

**TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SCIENTIFIC JURY,
DETERMINED BY ORDER No. RD-38-500/24.08.2022
OF THE RECTOR OF SU "ST. KLEMENT OHRIDSKI"**

S T A T E M E N T

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Elected as a member of the scientific jury

Regarding: Conducting a competition for the occupation of the academic position "**Associate Professor**" in a field of higher education 4. Natural sciences, mathematics and informatics, professional direction 4.3. Biological Sciences (Human Biology) announced for the needs of the Department of "Biology, Medical Genetics and Microbiology" at the Faculty of Medicine, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". The competition was announced in the State Gazette, issue 48 of 28.06.2022, according to the Order of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

A candidate for the announced competition

One candidate participated in the competition - **Lyudmila Filipova Belenska - Todorova**, PhD in Immunology, Chief Assistant Professor in the Department of "Biology, Medical Genetics and Microbiology" at the Faculty of Medicine at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

The procedure for the disclosure and announcement of the competition has been followed. The required complete set of administrative documents was presented, as the documents were prepared by the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its application and the internal regulations of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski".

I. Analysis of the candidate's career profile

1. Education and qualification

The candidate Lyudmila Filipova Belenska - Todorova completed **her higher education** at the Faculty of Biology of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in 2006, majoring in "Molecular Biology" and obtained a master's degree in "Microbiology and Microbiological Control". In 2006, Lyudmila Belenska - Todorova received a post-graduate qualification, "Teacher of Biology", from the Faculty of Biology of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski".

After a three-year post-graduate qualification, in 2011 - 2014, at the Faculty of Medicine of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski", the candidate acquired a specialty in Medical Biology. In 2016, after successfully defending a dissertation on the topic: "Role of complement in the processes of joint destruction in experimental models of arthritis", she was awarded the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Philosophy" in the scientific specialty "Immunology" at the Stefan Angeloff Institute of Microbiology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

2. Work experience and specializations

Immediately after completing her higher education, she worked as a correspondent for a short period. She conducted conversations with Bulgarian and foreign sales representatives in the sale of

professional, home and car sound equipment and musical instruments. The candidate Lyudmila Belenska – Todorova, has 14 years of work experience in the specialty. In 2008, he started working as an Assistant Professor in Human Biology at the Department of Biology, Medical Genetics and Microbiology at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski". For nine years, he held the position of Assistant Professor, and from 2017 to the present, within five years, he held the position of Chief Assistant Professor in the same Department. In parallel with her main employment contract, Lyudmila Belenska - Todorova worked on a second employment contract, from November 2008 to January 2019, as a medical specialist in Medical Biology at Lozenets Hospital. From April 2019 to the present, she has been a technical associate in the Laboratory of Molecular Diagnostics, Microbiology, Virology, Parasitology and Genetics at the Medical Faculty of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski".

She completed specializations related to professional development at Tor Vergata University, Rome, Italy and at the Medical Faculty of the University of Cologne, Germany.

II. Assessment of teaching and learning activities

Chief Assistant Professor Lyudmila Belenska - Todorova is an experienced university teacher, and in the last five years, she has conducted over 1200 hours of exercises in "Human Biology" for students majoring in "Medicine". And over 600 hours of exercises in "Human Biology" with English-speaking students from the "Medicine in English" specialty at the Faculty of Medicine of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski. She lectures and conducts exercises in "Microbiology, Parasitology and Virology" for students majoring in Nursing. Participates in preparing exam test questions, conducts preparatory courses, and evaluates applicants' works for the specialty "Medicine in English". Deputy Chairman of the examination committee for assessing applicants' results for the specialty "Medicine" at the Faculty of Medicine of the SU "St. Kliment Ohridski".

III. Assessment of the candidate's scientific publications for the overall academic development

Chief Assistant Professor Lyudmila Belenska – Todorova presents herself, in her academic development to date, with a total of 11 scientific publications in refereed journals, 8 in non-refereed editions, five book chapters, one published book based on a defended dissertation and two monographs. Total impact factor 27.103, individual impact factor 2.71, H-index 3.

To participate in the current competition, the candidate applied eight scientific publications in refereed editions for 2015 - 2022. Of these, two publications are in journals that fall into the first quartile (Q1), two articles are printed in journals that fall into Q2, three publications are in journals with Q3, and one of the publications is in a refereed journal on *Web of Science* but without a quartile.

According to the attached general reference for citations, it can be seen that nine of the scientific publications of Chief Assistant Professor Ludmila Belenska – Todorova are cited 37 times in journals indexed in WoS and Scopus (indicator D).

