

OPINION

From: PROF. Dr. GALINA GEORGIEVA KURTEVA, Ph.D. "Social Management", professor in the professional field 3.7. "Administration and Management", Burgas Free University.

on the scientific works for participation in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.7. Administration and management, announced in SG No. 8 / 28.01.2022, with candidate **chief assistant Dr. Mariya Aleksandrova Ivanova**

Grounds for presenting the opinion: participation in the composition of the Scientific Jury of the competition according to Order № 3-PK-151 / 01.03.2022 of the Rector of NBU and decision of the first meeting of the Scientific Jury from 11.04.2022.

The opinion has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (RASRB), the Regulations for its implementation (PPZRASRB) and the Ordinance on the Development of Academic Staff at NBU.

The structure of the opinion corresponds to the template for the preparation of an opinion for holding an academic position "Associate Professor" at NBU.

I. Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University

One candidate participates in the announced competition - Chief Assistant. Dr. Maria Alexandrova Ivanova. The submitted documentation for the competition meets the requirements of the Law for development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (art. 2b) and the Regulations for its implementation (art. 1a, para 1), as well as the Ordinance for development of the academic staff in NBU 2, Edition 21 / 29.11.2021 in force from 23.12.2021).

As can be seen from the presented report - self-assessment, the candidate Chief Assistant Dr. Maria Alexandrova Ivanova fully meets the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the NBU for holding the position of "Associate Professor" at the NBU. The total number of points of the candidate (1652.5 points) on the evaluation indicators is significantly higher (almost three times) than the required minimum (570 points).

II. Research (creative) activity and results

. Assistant Professor Dr. Mariya Ivanova participates in the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.7. Administration and management in the NBU with:

- ✓ one monograph (habilitation thesis);
- ✓ a book published on the basis of a defended dissertation;
- ✓ 5 studies, one of which was published in a referenced and indexed scientific journal;
- ✓ 48 articles and reports, of which 34 are independent publications; and 2 articles have been published in refereed and indexed editions.
- ✓ 7 participations in collective monographs (developed individual chapters and topics).

Two articles and one study by Chief Assistant Dr. M. Ivanova have been published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information.

1. Evaluation of the monographic work, creative performances or other publications, corresponding in volume and integrity of the monographic work, including evaluation of the scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the author.

In the presented monograph on "Management of the employer brand in the XXI century - opportunities and limitations" Chief Assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova focuses on the management of the employer brand in order to effectively "sell" jobs and win the best candidates for work. According to the author, the task of the employer brand, like all marketing concepts, is to manipulate the minds of a large group of potential consumers in a certain direction. In this context, in her research she aims to define the limits of this manipulation and at the same time to reveal the specifics of the activities related to the management of the employer brand, taking into account the fact that this concept has already acquired new dimensions arising from digital technologies, changes in the values and attitudes of new generations, job seekers, and societal changes brought about by the globalization of business.

The results achieved by the author's research can be assessed as contributions of theoretical and practical nature. The main contribution of the monographic work should be noted the analysis of the labor market situation and the role of the employer brand in a country like Bulgaria, which has its own specifics and therefore there are significant differences between the conditions offered by elite Bulgarian companies and firms, owned by large international corporations, on the other hand companies that do not have large financial resources but good management, and thirdly small mostly family companies that are intuitively managed and offer wage and working conditions that have no motivating force. Theoretically, the introduction of the term "generalized employer brand" can be considered as a contribution of the author, when a set of desired characteristics is attributed to a group of employers and this is transferred to each company that belongs to the category.

Generalized employer brands, according to the author, are widespread among job seekers and employees who do not have a high economic culture and are more susceptible to general prejudices, for which there is not always real evidence. The habilitation work of Chief Assist. Dr. Mariya Ivanova has the merits of in-depth research with a certain practical focus.

The achieved results, the made summaries and conclusions are useful for researchers, managers, consultants, as well as for a wide range of readers who are interested in building a strong employer brand.

