

# OPINION

**on the application for academic position “Associate Professor” in professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Mathematics and Information Technology in Primary Education, for the needs of the Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts (FESA), Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” (SU), announced in SG, issue 93/26.11.2019 and on the SU website**

This opinion is prepared by **Prof. Dr. Zdravko Voutov Lalchev**, a retired professor from FESA, SU, as a member of the scientific jury for the competition in accordance with Order №ПД 38-6/09.01.2020 of the Rector of Sofia University.

Only one application was submitted for the announced position by Chief Assistant Professor Dr Lyubka Krasteva Aleksieva, FESA, SU.

## **I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS**

### **1. Application data**

The submitted documents by the only candidate comply with the requirements of the corresponding National Acts (ЗПАЧРБ, ППЗПАЧРБ) and the Regulations on the Terms and Conditions for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Occupying Academic Positions in Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” (ПВПИНСАДСУ).

Ten of the reviewed 20 scientific papers have been published in international scientific journals indexed in internationally-recognized databases, six papers are published in peer-reviewed scientific journals in Bulgaria. The other papers consist of one monography (the main habilitation work), one book based on the applicant’s doctoral thesis and two studies published in edited volumes. Seven from the 20 presented papers are independent researches and in three of the other papers Lyubka Aleksieva is the first author.

The candidate presented the following documents for the competition: CV, copies of Bachelor and Master Degree Diplomas, copy of Doctoral Degree Diploma, document for an academic position, certificate of professional experience, documents proving the fulfilment of the requirements of art. 105, para. 1, item 2, lists of publications (a list of all publications and a list of publications presented for the competition), reference from SU Author system, reference for the implementation of the minimum national requirements for the corresponding professional field and the additional requirements of SU “St. Kliment Ohridski”, citations reference, reference for the original scientific results and achievements, reference for the indicators of art. 112, para. 2 with relevant evidences, copies of scientific papers presented for the application, abstracts of the reviewed papers in Bulgarian and English languages, copy of the announcement in the State Gazette.

## **2. Candidate Data**

Assistant Professor Dr Lyubka Krasteva Aleksieva earned a bachelor degree in Primary Education with English as a Foreign Language in 2006 and two years later in 2008 she also completed a master degree in Information Technology in Primary Education in FESA, SU. In 2014 she successfully defended a doctoral thesis in professional field 1.3 Pedagogy in Mathematics in Primary Education. During her doctoral education she managed to successfully complete a one-term doctoral Special Research Programme in Institute of Education, London University. In the end of 2014 she also earns a certificate for professional development in design and delivery of online education.

Since 2010 Dr Aleksieva is a teacher and designer of online content in more than 10 different courses in variety of specialties in FESA, SU, and since 2017 she teaches in one of the courses of the first accredited distance education programme in SU – the master degree programme “Information and Communication Technologies in Education”, Faculty of Pedagogy.

Since 2015 Assistant Professor Dr Lyubka Aleksieva is an expert and a technical assistant in the Centre for Distance Education (CDE) in Sofia University.

### 3. General information of the applicant's scientific works and achievements

The reference of the candidate for the original scientific contributions (Appendix 14) correctly reflects her scientific achievements and results. Research interests of Assistant Professor Dr Lyubka Krasteva Aleksieva are in the field of ICT in education and in mathematics education in primary school and they are fully compliant to the field of the proposed academic position. I believe that the candidate's achievements in the presented scientific papers contribute and builds on the existing scientific knowledge implementing new ideas and methods. The scientific papers of Dr. Lyubka Aleksieva demonstrate her qualities as a researcher and characterize hers as an established scientist in her research field.

a) the scientific work of the candidate complies with the minimum national requirements (under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of ЗПАСРБ) and respectively with the additional requirements of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" for occupation of academic position "Associate Professor" in the scientific filed of the competition, as follows:

Indicators Group	Content	Required points (according to the minimum national requirements for Associate Professor)	Candidate points
A	Indicator 1	50	50
B	Indicator 2	0	0
B	Indicator 3	100	100
Г	Sum of indicators from 4 to 10	200	270,16
Д	Sum of indicators from 11 to 13	50	230
E	Sum of indicators from 12 to the end	0	–

b) the scientific papers submitted by the applicant do not repeat those of previous procedures for the acquisition of a scientific degree and academic position;

c) there is no plagiarism proven in the scientific works presented in the application.

