

To  
The Head of a Scientific Jury appointed by  
Order no. RD-16-146/ 30.09.2021 of the  
Rector of Konstantin Preslavsky University of  
Shumen

## OPINION

by Prof. Malcho Malchev, Doctor of Science

Regarding the application for the academic position of ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, according to the Bulgarian legislation in Area of Higher Education 1. Pedagogy, Professional Field 1.3. Pedagogy of... **(Methodology of physical education and sports)**

### 1. Information about the procedure

The procedure for "associate professor" in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogy, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of... **(Methodology of physical education and sports)** is announced in the State Gazette no. 64 of 03.08.2021, in accordance with the requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its application, as well as the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at Shumen University.

There is one applicant for this procedure - Assistant Professor Dr. Teodora Zhelyazkova Ignatova.

This opinion is written in accordance with the Order of the Rector of *Konstantin Preslavsky* University of Shumen no. RD - 16-146 / 30.09.2021.

### 2. Information about the applicant

Teodora Zhelyazkova Ignatova was born on October 21, 1964 in Shumen. In 1982 she graduated from *Nikola Vaptsarov* School, Shumen. In 1987 she graduated from *Georgi Dimitrov* National Sports Academy, Sofia, with a Master's degree as a *Physical Education Teacher* and *Rhythmic Gymnastics Coach*.

From 1983 to 1986 she was a coach in rhythmic gymnastics at SFS "Shumen", Shumen.

From 1989 to 1999 she worked as a physical education teacher at the High School of Humanities, Shumen.

In 1999, she started working at *Konstantin Preslavsky* University of Shumen as a lecturer. In 2002 she was promoted to senior assistant, and since 2007 he has been an assistant professor at the Department of Theory and Methodology of Physical Education and Sports.

In 2010, after a successful defense at the Scientific Council of sports training and kinesitherapy at the Higher Attestation Commission, Teodora Ignatova was awarded a Doctoral degree. The topic of her dissertation is "Methodology of forming psychophysical readiness in students for professional pedagogical activity".

Since 1984 she has a card issued by the Bulgarian Union for Physical Education and Sports for a public aerobics coach, choreographer and leader of cheerleaders.

At Shumen University she teaches the subjects - "Basic Gymnastics"; "Gymnastics and methodology"; "Rhythmics and dances", "Applied aspects of kinesitherapy in physical education"; "Sports management"; "Aerobics"; "Corrective gymnastics"; "Callanetics and

Stretching”; “Fitness and bodybuilding”. Dr. Teodora Ignatova also teaches various types of pedagogical practices.

## **II. General description of the submitted materials**

As an applicant in this procedure Assistant Professor Dr. Teodora Zhelyazkova Ignatova has duly submitted the required documents, according to the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at Shumen University. The scholarly papers are subject to a peer review. **They cover the minimum requirements for the scientometric criteria by groups of indicators (Appendix 13 of the candidate's application in the procedure).**

## **III. Evaluation of the scholarly work submitted by the applicant**

The scholarly work of the applicant contains a list of 28 items: 1 monograph; 1 study; 26 scientific publications, 3 of them with an impact factor. From the presented publications by Assistant Professor Teodora Ignatova eight are co-authored. Five of them are in English and the rest are in Bulgarian.

There are 14 citations of Dr. Ignatova by other authors, diligently presented in Appendix 7.

From the point of view of the place of publication, the papers are distributed as follows: a) 2 published abroad - Macedonia in peer-reviewed scientific journals and b) 25 published in Bulgaria in scientific peer-reviewed journals.

The publications can be found in yearbooks of universities: *Konstantin Preslavsky* University of Shumen, *St. St. Cyril and Methodius* University of Veliko Turnovo, University of Ruse, National Sports Academy, and other journals that are registered in the National Reference List of Bulgarian Scientific Journals reviewed by NACID.

**Thematically the works of Assistant Professor Dr. Teodora Zhelyazkova Ignatova are primarily oriented to the professional field of the procedure. They are conditionally divided by the applicant into 4 (four) groups, with which I agree.**

**The first group, called *Sports in higher education*, includes 11 publications with numbers: 1, 4, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26 and 27.**

**The second group, *Theoretical and practical-methodological problems of physical education in the educational system* includes nine publications with numbers: 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 15.**

**In the third group, *Medico-biological problems of physical education and sports*, four publications are included: 2, 3, 11 and 19.**

**The fourth group defined as *Professional pedagogical image* covers the publications with numbers 7, 17, 21 and 25.**

In accordance with the requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its application for the academic position "Associate Professor" / minimum requirements for scientometric criteria by groups of indicators /, I accept as a main work the monograph by Dr. Ignatova entitled *Aerobics in higher education*, ISBN 978-619-201-501-5, Shumen: Shumen University Press, 2021. It corresponds to the definition given in the Law for this genre of scientific communication. It is printed in a volume of 134 pages, with 1,800 characters per page.

In structural terms, as well as the methodological framework, purpose, subject and object of the monographic study, I find them adequate to the author's intention. In this regard, we can also trust the professional competence of the reviewers and the scientific book, who evaluated the merits of the monograph and recommended its printing.

The research is developed in four main parts (chapters), the theoretical interpretation is based on the review of 86 information sources (printed and Internet resources). The conclusion emphasizes that the innovative approaches and models of physical education in

higher education will provide a dynamic, flexible and adaptive education in which aerobics will be present with its new styles, combinations between them and expressiveness.

