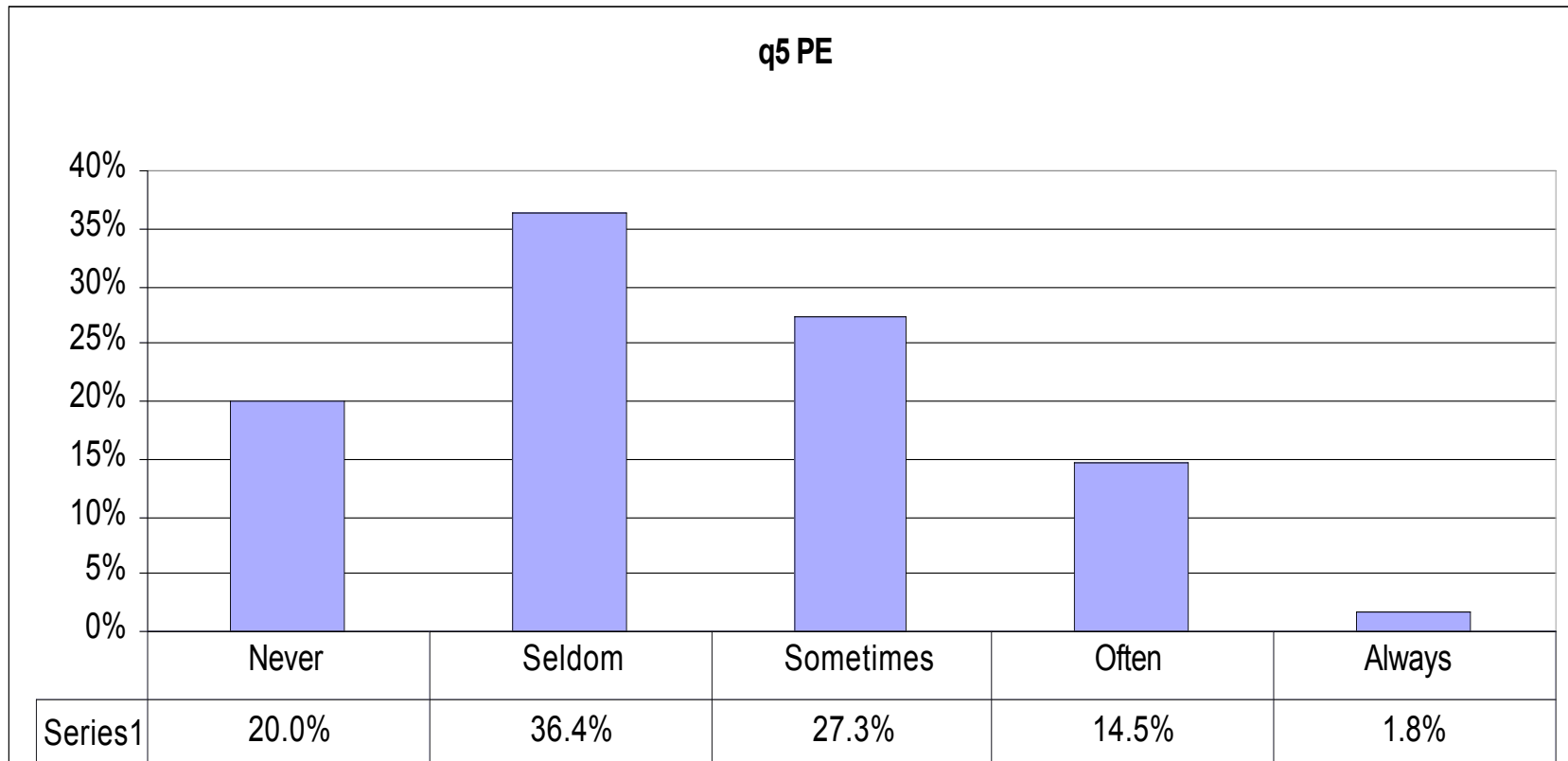
# **Bullying & harassment in HE – what to do about it**

- *Transparency in terms of complaints/harrassment/bullying processes - few people are prepared to declare themselves stressed or bullied for fear of worse to come and poor future references*
- *I urge UCU to bring to account the managers and management systems which encorage and reward bullying and Harrasment at work*