2. Evaluation of the contributions in the other attached publications (creative performances) made after the appointment of the academic position "Chief Assistant" or the academic position "Associate Professor" (for candidates for professor). It also includes an assessment of the peer review requirement.

The presented publications outside the habilitation work (61 in total) can be divided into several groups.

- *Human resource Management.* Publications in this group (group D, indicator 7 - № 1, № 3, № 5, № 9, №12, 15, № 16, № 17, №25, № 28, № 36, № 45; group D, indicator 10 - № 1) are dedicated to current and significant issues in the field of human capital development; human resources management in the organization, building motivation systems, systems for selection and certification of human resources; management of knowledge and information in the process of human resources training, systematization of the stages in the implementation of

the competence model in human resources management. Emphasis in the research work in this field, the candidate has placed on the specifics of talent management in the organization. In her publications (group D, indicator 7 -№13, № 14) she has substantiated the connection between the strong organizational culture and the attraction and retention of talents in the organization; identified the specifics of developing a strategy for talent management in the organization.

- *Leadership* (group D, indicator 7 -№ 2, № 18, № 20, № 21, № 26, № 30, № 32; group D, indicator 10 - № 6, № 7). In this group of publications, the results of the research and studies of the Chief Assistant can be defined as contributions. Dr. Maria Ivanova, related to the assessment of the organization's readiness for digital transformation and the role of the leader in this process; the proposed model of leadership competencies; the proposed methods for effective training of managers; the application of transformational learning in people with experience in achieving organizational leadership; the use of portfolio as a tool for managerial development; identified differences in leadership styles by gender.
- *Employer brand* (group D, indicator 7 - № 6, № 7, № 11, № 27) In this group of publications the emphasis is on the management of the employer brand. The systematized restrictions arising from the modern factors influencing the employer brand can be defined as contributions; comparative analysis of good practices in the use of the employer brand to attract talent; the identified stages in the process of creating an employer brand and the proposed indicators for measuring investment in an employer brand.
- *Corporate social responsibility*. In many of her publications (group D, indicator 6 - № 1, group D, indicator 7 - № 8, № 10, № 19, № 24, № 35, group D, indicator 9 - № 1, № 2; № 3 ; group D, indicator 8 - №1; group D, indicator 10 - № 2, № 3, № 4, № 5) Dr. Maria Ivanova examines current problems of modern organizations related to their social responsiveness, responsibilities and obligations. Some results of these studies can be assessed as contributions of theoretical and practical application: retrospective analysis of the development of the concept of "quadruple spiral", the definition and specific characteristics of the approach "quadruple spiral" and the presented opportunities for using the quadruple spiral approach to accelerate the transfer of innovative solutions in the field of social care in the regional chains in Bulgaria; guidelines for the implementation of EU policies and practices on ethnic tolerance in job selection; the identified guidelines for building a sustainable workplace with shared tolerance for diversity and diversity of people; effective methods of training men and women over the age of 65 ", the distinguished advantages and disadvantages of communication between men and women through virtual social networks; the opportunities for socio-economic integration of Roma.
- *Problems of higher education* (group D, indicator 5 № 1, group D, indicator 6 - № 2, group D, indicator 7 № 4, № 22, № 29, № 31, № 33, № 34, № 41, № 42, № 43, № 44; № 46; group D, indicator 9 № 4) In this group of publications the book of Dr. Maria Ivanova (2019) "Higher education in Bulgaria - institutional and financial aspects in the context of the European educational space ", published on the basis of her dissertation. In it, the author identifies the state of the institutional and financial subsystems of higher education in Bulgaria in relation to the requirements of the European educational area. Proposes and approves a system of indicators for quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the higher education system in institutional and financial aspects. Assess the opportunities for building highly developed and competitive higher education in Bulgaria, integrated into the European Higher Education Area. Recommends

models for forecasting the effectiveness of the work of higher education institutions. Proposes guidelines for improving the national strategy and policy for the development of the institutional and financial subsystem of higher education in Bulgaria. In the other publications in this group the following can be assessed as practical-applied contributions: the proposed guidelines for application of the coaching approach in the conditions of digital learning; the results of the study of the portfolio of adult distance learning teachers; web-based assessment and certification system; the results of the analysis of the experience of the New Bulgarian University in distance and e-learning in the field of human resources development.

