

OPINION

on competition for an academic position

"associate professor"

of **"Methodology of training in physical education and sports - Fitness disciplines"**, in the field of university education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of training in ...

for the needs of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" (Sofia),

Department of Sports

The competition was announced in the Official Gazette, No 24 of 17.03.2023

The opinion was prepared by Full Prof. Iren Yordanova Peltekova, PhD

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski",

in the capacity of an internal SU member of the scientific jury for a competition according to Order No. RD 38-168 of 19.04.2023 of the Rector of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski"

To participate in the announced competition, the only candidate submitted documents:
chief assistant **Petya Stoyanova Hristova, PhD**

1. Application data

The documents presented in the competition from chief assistant Petya Stoyanova Hristova, PhD, comply with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Rules for the Implementation of the, and the Rules for the Terms and Conditions for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions in SU "St. Kliment Ohridski".

According to the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position "associate professor", the candidate participates in the competition with 405 points, with which he covers them in all points.

I have not found any proven plagiarism in the scientific works submitted for the competition.

The documents are carefully described and systematized, which greatly facilitates the evaluation of the submitted materials for participation in the competition.

2. Applicant data

Chief assistant Petya Hristova, PhD is a full-time lecturer in the Department of "Individual Sports and Recreation" at the Department of Sports at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" since 2015. In 2017, she defended a dissertation on the topic "*A model for increasing the effectiveness of aerobics training in higher education*" and obtained a PhD in the scientific field of "pedagogy", professional direction 1.3 Pedagogy of training in ... (Physical education and sports – aerobics), Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". She obtained his higher education – bachelor's and master's in 1996 at the "Vasil Levski" National Academy of Sports with the specialty "Physical Education Teacher and Sports Manager".

Petya Hristova holds an additional certificate for the specialty "Sports Journalism" with the qualification "Editor in the sports department of a newspaper, television and radio", which contributes to her competent work as the editor-in-chief of the Yearbook of the Sports Department of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" and member of the editorial board of the international journal Research in Kinesiology (RIK).

The candidate's professional development is helped by holding positions as a part-time lecturer at the discipline of "sport" - aerobics and callanetics in the Department of Sports of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" – 5 years; aerobics, callanetics and fitness instructor at "Al Wazzan" sports center, Manama, Bahrain - 1 year; aerobics, callanetics and fitness instructor at the "New Chance" sports center, Sofia - 1 year.

From 2021 chief assistant Petya Hristova, PhD, is the Head of the "Individual Sports and Recreation" Department and a member of the Council of the Department of Sports of SU. In the period 2018-2021, she is a member of the Attestation Commission of the Department of Sports. From 2022, she is an authorized representative of the Department of Sports of SU for National center for information and documentation.

She has an excellent command of the English language and uses it with ease in her work with students, in scientific conferences, international projects and all other activities that require its use. From the presented brief reference for chief assistant Petya Hristova, it is clear that the purposeful and consistent education has contributed to her professional realization, and all this is in sync with her participation in the announced competition for associate professor, as well as with scientific research, academic duties and teaching activities.

3. Teaching workload and coaching activity

The main study load of chief assistant Petya Hristova, PhD, is related to her work with students from profiled groups in the discipline "Sport". According to the presented report, the academic workload for the last five academic years (from 2016/2017 to 2021/2022) is 2950 academic hours or an average of 590 hours with a requirement of 360 hours per academic year. The lecture load is carried out both in the Bachelor's and Master's programs in various faculties and departments of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski", where her qualifications and competences are needed.

I find that the accumulated teaching experience is completely sufficient for acquiring the academic position of associate professor.

Upon entering the Department of Sports Petya Hristova began active work as a coach of the representative teams in aerobics and cheerleading sports of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski", with which she won a number of honors and awards in the national university championships. Her girls, from the cheerleading team, are indispensable participants in all sports activities of the Sports Department.

In the presented by chief assistant Petya Hristova, PhD references for educational and coaching activities show that she satisfies the formal requirements for this section. To this I would like to add my personal impressions from working together with my colleague Hristova. This is an extremely meticulous, executive, responsive and committed teacher. She works thoroughly and competently with students, and her colleagues can always count on her assistance.

4. General characteristics of the scientific works presented for the competition

The scientific works of chief assistant Petya Hristova PhD are related to the problems and perspectives of sports pedagogy and teaching methodology in the discipline "Physical Education and Sport" and fitness disciplines in the higher education system, university sports, mass sports, health-enhancing physical activity, physical culture as part of the general human culture, health culture, prevention and preservation of health.

In a quantitative aspect, the scientific works are presented in one monograph, three articles and reports published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in a world-famous database with scientific information (Web of Science) and 11 articles and reports published in non-refereed publications with scientific review or published in editorial collective volumes. All 15 presented scientific publications are in the field of the competition. By counting points (200) acquired from the scientific production are completely sufficient and cover the recommended criteria of minimum national requirements (MNR) for the awarding of the academic position "associate professor".