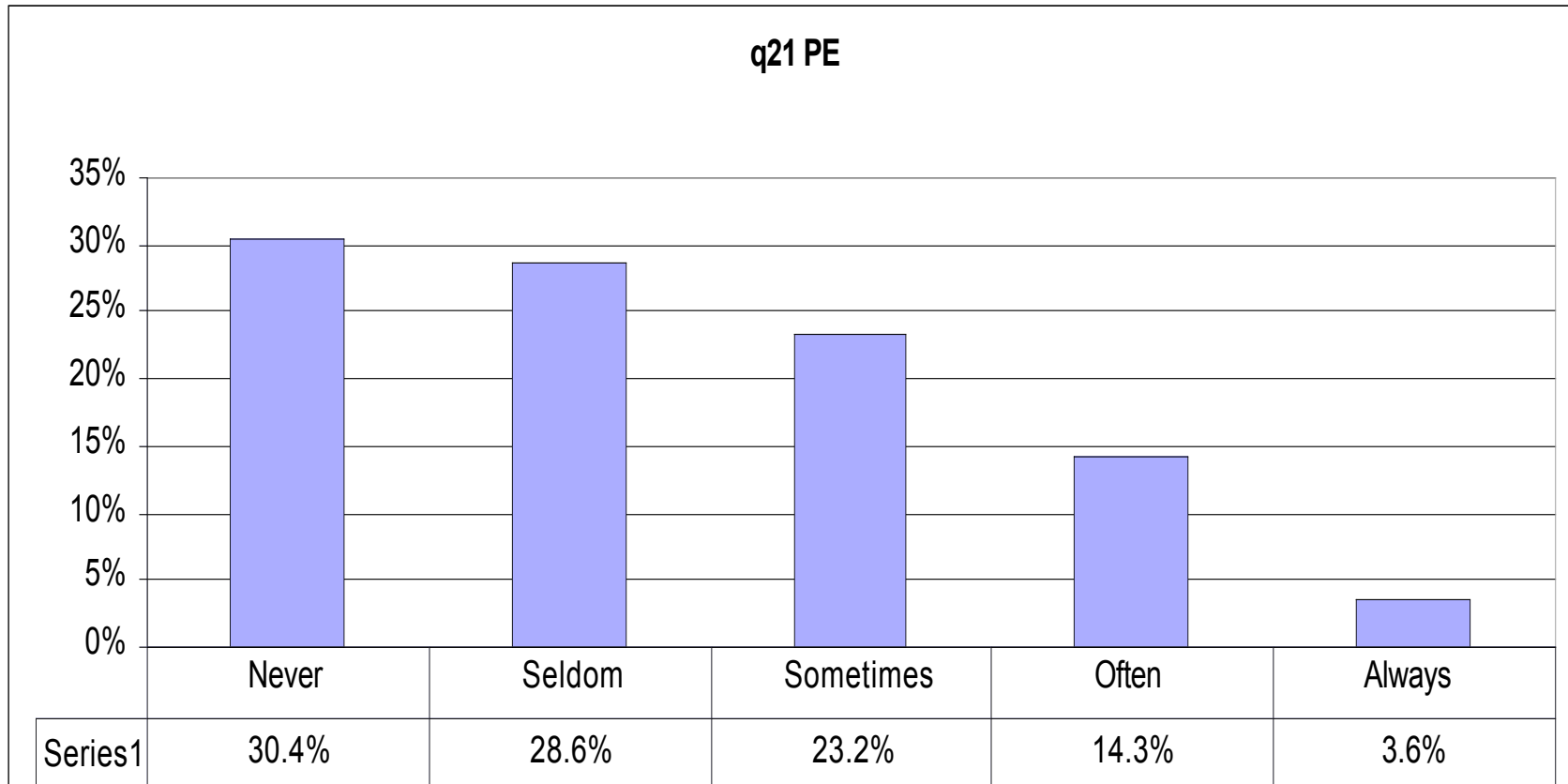
# **Bullying & harassment in HE – what to do about it**

- *Application by managements of bullying and harassment policies - they talk the talk, but often do not walk the walk. In particular, senior male academics who bully colleagues are often protected by their managers, who may themselves be bullies*
- *Deal with people who "bully up" - i.e. disgruntled staff who target managers*