IV. Brief description of the presented scientific works/publications

The scientific works presented in the competition in connection with the publication activity of Chief Assistant Professor Lyudmila Belenska – Todorova are mainly in five scientific, scientific-applied and methodological directions. Most scientific works aim to analyze the mechanisms of acute and chronic inflammation in the field of Immunology. A model of septic shock was chosen, and the

cellular and molecular mechanisms involved in its development were analyzed. The fundamental nature of the research allows for studying the expression of different molecules on cell populations involved in sepsis. The goal is to find quick and adequate therapeutic approaches to limit the damage that acute inflammation inflicts on the body.

Research on inflammatory joint diseases contributes to elucidating the mechanisms of bone destruction and remodelling. In osteoimmunology, several experiments have been carried out in mouse models of rheumatoid and osteoarthritis, and patient samples have been taken to study the mechanisms of chronic inflammation. Part of the analysis aims to investigate the effect of used hormones in the development of arthrosis during assisted reproduction procedures. The research is used in practice, as they are the basis for developing new therapeutic approaches to prevent and treat inflammatory diseases.

Essential for clinical practice is the search for rapid methods for diagnosing genetic diseases and selecting their adequate, timely treatment. One part of the attached scientific publications analyzed the similarities and differences of the specific dermatoglyphic skin marks on the fingertips and palms of mono- and dizygotic twins. Data from these studies clarify whether phenotypic and genotypic differences exist between twins.

A substantial part of the presented scientific works aims to improve medical students' educational process at the Faculty of Medicine of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski". The research in the works presented for the competition is in areas included in the training program in the discipline "Human Biology". This makes the given data applicable in the competent practical and theoretical training of medical students and in the supervision of medical biology specialists.

The study of anatomical features in humans is of interest, which is important for medical practice and especially in the field of surgery.

V. Participation in projects and scientific and creative achievements

Lyudmila Belenska – Todorova was the head of one project and a member of the working groups of 2 projects financed purposefully from the state budget; she participated in 3 projects financed by the National Science Fund (NSF). She was a member of the target group under project / Contract No. BG051PO001-3.3.06-0040 "Building interdisciplinary teams of young researchers in the field of fundamental and applied scientific research relevant to medical practice" carried out with the financial support of the Operational Program "Development of human resources", co-financed by the European Social Fund of the European Union.

Lyudmila Belenska – Todorova is a member of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria and the Society of Medical Biology in Bulgaria.

VI. Fulfillment of the requirements for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor"

The scientific asset and scientometric indicators of the candidate for Associate Professor cover and exceed the minimum national requirements (indicators D and E from the attached table) and meet all the conditions for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor" in the Faculty of Medicine of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski". The candidate submits evidentiary material according to indicator E (150 points) for participation in national and international scientific projects and, according to this indicator, even meets the criteria for AP "Professor".

GROUP OF INDICATORS	CONTENTS	Mandatory quantitative criteria for holding the academic position "Associate Professor"	Scientometric indicators of Chief Assistant Professor Lyudmila Belenska – Todorova
A	1. Dissertation for educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Philosophy"	50	50
V	3. Habilitation thesis - monograph	100	100
G	5. A published monograph that is not presented as the main habilitation thesis. 6. A published book based on a protected dissertation work for the award of an educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Philosophy" or for the award of a scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences". 7. Scientific publication in publications that are referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information (Scopus and Web of Science), outside of the habilitation work. 8. Published book chapter or collective monograph.	Total: 200	Total: 265
D	11. Citations in scientific publications, monographs, collective volumes and patents, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information (Web of Science and Scopus).	50	74
E	14. Participation in a national scientific or educational project. 15. Participation in an international scientific or educational project. 16. Management of a national scientific or educational project.	–	Total: 150

VII. Conclusion

In conclusion, I state that Chief Assistant Professor Lyudmila Belenska – Todorova has many years of experience as a teacher and researcher, possesses the necessary theoretical and methodological training, language skills and computer literacy, has given sufficient evidence of a built scientist-biologist and meets the mandatory and specific conditions and scientometric criteria for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor".

Based on the above and in accordance with the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Rules for its Implementation and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the Faculty of Medicine of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski". I recommend to the esteemed Scientific Jury to propose a Chief Assistant Professor Lyudmila Filipova Belenska - Todorova for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in Human Biology announced for the needs of the Department of "Biology, Medical Genetics and Microbiology" at the Faculty of Medicine of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski".

Prepared the statement,

Assoc. Prof. Dimitrinka Atanasova-Dimitrova, PhD

12.10.2022

Stara Zagora