Assessing the totality of the publications of Chief Assistant Dr. Mariya Ivanova, it can be summarized that they are all in thematic areas of the announced competition - Administration and Management. In the presented scientific production there are own scientific and scientific-applied contributions, evaluated by the practice and in the expert activity of the candidate. The presented scientific production does not repeat that for the acquisition of ONS "Doctor" and the academic position " Chief Assistant " .

3. Citation from other authors.

The required number of citations are certified by a reference from the Book Center, NBU Library. Among the verified sources are 20 references to publications by Dr. Maria Ivanova, of which 14 are self-citations. One of her publications is cited in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases (Group E, indicator 11 № 1). The candidate meets the requirements.

4. Evaluation of the results of participation in research and creative projects and application of the obtained results in practice.

The candidate Chief Assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova reports participation in 5 national projects (group E, indicator 16) and 3 international projects (group E, indicator 17). He is the leader of one of the international projects (group E, indicator 17 - № 6).

She participated in the preparation of the Memorandum of Development (the positive concept). The memorandum was prepared on the basis of academic events, forums, seminars and conferences held in 2018/2019. and dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the first BA / MBA programs in Bulgaria.

My general assessment of the research activity of Chief Assistant Dr. Mariya Ivanova is positive.

III. Teaching and learning activities

The candidate for the competition is a full-time lecturer at NBU. Based on the reference for long-term attestation (for the period 2013/14/2019/2020) it can be seen that Chief Assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova repeatedly fulfills the standards for classroom and extracurricular employment. As a senior assistant in the Department of Administration and Management, Dr. Maria Ivanova has developed and improved the content of courses (indicator 31 of the self-assessment card) in bachelor's and master's programs:

- MP Management and development of human resources in Bulgarian and English in full-time and distance learning;
- MP Management for organizational excellence in full-time and distance learning;
- MP Business Administration DO;
- BP Business and Entrepreneurship Management;
- BP Applied foreign languages for administration and management (in English and a second foreign language).

For the purposes of the training she has published in textbook and electronic form independently one textbook and two textbooks (resource book). In co-authorship, Dr. Maria Ivanova has published three textbooks and one manual (group E indicator 20, 21). In Mudal space, Chief Assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova has published author's study materials on the programs "Human Capital and Talent Management"; Labor relations management (labor valuation and remuneration); "Business Context and Human Resource Management". He teaches in many foreign language courses (reference in the Electronic Catalog of Curricula of NBU).

For the analyzed period Chief Assistant Dr. Mariya Ivanova has been the research supervisor of 23 students, has prepared 53 reviews and has participated in 14 examination commissions. (Group 3, indicator 38).

Her teaching activity is evaluated positively by the students. For the last 5 years the average assessment of the students for the satisfaction with the courses of the chief assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova is 4.35 out of a maximum of 5 (according to a Report from the Center for Quality and Evaluation and a Report from an e-lecturer: Monitoring - surveyed students).

In her teaching activity, Chief Assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova actively participates in providing practical training for students (Group H, Indicator 39 № 1, № 2, № 3, № 4, № 5) and other creative events - "Training companies" (Group H, Indicator 40 - № 2, № 3, № 4, № 5, № 6). Together with the students she conducts a number of studies, the results of which she presents at national and international conferences (Group H, Indicator 37 - № 1, № 2, № 3).

Chief Assistant Dr. Mariya Ivanova has given public lectures to international students Rovaniemi, Finland (2017); before the academic community of NBU (2021) she was a moderator and methodologist); she was a lecturer on ERASMUS + TEACHING ACTIVITIES (2018, 2019); She participated as a moderator and methodologist in the WP2 conference "Survey of the main renewable energy sources in RES in the cross-border region Constanta-Dobrich", Kranevo, under the project Green Energy Cluster "Constanta - Dobrich" 47313 / 26-06.2014, MIS ETC 328 2014/15 Autumn.

