

## STANDPOINT

**Of Associate Professor Doctor Nikolay Sashkov Tsankov,  
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A member of the scientific panel in the contest for taking the academic position "**Associate Professor**" in the area of higher education: 1. Pedagogy Sciences, professional field; **1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of Education and Didactics)**, announced for the needs of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" in the State Newspaper, Issue 31 from 12.04.2019;

This standpoint is developed according to the requirement of the Law for developing the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Rules for applying the Law for developing the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Rules for developing the academic staff at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski", in execution of an Order of the Rector No P33-3698/10.07.2019.

In the contest for the academic position Associate Professor, announced in the State Newspaper, Issue 31 from 12.04.2019 and on the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the requirements of Department "Primary School Pedagogy" of Pedagogy Faculty, as a sole candidate participates **Chief Assistant Doctor Nikolinka Aleksandrova Atanasova** from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

### **1. General Presentation of the Procedure and the Candidate**

The candidate for taking the academic position "Associate Professor" – Chief Assistant Doctor Nikolinka Aleksandrova Atanasova acquired an Educational Scientific Degree "Doctor" in a PhD programme "Theory of Education and Didactics" in 2011, and with the years to pass she has had a consistent academic career development (2002 – Assistant; 2005 – Senior Assistant, 2010 – Chief Assistant) replete with a range of educational and scientific-research activities and achieved results.

**The scientific interests** of the candidate during her long experience are in the area of sciences for education: (1) School and University Didactics, (2) Innovative and Interactive Education, (3) Docimology, (4) Theory of Education.

In quantitative terms the scientific-research production of **Chief Assistant Doctor Nikolinka Atanasova**, submitted for participation the ntry of the contest, includes:

Monographs *(individual) one of which was presented in a habilitation work	2
Books published on the basis of defended thesis for acquiring Educational and Scientific Degree "Doctor"	2
Scientific publications/articles in magazines and publications of reports in collections (including abroad) (14 individual and 3 in co-authorship)	17
Text books *electronic books for student at school education/Publisher Prosveta	6

A wide range of evidence materials has also been presented, connected with: Participation in national and international scientific conferences; Management of graduates; Preparation of educational courses and educational programmes for teaching students at Educational Qualification Degree "Bachelor" and Educational Qualification Degree "Master"; Promotion of pedagogy specialties of education among candidate students; Training seminars for PhD students; Trainings of pedagogical specialists; Preparation of reviews and recommendations for students and other.

From the provided reference it is obvious that **her annual workload** exceeds the requirements for taking the academic position "Associate Professor", namely above 400 hours of lectures.

The overall auditorium work of Chief Assistant Doctor Nikolinka Aleksandrova Atanasova with students at Educational Qualification Degree “Bachelor” and Educational Qualification Degree “Master” is in the subject matter of the contest – Theory of Education and Didactics.

## 2. General Characteristics of the Candidate’s Activity

**Monograph**, mentioned as habilitation work “**Mind Maps as an Innovative Technique for Studying and Teaching** (2015) (FastPrintBooks, Plovdiv, ISBN 978-619-7034-74-5) with CO-BISS.BG-ID: 127 3356772 a well thought of work, conceptually justified and technologically implemented according to all levels of research; In theoretical terms, significant generalizations are made concerning the essence and the types of mind maps, as the emphasis is on improvement of the opportunities for studying and teaching using them. A wide range of computer web-based applications has been submitted for development of mind maps, as the students’ preferences for their application have been considered. The conducted empirical study for design and research procedures, meets the requirements of an ascertaining one, although the parameters of the research programme could be widened with the purpose of receiving more results, concerning the effectiveness of applying the Mind Maps technique as an alternative for teaching and studying at universities. Certain contributions are revealed in the developed technological variations for applying mind maps in the context of applying four particular interactive technologies of education at universities.

The monograph “**Interactive Group and Project Education Face to Face, Theoretical Applicable Aspects**”, (FastPrintBooks, Plovdiv, 2018, ISBN 978-619-236-034-4) It reviews a subject matter, which has been a subject of multiple interpretation in recent years, and at the same time it is connected with quite contradictory understanding and limitations with reference to its complete and efficient operation in practical context. This is the reason why the author’s aspiration to reveal significant theoretical applicable aspects of effective interactive education, which are the basis of a quality implementation not only of group based and project based education as its variations, but of any others, including those with problems orientation, animated and others, is justifiable. This research presents a unique synergy among the interactive, group and project education which up to now has not been interpreted with such functional connections, carrying significant research charge and opportunities for optimal combination of different technological decisions.