Another publication on which I believe that I should pay priority attention is the study "Control and assessment of the physical fitness of students" (6.1). A successful attempt was made here to clarify the main characteristics of the physical fitness of students. From the analysis of the obtained empirical results it is clear that it is difficult to make a comparative analysis of the factors and components that determine their physical fitness due to the lack of system and universality. The author concludes that the introduction and adoption of the Eurofit system will open opportunities for longitudinal research both in our country and for comparisons between EU countries.

In conclusion, it is emphasized that the developed author's system for control and assessment of the physical fitness of students can be used as a starting point in the development of uniform standards for the discipline "Physical Education and Sports" in higher education.

**In conclusion to part III of this opinion, I would like to say that the presented monograph and studies have the necessary scientific achievements, which are noted by the reviewers of the submitted publications, as well as in the scientific contributions of the applicant that follow.**

In the conditionally formed first group of publications - Physical Education and Sports in Higher Education, in addition to the analyzed study, the other articles address the state and dynamics of the system of physical education and sports in higher education. The possibilities for using rhythmic and dances as a means to increase the motor activity of the students are analyzed, as well as the application of the means of different types of aerobics for the formation of adequate physical fitness in students and the interests, motives and needs of students for sports. A modified methodology for training and improving students playing aerobics has been developed for the formation of adequate psychophysical readiness in them for professional pedagogical activity (see no. 16, 18, and 24). The dynamics of the physical capacity and mental readiness of the students in the profiled swimming training were also monitored (publications 20 and 22).

In the thematic field Theoretical and Practical Problems of Physical Education and Sports in the Educational System are grouped the publications, in which the results of the applicant's research on problems related to physical education and sports in different educational levels and stages of secondary education are presented. The effect of the use of ensemble gymnastic compositions is presented to provoke the motor activity of students and achieve the appropriate gymnastic competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes), as well as communication, raising a sense of collectivism, responsibility and mutual assistance, etc., which are socially significant.

In this regard, the research among students majoring in "Pedagogy of Physical Education" also deserves attention. The conclusions reveal their attitude to gymnastics as a compulsory area of competence and a compulsory area of curriculum of Physical Education and Sports. In this thematic area, the publication (no. 11) discussing the problems of overweight among adolescents and the need for periodic screening in this socially significant area deserves special attention.

In the group of publications on the Medico-Biological Problems of Physical Education and Sports, the publication which stands out, is the one that refers to the problems of people with special needs. The author applies an adapted dance model as an appropriate way to overcome the differences between people with disabilities.

The Professional Pedagogical Image of the Modern Teacher is the other aspect that is of interest to Dr. Ignatova. She mainly studies the competence of physical education and sports teachers (their knowledge, skills and attitudes), as a basis for the realization of the



additional module *Dances*. Sociological research was made on the need to study dances depending on a number of predictors and on the possibilities for solving many integrative connections in education (publ. no. 7). Publication no. 17 – “On some issues of the professional image of the modern teacher” – Dr. Ignatova conducted a specific study on the professional appearance of the modern teacher, revealing the main patterns and factors for the effectiveness of teaching at high schools. Although the publication dates back to 2012, it can be said that the proposed summaries and conclusions are still relevant today.

#### IV. Information on the contributions in the author's scholarly work

From the synthesized and proposed by Assistant Professor Dr. Teodora Zhelyazkova original scientific contributions I consider the following to be sufficiently substantiated and academically significant:

1. In accordance with the results of successfully experimented methodology and models for psychophysical impact in the educational process, the overall **university curriculum** in the discipline Sports has been optimized.
2. A system for control and assessment of the physical capacity of the students at *Konstantin Preslavsky* University of Shumen has been developed and adapted to the European requirements. The system allows for indirect qualitative assessment of the educational process in Sports as a discipline at the faculty level and in general for the university.
3. The models and system of control and assessment of the physical capacity of the students, tested in practice, can be successfully extrapolated to other universities.
4. In connection with the International project: 579917-EPP-1-2016-2-EL-SPO-SCP "Equal Sport For All" (ESFA) a *Dance model for people with special needs* has been developed and tested, which is applied in some European countries.

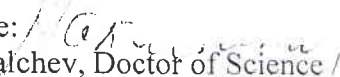
#### CONCLUSION

**Assistant Professor Dr. Teodora Zhelyazkova Ignatova** is a valuable and erudite specialist in pedagogy and sports pedagogy. She has authority among the academic community of Shumen University and other universities with a pedagogical profile. **With her scientific developments she meets the obligatory and specific conditions and scientometric criteria for the academic position "Associate Professor".**

In the analyzed scientific works of Assistant Professor Dr. Teodora Zhelyazkova Ignatova I did not find texts or parts of texts that belong to another author / under the current Penal Code of Bulgaria (Article 173, paragraph 1) /.

The scientific and pedagogical merits of Assistant Professor Dr. Teodora Zhelyazkova Ignatova, and the scientometric characteristics of her publications set out in this opinion give me sufficient grounds to propose to the distinguished Members of the Scientific Jury the applicant to be elected "Associate Professor" in higher education 1. Pedagogy, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of ... (Methodology of physical education and sports) - announced in the State Gazette no. 64 of 03.08.2021, and I personally will vote for it with conviction!

11.11.2021  
Shumen

Signature:   
/Prof. Malcho Malchev, Doctor of Science /