

## REVIEW

from Assoc. Prof. Milena Mutafchieva, PhD  
Associate Professor in professional field 3.2. Psychology (Developmental  
Psychology)  
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on scientific publications for participation in a competition for the academic  
position of associate professor in a professional field 3.2. Psychology  
(Experimental Psychology and Psychodiagnostics), published in the State  
Gazette, no. 24 of 17.03.2023 for the needs and for a full-time position in  
the Department "General, Experimental, Developmental and Health  
Psychology" at the Faculty of Philosophy.

with candidate assistant professor Aneta Petrova Atanasova, PhD

### I. Assessment of compliance with minimum national requirements

The candidate Assistant Professor Aneta Atanasova, PhD meets the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position "associate professor" in professional field 3.2. Psychology, formulated in the Regulations on the Implementation of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act. The applicant's self-assessment report is completed comprehensively and informatively and is supported by the necessary bibliographic description of publications and citations.

### II. Applicant data

Assist. Prof. Aneta Atanasova, PhD graduated from the Bachelor's Program in Psychology and Master's Program with two specializations in Clinical and Counselling Psychology and in Developmental, Educational and Cultural Psychology at the Department of General, Experimental and Genetic Psychology of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". In 2005,

she defended her dissertation on "Identification of specific disorders of learning ability in primary school age" in scientific specialty 05.05.01 "General Psychology".

Since 2000 Aneta Atanasova has been working as a lecturer, in 2002 she was appointed as an assistant professor, and since 2006 she started working as a senior assistant professor in the Department of General, Experimental, Developmental and Health Psychology of the Faculty of Philosophy of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

### III. Research activities and results

Assist. Prof. Aneta Atanasova, PhD applied for the academic position of Associate Professor in the professional field 3.2. Psychology with one major monographic book:

1. Atanasova, A. (2018). *Diagnosis and assessment of autism spectrum disorders*. Sofia. Kliment Ohridski.

The additional publications are a book based on a defended dissertation and 18 other publications.

#### 1. Evaluation of the monographic work, including an assessment of the scientific contributions of the author

The monograph, *Diagnosis and Assessment of Autism Spectrum Disorders*, listed as the major paper for the competition, is 470 pages in length and uses literature from over 290 sources. It is an extremely insightful work on diagnosis, the specifics of autism across life span, methods, domains, and tools for assessing autism, and building a treatment plan. The book is highly engaging and thorough, presenting numerous case studies of people with autism from around the world and in Bulgaria, describing examples of autism in broader contexts such as fairy tales and movies, and at the same time containing all the qualities of a wonderful guide to research and psychological practice in the field.

Of the many contributions of this monograph, I would like to draw attention to the following:

- The thorough systematic review of theoretical approaches and tools for the diagnosis and assessment of autism
- The highly detailed description of the psychological assessment of different abilities and areas of functioning in autism spectrum disorders

- A practical guide for developing a treatment plan and therapeutic interventions for psychological work with children and youth with autism spectrum disorders.

## 2. Evaluation of contributions in the other attached publications

The other attached publications, with which Aneta Atanasova participated in this competition, are a book based on a defended dissertation, 1 article in a refereed and indexed in the world databases journal, 6 articles in non-refereed journals, two of them in English, 4 publications in the proceedings of the National Psychology Congress, 6 published in the yearbooks and collections of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", one chapter of a collective monograph in English and one article in the Bulgarian Journal of Psychology. Eleven of the publications are independent and 8 are co-authored.

The attached publications clearly show the consistent research interests of the candidate, which can be summarised mainly in several areas. The first concerns the diagnosis, therapy of autism, specific problems such as naming and self-naming (Hancheva et al., 2022; Atanasova et al., 2022; 2021; Atanasova, 2017a; 2017b; 2016; 2015; 2010). The second area concerns mental health in pregnant women and mothers of young infants, as well as difficulties and positive aspects of continued breastfeeding (Hancheva et al., 2022a; 2022b; Atanasova, 2014; 2011a; 2011b; Atanasova, 2016), and the third relates to specific learning needs and inclusive education (Atanasova 2018; 2006; Atanasova & Yosifova, 2019; Atanasova et al., 2012). One of the articles with a different topic addresses the alienation of the child from the non-custodial parent (Valkova et al., 2019).

## 3. Citations

The citations of the candidate's scientific works exceed the minimum required for the academic position of Associate Professor in PF 3.2. Psychology, formulated in the Regulations on the Implementation of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act. Two of the citations are in journals indexed in world-renowned databases, 3 of the citations are in monographs and collective volumes, and the remaining 11 are in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals.

#### IV. Evaluation of the results of participation in research and creative projects and application of the results in practice

Aneta Atanasova has participated in 2 research projects, which are attached to this competition. The first one investigates the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health and the organization of psychological support, and the second one to interventions for social inclusion of adults and youth with autism spectrum disorder.

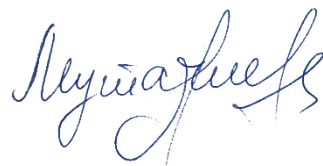
#### V. Teaching Activities

Assist. Prof. Aneta Atanasova has an extremely rich teaching experience in the field of Child and Adolescent Psychology, Diagnostics of developmental disorders, Experimental Psychology.

Unfortunately, I cannot share personal impressions of the candidate and her teaching, as I do not know her in this role.

#### VI. Conclusion

Assist. Prof. Aneta Atanasova, PhD is a lecturer with great experience and research potential. I find her to be an exceptionally suitable candidate for the position advertised in this competition. Her candidature meets the requirements of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act. I recommend the members of the esteemed jury to propose her for election by the Faculty Council to the advertised post of Associate Professor in Professional Field 3.2. Psychology (Experimental Psychology and Psychodiagnosics).



Sofia

Assoc. Prof. Milena Mutafchieva, PhD

08.08.2023