### 4. Information and evaluation of the applicant's teaching activity

The candidate Assistant Professor Dr Lyubka Aleksieva has a ten-year rich teaching experience which is also rated as excellent in the evaluation of Faculty Quality Committee

(FESA, SU) in the attestation of Dr Aleksieva from 2019. This evaluation also includes the opinions of her students. Since 2010, Aleksieva has been an adjunct lecturer in mathematics education at FESA, SU, since 2011 she has been an assistant professor and since 2015 – a chief assistant in mathematics and information technology education in primary school in the same faculty. She has been teaching in a variety of courses in the educational field of the competition in different bachelor and master degree programmes in FESA, SU, including lecturing in mathematics education in primary school, information technology in education, multimedia technologies in education; and conducting seminars in the same courses, as well as seminars in information technology education in primary school. She has also been teaching in the first accredited distance education programme “ICT in Education” of the Faculty of Pedagogy, SU, for three years now.

The candidate has prepared and is constantly updating the content and the curricula of a number of courses in the professional field of the competition, in addition to which she has also designed and developed e-courses which are updated annually. She is also a co-author in several textbooks for university students, as well as a leading author of numerous textbooks and student books for primary school. Dr Aleksieva has been involved in many European and national research and developmental projects which scientific results and applied innovations she implements in her teaching.

##### **5. Comprehensive analysis of the applicant’s scientific and applied scientific achievements presented in the application documents**

Dr Aleksieva’s monography “Electronic Resources in Primary Education” presents the nature and characteristics of electronic resources for primary education exploring their specifics, practices for their implementation in education and the required competencies of primary teachers for using them. The book emphasises on the mathematics primary education. The other book included in the application papers “Educational Multimedia for Learning Tabular Division and Multiplication”, which is based on the doctoral thesis of Dr Aleksieva, focuses on the educational potential of multimedia as an instructional tool for learning tabular multiplication and division in the second grade of primary school. The two studies published in edited volumes explore the same topic and their research results are integrated into this book.

Scientific issues that the candidate reviews and researches in her articles published in scientific journals indexed in international databases, are related to the usage of e-resources by primary teachers. In six of her papers the emphasis is on the e-assessment and the trust in it. Research in this field is related to Assistant Professor Dr Lyubka Aleksieva involvement as a Pilot Leader in the international EC Horizon 2020 project: TeSLA – An Adaptive Trust-based e-assessment System for Learning.

Aleksieva's papers published in scientific peer-reviewed journals are in the field of blended learning and virtual synchronous teaching, including the international standards for quality and accessibility of e-content. These researches has served as a basis for her monography "Electronic Resources in Primary Education". Dr Aleksieva also has two publications in collaboration with students which explore the specifics of integration of ICT in primary education.

The candidate presents a detailed reference for citations of her publications, supported by corresponsive evidences for 16 citations, 3 of which are in indexed journals (1 indexed in Web of Science and 2 indexed in Scopus).

## **6. Critical notes and recommendations**

I do not have any critical comments on the work and papers, presented by Dr Aleksieva in her application. The submitted documents are well arranged and properly represent her achievements.

## **7. Personal impressions**

I remember Lyubka Aleksieva as an excellent student in her undergraduate education in FESA, SU, but mostly as an outstanding student in the master degree programme „Information Technology in Primary Education” which I was supervising. Even now I am excited to review the first programme products – educational multimedia on “Selected Mathematics Issues”, designed and developed by her and to read her first publications in the conference proceedings of Fall Scientific Conferences of the Faculty of Primary and Preschool Education (now FESA). The topic about educational multimedia has become her favourite research topic and it has expanded in the research of the potential of educational software in mathematics education in

which she developed and defended her doctoral thesis. The development of this topic as well as the development of Assistant Professor Dr Aleksieva are still in progress. For the current competition she has prepared two new professionally written monographic books – one for educational multimedia and the other for electronic resources in primary school education.

Lyubka Aleksieva is helpful and respected colleague, an excellent teacher, author of up-to-date textbooks and an enthusiastic researcher with scientific interest in implementation of ICT in mathematics education. In the prospective associate professor Dr Aleksieva I see a scientist who gives a real expression of the idea of providing mathematics education in primary school not through teaching, but through re-creating mathematics.

### **8. Conclusion for the application**

After reviewing the documents and scientific works presented for the competition and analysing their significance and scientific and applied contributions, **I confirm** that the candidate scientific achievements comply with the legal requirements (ЗРАСРБ, ППЗРАСРБ, ПУРПННСЗАДСУ) for the academic position Associate Professor in the scientific and professional field of the competition. The candidate meets the minimum national requirements for the professional field and no plagiarism has been identified in the submitted papers.

Therefore, my evaluation to Aleksieva application is **positive**.

### **II. GENERAL CONCLUSION**

Based on the above information, **I strongly recommend the scientific jury to propose to the Council of the Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, to approve the application of Assistant Professor Dr Lyubka Krasteva Aleksieva for the academic position “Associate Professor” in the professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Mathematics and Information Technology in Primary Education.**

13.02.2020 г.

Sofia

Reviewer: .....

Prof. Dr. Zdravko Lalchev