# I am subject to personal harassment at work (PE)



# I am subject to bullying at work (PE)



# **Bullying & harassment in PE: Relationships**

- **HSE scale: 1=low well-being; 5=high well-being**
- **HSE 2008 survey target group average: 4.13**
- **UCU members working in prison education: 3.04**
- **(FE 3.52, HE 3.57)**

# Bullying & harassment in PE

- *students in prison environment can have a bullying attitude to staff - especially females - and to other learners (teacher)*
- *bad management structure - causing bullying and victimization amongst staff - which is supported by management (teacher)*
- *Poor management, favouritism at work, cliques and distrust in the staffroom, working with disturbed young offenders (teacher)*



# Bullying & harassment in PE

- *I have witnessed much bullying over many years, and feel I have been subjected to this, and particularly harassment in terms of the creation of a hostile working environment. I have suffered and witnessed discrimination mostly in the way teaching hours are given and removed at the manager's will. Discrimination is mostly not on the basis of race or the other (illegal) criteria, but on the basis of the manager's personal likes and dislikes and political agenda. (teacher)*
- *Harrassment from Line Manager, not listening to any concerns. Not recognising after affects of cancer. Being put down by Line Manager (teacher)*

# **Bullying & harassment in PE – what to do about it**

- *bullying/harassment course for all members of staff*
- *more faith in the ability of teachers to do the job*
- *I would like our employer to try and understand the pressure they put on us all the time. Some research before they introduce new ideas would be helpful, instead of expecting us to fit everything into 37 hours a week*

# Bullying & harassment in PE – what to do about it

- *I would like to see a reduction in the hours I am expected to deliver and much less pressure from management to cover lessons on top of my set sessions on a weekly basis, particularly those that are not within my subject area. I am often bullied into covering lessons once students are already in the class, with no work provided and no time to put anything together. This is particularly difficult when you are covering a 3 hour session. If you refuse to do this cover management make life much more difficult for you and many good staff have been forced out because management made life very hard for them following their refusal to jump at every request*

# UCU Negative behaviour at work survey 2008

- November 2008
- Included the Negative Acts Questionnaire
- 75% of respondents were involved in teaching
- 48% in FE
- 44% in HE
- 5% in adult education
- 3% in prison education

# UCU Negative behaviour at work survey 2008

- **Negative Acts Questionnaire**
- “We define **bullying** as: a situation where one or several individuals persistently over a period of time perceive themselves to be on the receiving end of negative actions from one or several persons, in a situation where the target of bullying has difficulty in defending him or herself against these actions. We will not refer to a one-off incident as bullying.”

# UCU Negative behaviour at work survey 2008

- **Using the above definition, please state whether you have been bullied at work over the last six months? (694 respondents)**
- a) No: 62.0%    🍏
- b) Yes, very rarely: 12.1%    🍏
- c) Yes, now and then: 15.6%
- d) Yes, several times per month: 6.3%
- e) Yes, several times per week: 2.0%    🍏
- f) Yes, almost daily: 2.0%

# UCU Negative behaviour at work survey 2008

- **Who bullied you?** (can ✓ >1 category)
- Supervisor/s, line-manager/s
- or senior manager/s: 75.4%
- Colleague/s: 38.7%
- Subordinate/s: 9.7%
- Client/s, customer/s: 1.6%
- Student/s: 6.0%

# **UCU Negative behaviour at work survey 2008**

- **Have you received derogatory, personal comments on student course-evaluation forms?**
- Never 75.7%
- Now & then 23.6%
- Monthly 0.7%
- Weekly 0.0%
- Daily 0.0%



# **UCU Negative behaviour at work survey 2008**

- **Are you aware of personally derogatory comments about you on student websites?**
- Never: 96.8%
- Now & then: 3.1%
- Monthly: 0.1%
- Weekly: 0.0%
- Daily: 0.0%

# UCU Negative behaviour at work survey 2008

- **If yes, how offensive were such comments?**
- Not at all: 18.2%
- Slightly: 36.4%
- Moderately: 13.6%
- Very: 31.8% (7 respondents – approx 1% of total)