

EXPERT OPINION

for a competition procedure for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of Education) for the needs of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Faculty of Sciences for Education and Arts, Department of Social Pedagogy and Social Affairs

Submitted by:

Prof. Dr. Silvia Nikolaeva Nikolova

A single application has been submitted and approved for the competition, namely that of Assis. Prof. Dr. Alexander Ivanov Ranev, who is a full-time lecturer at the Faculty of Sciences for Education and Arts at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". After a procedure for checking the eligibility, by a decision of the respective Faculty Committee, He was allowed to participate in the contest.

1. Data analyzed in relation to compliance of the application with the minimum and additional requirements for the appointment to the academic position "Associate Professor".

It is evident from the submitted documentation that the application of Dr. Alexander Ranev fully complies with the requirements of the Law on Scientific Degrees and Titles, as well as with the Regulations of Sofia University on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying scientific positions at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", namely:

- The candidate in the competition has held the academic position of Chief Assistant at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" for 12 years since 2011. The service period of the academic position is been certified by presented copy of the Additional Agreement to the Employment Agreement from 10.11.2011.
- Since 23/06/2010 he has been awarded the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the same field of higher education and professional field (former specialty in the classifier of the Higher Attestation Commission 05.07.01. "Theory of Education and Didactics") as the current competition for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor".

- Dr. Alexander Ranev has presented a peer-reviewed monographic work in the field of the competition. The monograph does not repeat his previous publications presented thematically for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "Doctor".
- The candidate has submitted a common list of 15 original research works and publications, of which 14 on the profile of the competition, which is why in their totality they will be subject to review.
- The additional requirements of art. 112, para. (2), which are related to the teaching and teaching, research and artistic and creative activities of the candidate, are fully implemented (Annex 15).
- His application meets the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para 2 and 3 of the ZRASRB, and in accordance with the data from Annex 12A of the applicant the quantitative values by groups of indicators are as follows:

| | | |
|------------------------|-----|----------------------------------|
| Group of indicators A: | 50 | (at the required minimum of 50) |
| Group of indicators B: | 100 | (at the required minimum of 100) |
| Group of indicators G: | 300 | (at the required minimum of 200) |
| Group of indicators D: | 185 | (at the required minimum of 50) |
| Total: | 635 | (at the required minimum of 400) |

As can be seen from the presented data, on the two groups of indicators (groups G and D), where there is a possibility to achieve higher than the minimum required point scores, the candidate collects a total of 485 points, which is 235 points more than the minimum required 250 points (200+50 points).

The indicators of group A (50 points) assess the availability of a doctoral degree, which the candidate has successfully defended in 2010 on the topic "The Teacher as a Class Manager".

The indicators of group B (100 points) assess the availability of habilitation monographic work, as in this case is the published in 2022 with the title "Positive Education and Behavioral Change." Working with Children Induced Behavior" (University Press. ISBN: 978-954-07-5565-6). The work has a volume of 236 pages, with a scientific review by two habilitated reviewers and contains

an introduction, two sections and a list of the literature used. His more detailed review in terms of his contribution qualities will be presented in the next part of the document.

The indicators of group D (300 pts.) refer to the publication activity of the candidate in the competition, which in this case is quantitatively higher than set in the minimum requirements (200 pts). In the submitted documentation, Dr. Alexander Ranev has presented a complete list of his publications, which contains:

- 2 monographs;
- 5 articles and reports published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information;
- 4 articles and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes;
- 3 studies published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes; A published chapter of a collective monograph.

The reduced list of publications submitted for participation in the competition contains:

- a habilitation work;
- a published and peer-reviewed monograph work;
- 4 articles and reports published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information;
- 4 articles and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes;
- 3 studies published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes and one published chapter of a collective monograph.

The thematic distribution of publications is as follows:

| <i>Thematic and problematic fields</i> | <i>Publications numbers:</i> |
|---|------------------------------|
| Positive Approaches to Challenging Behavior | B 3-1; G6-3; G10-1 |
| Sunny Pedagogy | G4-1; G7-1; G9-2 |

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Classroom Management | G6-1 G6-2 |
| Non-formal education and social support | G6-4; G7-2 |
| Social services and upbringing | G7-3; G7-4; G9-1; G9-3 |

The thematic scope of the publications shows that they fully correspond to the profile of the competition.

With regard to the minimum requirements in Group D (185 points), the applicant has submitted a list of identified citations, which contains:

- Nine citations (90 pts.) Citations or reviews in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes (criterion D11);
- Nine citations (90 points) in non-refereed journals with scientific review (criterion D12);
- One citation (5 pts.) in non-refereed journals with scientific review.

The presented official statement of the lecturer employment of the applicant shows an extremely high level of employment, which many times exceeds both the required and the average for the university. A strong impression is making the information in his professional CV concerning the conducted university courses. At first glance, they cover broad thematic boundaries. At the same time, however, their closer analysis shows the value and meaningful relationships between them, especially in the direction of the profile of the current competition.

In summary, taking into account the minimum and additional requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor, I firmly believe that the applicant has presented indisputable evidence that his scientific and teaching activity and productivity fully satisfies, and in some respects exceeds these requirements. It is very significant that Dr. Ranev combines his scientific development with active practical and applied work and public participation.