To improve and expand her teaching skills and knowledge, Chief Assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova is actively involved in the training programs of the teaching and administrative staff of NBU (Group I, indicator 42; Information from the Center for Career Development and Training Resources).

All this gives me reason to appreciate Chief Assistant. Dr. Mariya Ivanova as an established lecturer, responsible and correct lecturer. Her teaching and teaching activities are categorically related to the subject of the competition, and the accumulated teaching experience is completely satisfactory for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management.

IV. Administrative and public activities

In administrative terms, Chief Assistant Dr. Mariya Ivanova has been engaged in the work of a number of commissions at NBU - member of the Accreditation Commission at FDENO and MoF as a Program Consultant of the Ministry of Justice "Human Resources Management and Development - in Bulgarian", Human Resources Management and Development - in English, Management for Organizational Excellence in the period 2014-2015 and the period 2019-2020; tobacco to BF. In the period 2000-2013. was Head of the Education Department at the School of Management at NBU. In the period 2013-2020 she is Program Director / Consultant of BP "Administration and Management - module Management and Development of the Organization", MP Management for Organizational Excellence - full-time and distance learning, MP Management and Development of Human Resources in Bulgarian - RO and DO, MP Management and development of human resources in English - RO and DO. She was a member of committees for admission of prospective students and was actively involved in activities to attract prospective students.

Chief Assistant Dr. Mariya Ivanova actively participates in the development and launch of bachelor's and master's programs at NBU.

The candidate in the competition conscientiously performs her academic duties (participates in the regular meetings of departmental / program councils), observes the reception time as a lecturer and conducts her classes regularly.

She has actively participated in organizing and conducting scientific events, workshops, scientific seminars, training seminars, practical and applied seminars, student discussion forums, public lectures at NBU.

The candidate in the competition for "Associate Professor" Chief Assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova has been a member and is currently a member of a number of national and international organizations - the European Society for Research on Adult Education (ESREA) since 2009; ESREA **Network** on Gender and Adult Learning; ESREA Network on Adult Educators, Trainers and their Professional Development; European Distance and E-learning Network (EDEN) from 2006 to the present; Bulgarian Association for People Management and Development (BFSA); Bulgarian Association for Development of Society, Culture and Education (BAROCCO) since 2010; Balkan Association for Regional Initiatives (B.A.R.I.) since 2012; Early Childhood Development Association since 2011.

In other words, with the administrative and public activity of Chief Assistant. Dr. Maria Ivanova contributes to the development and improvement of the educational process in various master's and bachelor's programs at NBU.

V. Personal impressions of the candidate (if any)

I have known Mariya Ivanova since 2006 from participation in scientific conferences. My personal impressions are that she is characterized by strong business acumen, high competence, correctness and a sense of responsibility in the performance of her official and personal commitments.

VI. Opinions, recommendations and notes on the activities and achievements of the candidate

I do not have specific critical remarks on the content of the scientific works of Chief Assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova.

As a future associate professor, I recommend the Chief Assistant. Dr. Maria Ivanova to continue to combine her research and teaching work with that of an expert and consultant, to make targeted efforts to implement more publications in authoritative foreign refereed and indexed publications, which would provide her greater recognition and popularity in the scientific space.

With regard to her future teaching work, it is advisable to continue to develop and publish independent teaching materials (manuals and textbooks) in the disciplines she teaches.

Conclusion

In summary of the presentation so far, judging by the aggregate, it can be confidently stated that the candidate meets the requirements for the academic position of "Associate Professor" according to ZRASRB, the rules for its implementation and the requirements of NBU university.

With full conviction and responsibility, I propose the candidate for the competition, Chief Assistant. Dr. Maria Alexandrova Ivanova to be elected to hold the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.7 Administration and Management at NBU.

Date 13.05.2022

Signature