

# OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Dr Nikolay Ivanov Tsanev,  
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on the application documents submitted for the competition for the occupation of the academic position "Associate Professor" in Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" (SU)

Field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences

Professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Mathematics and Information Technology in Primary Education

The competition for the occupation of academic position "Associate Professor" is announced in the State Gazette - issue. 93, 26 November 2019 and on the SU website, for the needs of Primary Education Department of the Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts (FESA). Only one application was submitted for the announced position by Chief Assistant Professor Dr Lyubka Krasteva Aleksieva, FESA, SU.

## 1. General description of presented application documents

In accordance with Order №ПД 38-6/09.01.2020 of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" I have been assigned as a member of the scientific jury for the competition for the occupation of the academic position "Associate Professor" in Field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, Professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Mathematics and Information Technology in Primary Education, for the needs of the needs of Primary Education Department.

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

The submitted set of documents by the only candidate comply with the requirements of the Regulations on the Terms and Conditions for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Occupying Academic Positions in Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" and it includes:

1. CV
2. Higher Education Degree Diploma
3. Doctoral Degree Diploma
5. Document for academic position
6. Certificate of professional experience
7. Documents proving the fulfilment of the requirements of art. 105, para. 1, item 2
10. Lists of publications

a/ list of all publications

b/ list of publications presented for the competition

11. Reference from SU Author system

12. Reference for the implementation of the minimum national requirements for the corresponding professional field and the additional requirements of SU “St. Kliment Ohridski”

13. Citations reference

14. Reference for the original scientific results and achievements

15. Reference for the indicators of art. 112, para. 2 with relevant evidences

16. Copies of scientific papers presented for the application

17. Abstracts of the reviewed papers in Bulgarian and English languages

18. Copy of the announcement in the State Gazette.

The candidate Dr Lyubka Aleksieva has presented a total of 20 scientific works of which 1 monography (the main habilitation work), 1 book (based on the applicant’s doctoral thesis), 2 studies published in edited volumes, 10 papers published in scientific journals indexed in internationally-recognized databases, 6 papers published in peer-reviewed scientific journals.

The scientific works of Lyubka Aleksieva comply with the minimum national requirements (under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ЗПАССБ) and also with the additional requirements of SU “St. Kliment Ohridski” for occupation of academic position “Associate Professor” in the scientific filed of the competition, as it is seen in the table below:

Indicators Group	Content	Required points (according to the minimum national requirements for Associate Professor)	Candidate points
A	Indicator 1	50	50
Б	Indicator 2	0	0
В	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
Е	Sum of indicators from 12 to the end	0	–

It should be noted that the scientific papers submitted by the applicant do not repeat those of previous procedures for the acquisition of a scientific degree and academic position. There is no plagiarism proven in the scientific works presented for the competition.

2. Short biography of the candidate

Chief Assistant Professor Dr Lyubka Krasteva Aleksieva graduated in 2006 with a bachelor degree in Primary Education with English as a Foreign Language and in 2008 with a master degree in Information Technology in Primary Education in FESA, SU. In 2014 she successfully completed her doctoral study and obtained a doctoral degree in professional field 1.3 Pedagogy in Mathematics in Primary Education. During her doctoral education in 2013 she participated and successfully completed a specialization for doctoral students in the field of pedagogical research at the Institute of Education, London University. Later, in a postgraduate professional development programme she was certified as a “specialist in design and delivery of online education”.

As an excellent teacher and specialist in e-learning and distance learning, Dr Aleksieva develops individually and in a team, a number of courses related to the disciplines she teaches, namely Pedagogy of Mathematics, Information and Communication Technologies in Primary Education, ICT in Education and Work in Digital Environments, etc. She is also one of the teachers and participants in the first accredited master degree distance education program at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” – “ICT in Education” of the Faculty of Pedagogy. Since 2015 Chief Asst. Prof. Lyubka Aleksieva is an expert and technical assistant at the Centre for Distance Education (CDE) of Sofia University.

Her overall activities as a faculty member and an expert serve as a basis for an excellent evaluation of her qualities and professional experience related to the announced competition.

