

STANDPOINT

By a member of the scientists' panel: PhD Galin Borisov Tsokov, Professor in Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" of the materials presented for participation in a contest for the academic position of **Associate Professor at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"** in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogic science, professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of Education and Didactics). In the contest for Associate Professor announced in State Newspaper, issue 31 from 12.04.2019 and in the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of Department "Primary School Pedagogy" to Pedagogy Faculty, participates Chief Assistant PhD Nikolinka Aleksandrova Atanasova from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" applies.

1. General Review of the Procedure and the Applicant

With Order No P33-3698 from 10.07.2019 by the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" I was appointed as a member of the scientists' panel of a contest for the academic position of Associate Professor at Plovdiv University in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogic science, professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of Education and Didactics). In the contest for Associate Professor announced in State Newspaper, issue 31 from 12.04.2019 and in the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of Department "Primary School Pedagogy" to Pedagogy Faculty, for participation in the contest only one applicant has submitted documents: Chief Assistant PhD Nikolinka Aleksandrova Atanasova from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

The set of materials submitted by PhD Atanasova are in paper and complies with the Rules for Development of the Academic Members of Plovdiv University. The applicant enclosed 20 scientific papers: 2 monographs, 1 e-book for students, 17 scientific articles – all of them reviewed. This scientific production was not presented for acquiring the educational and scientific degree PHD. That is reason why all 20 scientific works are accepted for reviewing.

Brief biographical data of the applicant

The only applicant in the contest for the academic position, Chief Assistant PhD Nikolinka Atanasova was born in 1976. She graduated from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" in 1998 as a holder of Bachelor Degree in "Pre-school Pedagogy". For the period of 2002 – 2004 PhD Atanasova studied and successfully acquired her Master Degree on „Alternative Technologies of Education in Primary Stage of Secondary School" in Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski". In 2002 the applicant started work as an assistant in Pedagogy in Pedagogy College of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" and in 2005 she became Senior Assistant; since 2010 she has been Chief Assistant in Pedagogy Faculty. In 2011 the applicant develops and presents successfully a PhD thesis by *professional field: 1.2. Pedagogy, scientific specialty: Theory of Education and Didactics*.

2. General Characteristic of the Applicant's Activity

Evaluation of educational pedagogic activity and preparation of the applicant

Nikolinka Atanasova has rich pedagogic experience and 17-year teaching experience in Pedagogy Faculty of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski". The submitted documents prove that the required teaching load of over 700 hours per year there is. As a university lecturer PhD Atanasova has given the following lecture courses and exercises: *Pedagogy, Theory of Education, Didactics, Interactive Methods of Education, Project-based Education etc.*

The high quality of the teaching activity of the applicant is proved by the following facts:

- Participant is a member in accreditation committees for preparation of documents for program accreditation;
- Development of study programs for school subjects in Bachelor and Master Courses;
- Scientific editor of “PhD Research” Magazine of Pedagogy Faculty;
- Participation in 2 international, 1 national and 3 university educational and scientific projects.

I believe that the teaching experience of the applicant meets the criteria for borrowing of the academic position Associate Professor, accepted in Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”.

Evaluation of the scientific and science-applied activity of the applicant

In the announced contest Chief Assistant PhD Atanasova applies with a total of 20 scientific papers: 2 monographs, 1 e-book for students, 17 scientific articles – all of them reviewed. This scientific production was not presented for acquiring the educational and scientific degree PHD. That is the reason why all 20 scientific works are accepted for reviewing.

In the presented monograph *Atanasova, N., Mind Maps as innovative technique of learning and teaching, pages 181, FastPrintBooks, Plovdiv, 2015, ISBN 978-619-7034-74-5*, she makes a systematic attempt to justify the significance of mind maps as a technique for study and teaching. Mind maps are a possible way of improving both activities in the process of education. The author justifies the use of mind maps with the fact that they stimulate learning with understanding, which is replaced with mechanical learning in many cases; they assist interactive teaching and contribute to educating competent and creative personalities in different professional fields.

The other monograph *Atanasova, N., Interactive group and project-based education face to face. Theoretical applied aspects, pages 119, FastPrintBooks, Plovdiv, 2018, ISBN 978-619-236-034-4* considers the issue of effective interactive training face-to-face. She analyses the project-based training as a variant of the interactive one, which is done mainly with regard to the activities of clubs of interests and other extracurricular activities but is rarely combined from one side with the lesson as a leading external form of study and from another side with the spontaneous initiatives of the students. The problem of assessing group work and project training is also considered. Therefore the monograph contributes to justification of the actuality and significance of interactive group-based and project-based training as an important part of the contents of the new school programs and school materials in school subjects.

The main scientific research emphases in her other scientific works are related to the following thematic areas:

- Research of educational environment as a stimulant for developing digital competence of the students of the contemporary school.
- Works related to the clarifying innovative technologies of learning with mind maps.
- Research of e-platforms MozaBook and EdrawMax 7.7 as an alternative means of learning.
- Works connected with determining the nature of problem-based learning at school.
- Research of learning in the process of acquiring university education.
- An e-textbook for students has been created - "Interactive Learning in School".

Main scientific and science-applied contributions:

The contributions of Chief Assistant PhD Atanasova can be summarized as:

A. Theoretical contributions

- Systematic presentation of mind maps as innovative technique of learning and teaching is achieved.
- The characteristics of interactive learning are clarified and determined.
- The project-based and problem-based learning are theoretically justified from a postmodern point of view.

B. Science-applied contributions

- The size and the specific features of the implementation of mind maps in the school and academic learning are analyzed.
- Good practices regarding effective implementation of some contemporary interactive methods of learning are presented.

The enclosed reference shows that the quotations in publications of PhD Atanasova are 11.

3. Critical Notes and Recommendations

Some recommendations can be made to the scientific and teaching work of the applicant:

- In my opinion, in the scientific production of PhD Atanasova has sufficient originally developed ideas and achieved results which can be publicized through publications in leading specialized and reference scientific magazines in Bulgaria;
- I think that PhD Atanasova has scientific-research achievements and sufficient knowledge and teaching experience in order to publish an academic book in *Didactics*.

Conclusion

The papers and materials submitted by Chief Assistant PhD Nikolinka Aleksandrova Atanasova complies fully with requirements of the Law of development of academic members in the Republic of Bulgaria, Rules for its application and Rules of Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”. She has presented a sufficient number of high quality scientific works, published after the material used for acquiring the academic degree PhD. In the works of the applicant there are original scientific and applied contributions, which have received national recognition. The theoretical works have practical application and part of them are directly connected with the school work. The scientific and teaching qualification of Chief Assistant PhD Nikolinka Aleksandrova Atanasova is undeniable.

The applicant in the contest meets the minimal national requirements of academic position Associate Professor. I have no doubt of plagiarism in the presented for reviewing scientific publications.

After becoming aware of the submitted for the contest materials and scientific papers, analysis of their significance and the scientific, science-applied contributions contained in them, I find it reasonable to give my **positive conclusion** and recommend to the Scientific Panel to prepare a report-suggestion to the Faculty Council of Pedagogy Faculty for awarding Chief Assistant PhD Nikolinka Aleksandrova Atanasova the academic position of Assistant Professor in Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski” in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogic Science, professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of Education and Didactics).

Date: 23.08.2019

The Standpoint was compiled by:

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