**The books published on the basis of defended thesis** for acquiring Educational Scientific Degree “Doctor” (“**The Challenge of Interactive Methods of Education**”, University Publishing House “Paisii Hilendarski”, Plovdiv, 2012, ISBN 978-954-423-757-8 and „**Interactive Methods of Learning in primary stage of secondary school. Methodic Guide of Interactive Learning in 4<sup>th</sup> grade**”, University Publishing House “Paisii Hilendarski”, Plovdiv, 2012, ISBN 978-954-423-754-7, affirm **Chief Assistant Doctor Nikolinka Atanasova** as a leading researcher in the area of interactive education, as well as for clarifying its conceptual-event essence (in the context of the didactics school, founded by Professor Plamen Radev in Plovdiv University).

**Articles** – 17 in total, 3 of which in co-authorship (all the others submitted for acquiring Educational Scientific Degree “Doctor”), widen the research area of the candidate for acquiring Educational Scientific Degree “Associate Professor” in the area of didactics: in the direction of applying mind maps in education and assessment at the different educational stages of secondary education and tertiary education, as well as in the context of other problematic areas – problem-based education at school, educational environment for developing digital competence, tools of education, education at university, ways of improving the educational environment at university (history museum and facilitation), the role of didactic games and didactic tests in education; also in the area of *theories of education* – the child as a value in different philosophies, alternative ways of positive change at school (“European Lessons”), intercultural and civil education, integrating education and others.

The reference presented from publications for taking part in the contest for taking the academic position of Associate Professor, do not fully reveal all noticed in the post tracking systems publications, which Doctor Nikolinka Atanasova published after acquiring the Educational Scientific Degree Doctor, part of which are particularly connected with the scientific research activity of the candidate and outline her profile.

In support of her application, **Chief Assistant Doctor Nikolinka Atanasova** also presents evidence, which is not required for taking position Associate Professor according to the minimum national requirements for academic positions, for example: electronic educational courses for university students of Education Qualification Degree “Bachelor” and Education Qualification Degree “Master”, as well as participation in the teams for compiling electronic text books in Bulgarian Language and Literature for the primary stage of the basis educational degree, issued by Publishing House “Prosveta”.

The candidate for taking the academic position of Associate Professor, **Chief Assistant Doctor Nikolinka Atanasova**, has taken part in a number of national and international projects and trainings, connected with the pedagogy specialties qualifications and the quality of education, as well as in editorial boards and review teams, a number of forums, and she has also had some practical activities, in which her students have also been actively involved.

The presented reference **for citations** (11 in total), specifically related to the scientific research work of the candidate, meet the required minimum for indicators of Group D of the minimum national requirements for taking academic positions.

No plagiarism has been found in the presented for a review scientific research production of the candidate, neither has any incorrectness or in inaccuracy been detected in the interpretation of the received empiric results in the course of the scientific research activities.

There is **fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for taking the academic position Associate Professor**, as the candidate also submits additional evidence, which even exceeds them.

### 3. Critical Remarks and Recommendations

On the basis of the presented for a review scientific research production, the following critical remarks and recommendations can be drawn up:

1. The monographic work and subsequent researches of the author will benefit more if they are accompanied by empiric researches (testing, expert evaluation and others), the results of which to be subjected to detailed statistical processing, which can be the reason for evaluation of the effectiveness of applying mind maps in the course of education at universities.
2. There should be more precision citing the authors, more precisely in the style formation of the literature and its use in the text, as in different paragraphs, in the monographs for example, a lot of inaccuracies have been noticed.
3. Popularizing the scientific results by means of participation in national and international conferences is a positive thing, but all scientific searches should find there place in specialized magazines, publishing in the area of educational sciences.
4. Doctor Nikolinka Atanasova stands a chance to increase her international recognition in the future by increasing her publishing activity in magazines, which are included in the system for referring and indexing, which means Impact Factor (IF), mentioned in the electronic data base Web of Science, impact rang (SJR) and SCOPUS.

## CONCLUSION

This critical evaluation analysis of the presented for a review scientific research production and the assessment of the compliance with the minimum national requirements for taking academic positions, are the reason for highlighting the candidate's contributions in the area of the contest. On the basis of all of the above, I suggest that the members of the scientific panel, and subsequently the members of the Faculty Council of Pedagogy Faculty at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski", should elect **Chief Assistant Doctor Nikolinka Aleksandrova Atanasova for taking the academic position Associate Professor** in professional field 1.2 Pedagogy (Theory of Education and Didactics), field of higher education 1. Pedagogy Sciences.

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**The Standpoint was compiled by:**

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