2. Data on professional development, academic and expert activities of the applicant that are not directly covered by the minimum and additional requirements for appointment to the academic position "Associate Professor".

The presented by the applicant professional CV as well as the list of applications, including information about his teaching employment, concluded official contracts for scientific and research work, project developments and participation in qualification programs and courses provide valuable additional clarity on the real scale of the professional and personal growth achieved over the years.

The educational path and professional development of Alexander Ranev cover all basic levels of growth of a helping specialist and academic staff who has managed to combine his practical experience with corresponding research activities and active reflection in his university and non-university teaching practice.

Although the minimum national requirements for the scientific and teaching activities of the candidates for acquiring a degree and for occupying the academic positions "Associate Professor" do not officially include a group of indicators E (project participation), the reference presented by the applicant on the scientific contributions shows that there is also impressive experience in this field.

In the period 2012 – 2022, Alexander Ranev has participated in 12 research projects, one of which is the manager. He has presented his own sectional papers and poster presentations at five national and university conferences. As Chairman of the Inter-University Institute for Management of Education "InterAula" I have acquired direct positive impressions of his work as a member of the Management Board of the Association, with whose organizational life Dr. Ranev is extremely engaged and successful as an expert and leader of various project activities.

Along with his academic work as an assistant and chief assistant at the Faculty of Education Sciences and Arts, he also works as a psychologist at Protected Home "Together", by giving practical psychological, educational and socio-pedagogical support to young people at risk. The

success of his work in this field speaks both the duration of the position occupied for a period of more than 10 years and the strongly positive recommendation given by his immediate institutional leader.

Very impressive is the huge number of practical trainings and qualification programs in which Alexander Ranev has participated over the years, sharing through them his academic experience and vision. It is very valuable that these trainings are not self-serving or aimless, but always closely related to the topics of the areas in which the candidate can boast of high scientific and practical contributions. For example in the field of positive approaches and physical intervention to work with children with emotional and behavioral difficulties, which is the basis of his habilitation work, he has implemented 17 specialized trainings. As part of his work in the non-governmental sector (mainly at the Partners – Bulgaria Foundation), Dr. Alexander Ranev has also gained extensive lecturing experience by participating in 11 thematic training programs of the Foundation.

In summary, the candidate proves his readiness to occupy the habilitated academic position of "Associate Professor" not only through his scientific and publication activity and efficiency, but also through his large-scale and consistent engagement in parallel forms of pedagogical and socio-pedagogical work with different categories of target groups and users of educational services.

3. Assessment of the quality of the applicant's scientific input and scientific contributions

The review of the overall scientific and publication activity of Dr. Alexander Ranev impresses with several significant specifics.

First, in his work there is a very tangible and powerful value meaning of scientific and applied searches and interests. They cover and reflect the universal virtue and wisdom of an authentic (self) educational philosophy and practice like that of Peter Deunov, developed in a native Bulgarian context, but took over from the depth of the eternal life wisdom of humanity over the centuries. They go through the complex and challenging sociality of today's times and generations to identify

and instrumentalize innovative educational and socialization approaches and techniques through which problematic personal and social maturation can be returned to the normal gradually, being understood and supported.

Secondly, the scientific maturation that we find in the work of Alexander Raney, quite naturally corresponds and rationalizes his need to understand the depth of things through and through practical experience. Therefore, his topics and quests are a natural continuation of his practical roles, interests and challenges. This authentic connectivity between them gives his publications an impressive accessibility, intelligibility and persuasiveness, reaching a wide range of readers and users.

Thirdly, I would highlight his postmodern "reading" of the educational as an object of theoretical understanding and applied methodical instrumentalization. It shows the paradigm holistic nature and interdisciplinary approach, combined with a bright contextual significance and applicability, through which the natural synergy between education and re-education, socialization and resocialization, socio-pedagogical support and social work, personal and social maturation and development has been achieved.

Fourthly, it is worth mentioning especially the candidate's research determination to seek and offer working solutions to transform stereotypical assessments and perceptions of certain educational tools and tactics in the bosom of new value and philosophical paradigms that positively think and act even when working with children / persons with challenging behavior.

With regard to the scientific and applied contributions submitted by the candidate, they are objective and clearly focused on the most significant contribution moments.

All this facts and trends gives me grounds for a high quality assessment of his scientific and academic creativity and scientific contributions, which in their thematic scope, scientific originality, practical significance and applicability fully comply with the requirements for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor" under this competition.

4. Questions and recommendations

I have the following question to the candidate: How would you change the approaches for positive educational impact to challenging behavior if they were been redefined as stereotyped reflection of others to the behavioral extravagance (including difference) of children / faces, because of which they are perceived and treated as socially unattractive or undesirable?

5. Conclusion

Bearing in mind both the quantitative scientific-metric minimum and additional requirements for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor" and the qualitative analysis of the scientific production, activity and contributions of Dr. Alexander Ranev, I strongly support his candidacy under this competition and give my positive assessment of his scientific and applied scientific achievements.

16.06.2021

Reviewer:

Sofia

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