The monographic book entitled "*Purpose and potential of the study discipline "Physical education and sport" in the system of higher education in Bulgaria*" was published in 2021, contains 160 standard pages and was reviewed by two reviewers. The monograph is an original author's text with a theoretical and practical-applied character. It is the foundation work that has a significant contribution character. The emphasis is placed on the physical education part of it as an expression of the Bulgarian state policy regarding the prevention and preservation of the health of young people and the creation in them of beliefs, knowledge, skills and habits for a future healthy lifestyle. The contribution nature of the work is expressed in the fourth chapter of the book "Model for using the potential and improving the efficiency of the study discipline FES in the system of higher education in the Republic of Bulgaria". It presents the author's view on the content, the formation of the assessment and the means and methods for reporting the efficiency and results of the FES curriculum, as well as how to realize its symbiosis with state policy.

Articles and reports: All presented publications are assigned to the direction: physical education and sports in the educational system and in particular in higher education. The review of the content of the presented publications gives reason to single out important contributions to the theory and practice of pedagogy and teaching methodology in the discipline "Physical Education and Sport" in the higher education system in general and fitness disciplines in particular. Through them, the theory and practice of the study discipline "Physical Education and Sport" and the fitness disciplines are enriched and modernized. A strong side of the scientific production is its practical orientation related to the work with students from non-sport-specialized higher schools.

Chief assistant Petya Hristova participated in five projects - in two of them as a leader and in three as a participant. One project is international.

The total number of citations presented in reference No. 13 are 34, and for the competition, the candidate presented five. Two of these citations are in scientific publications, referenced and

indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information (Web of Science, Scopus), one is in a monographic work and the rest are in scientific Bulgarian publications.

5. Scientific contributions

From the scientific production of chief assistant Petya Hristova, PhD the following several contributions can be cited:

Theoretical contributions:

- A basic concept of the possibilities of physical education and sports as a study discipline in universities is derived, which can be used for prevention for physical and mental health, motor activity and the possibility of reducing diseases caused by obesity and chronic immobility. On this basis, the potential of the FES can be used in the universities of our country, which are already widely available to all who wish.
- A modern meaning of physical education and sport has been formed according to various programs and policies at the world, European and national level. An alarming discrepancy has been established, in the Bulgarian university reality, between the written documents on strategies and policies between the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Youth and Sports and what is actually happening in practice.
- The current state of physical fitness, activity and health status of young Bulgarians studying at universities in our country has been revealed.
- A comparative analysis of the actual status of the discipline FES in the curricula of the Bachelor's and Master's degrees in several Bulgarian universities is summarized and presented. The issues with assessment, ECTS - credits, the form in which is studied: compulsory, elective or optional and the number of study hours for the semesters are affected. This is a good basis that allows important and significant conclusions to be made about the long-term prospects of the physical education and sport in higher education in the Republic of Bulgaria.

Practical contributions:

- A comprehensive model has been created for using the potential and increasing the effectiveness of the curriculum of physical education and sports in the system of higher education in the Republic of Bulgaria, including the content, the formation of the assessment and the means and methods for reporting the effectiveness and its results, as well as and how to realize its symbiosis with the state policy expressed in (1). The Eurofit test battery has been modified and supplemented (with author's additions) (1, 9).
- An author's model has been created for the formation of the evaluation of the FES discipline in higher schools (1).
- The practical contribution is the use of the efficiency of fitness disciplines (in particular, aerobic complexes with different orientations) for the development of the physical qualities and functional capabilities of the body (7).
- With a high practical-applied contribution, I appreciate the physical activity model developed and applied in practice to improve and maintain correct posture, which can be

applied in the preparatory part of the FES lesson. The model includes 16 exercises, to which there are methodical instructions and the exercises are illustrated, which significantly helps to perform them correctly (1).

I believe that the author's report on contributions prepared chief assistant Hristova, PhD adequately recreates them.

6. Conclusion

With his scientific developments, chief assistant Petya Hristova, PhD makes a significant theoretical and practical contribution in the field of physical education training methodology - fitness disciplines. The educational and teaching activities and the topics of the publications are in full accordance with the topics of the announced competition. The candidate's scientific activity is up-to-date, applicable, academically well-presented and fully meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its application, as well as the Regulations of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" to acquire the academic position of "associate professor".

Based on the above, I believe that there are sufficient grounds to propose to the scientific jury **chief assistant Petya Stoyanova Hristova, PhD** to be elected to the academic position of **“associate professor”** in professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of training in **"Methodology of training in physical education and sport - Fitness disciplines"**, for the needs of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" (Sofia) and Department of Sports.

As a member of the scientific jury, I give my **positive** assessment of the application.

5 June 2023 г.

Prepared the opinion:

/Full Prof. Iren Yordanova Peltekova, PhD/