### 3. General characteristics of candidate’s activity

The monography which is presented as a habilitation work, is a comprehensive study of electronic resources in the field of modern primary education. Early in its preface, Ch. Asst. Prof. Dr Lyubka Aleksieva pointed that: "Digitization in Bulgarian education and worldwide is a slow but inevitable process that affects different aspects of the educational field." This finding is completely true and the attempt to investigate this problem by researching electronic resources in pedagogical science is very relevant. It is necessary to acknowledge the good competence of the author and her cognition of the state of the art in Bulgaria and worldwide.

The author of the reviewed monograph notes that there is a lack of research about e-resources (ER) and their nature, characteristics, specifics and relevance of application in education. Moreover, the issue about the use of electronic resources is also studied in relation to university preparation of future teachers, to the work of university professors, and to the quality of electronic resources as well as to other current aspects.

The research questions of the monograph are clearly specified, which gives the reader a good orientation. In this regard it should be mentioned that in the development of the scientific plot, the

author begins with a theoretical study and analysis of the nature of electronic resources as a phenomenon (part 1.), then she traces the overall picture of the attitudes of the primary teachers on the use of electronic resources in primary education through accomplishing an empirical study (part 2).

The monograph of Ch. Asst. Prof. Lyubka Aleksieva is distinguished by her own scientific research style in exploring current educational issues and phenomena. Her interpretations are not related to superficial and elementary implications and conclusions. Different perspectives are presented. Scientific ethics and tolerance for differences are evident. The complexity and multifactoriality of the studied processes and phenomena are taken into account. In this context, a competency model is designed for assessing the competencies of the surveyed primary teachers in the study and defining the deficits and needs in teacher preparation related to acquiring necessary competencies to work with the ER.

The main contributions could be summarized as follows:

1. A broad theoretical presentation (review) of the nature and specifics of educational ER has been made.

2. Criteria for the quality of electronic resources for primary education are presented - a very strong author's point in the monograph.

3. Author's competency model has been developed to assess the competencies of primary teachers in both using and modifying and creating electronic resources.

4. Primary teachers' opinions and views are surveyed in terms of their competencies in working with ER.

5. The use of ER in mathematics is emphasised as a teacher-preferred school subject for working with ER.

6. A survey of nearly five hundred primary teachers was conducted to explore their attitudes, practices and competencies.

The monograph "Electronic Resources in Primary Education" authored by Ch. Asst. Prof. Dr Lyubka Aleksieva is distinguished by a rich scientific apparatus, important conclusions for contemporary theory and practice, directly oriented to the use of ER in the education of students from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grades, and the empirical research of attitudes and practices of teachers to use ER in their work. The monography text is very readable, the descriptions are clear and specific, a large database of literature sources on the subject is accurately researched.

4. Assessment of the applicant's personal contribution

All of the submitted papers respond to the profile of the competition and I can confidently confirm their authenticity.

#### 5. Critical comments and recommendations

I have no critical notes or recommendations. I recommend Dr Aleksieva to continue to persistently develop and improve her knowledge in the scientific fields that she have chosen.

#### 6. Personal impressions

The scientific papers submitted for review reflect the candidate's qualities in an indisputable way. My overall impressions of Dr Aleksieva's work and attitude are excellent. She is an exceptionally capable and ambitious young person who fully meets the requirements of the competition she is applying for.

#### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I can responsibly state that in the scientific work of Ch. Asst. Prof. Dr Lyubka Aleksieva there are enough scientific and applied scientific contributions. The documents and materials presented by her meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ЗПАССБ), the Regulations for the implementation of ЗПАССБ and the Regulations of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

The candidate has submitted a sufficient number of scientific papers published after the defence of her doctoral thesis. The candidate's works include original scientific and applied scientific contributions that are nationally and internationally recognised as part of them are published in scientific journals and edited volumes in our country and abroad. Much of L. Aleksieva's production is directly oriented to academic work. Her scientific and teaching qualifications and experience cannot be questioned.

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works presented for this competition, and the analysis of their significance and their scientific, applied scientific and applied contributions, I consider it quite reasonable to give my positive assessment and to recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to The Faculty Council of the Faculty of Educational Studies and Arts for the election of Ch. Asst. Prof. Dr Lyubka Aleksieva for the academic position of Associate Professor in the field of higher education: 1. Pedagogical Sciences, Professional Field 1.3. Pedagogy of Mathematics and Information Technology in Primary Education at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

19.03.2020

Sofia

Reviewer: .....

(Assoc. Prof. Dr Nikolay Tsanev)