

To
The Chair of the Scientific Jury,
appointed by Order
No. R-109-67/28.01.2026
of the Rector of the Medical University – Varna

OPINION

From: Assoc. Prof. Nedko Dimitrov, MD, PhD, Head of the Department of Special Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, Trakia University – Stara Zagora; Head of the Clinic of Orthopedics and Traumatology, University Hospital "Prof. Dr. St. Kirkovich", Stara Zagora

Regarding: Competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in Orthopedics and Traumatology, Professional Field 7.1. Medicine, Higher Education Area 7. Healthcare and Sports – 1 position, 0.5 full-time position for the needs of the Department of Orthopedics and Traumatology, Faculty of Medicine, and 1.0 full-time position for the Clinic of Orthopedics and Traumatology at University Hospital "St. Marina" – Varna, announced in the State Gazette, issue 102/28.11.2025.

This opinion has been prepared on the basis of Order No. R-109-67/28.01.2026 of the Rector of Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna and is in compliance with the Act and Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Rules for the Structure, Activities and Internal Order of MU – Varna.

Admitted candidate: Chief Assistant Prof. Preslav Plamenov Penev, MD, PhD

I declare that I have no conflict of interest in relation to this competition. I have not identified any omissions in the competition documentation. I have no remarks regarding the submitted materials.

I. Brief Biographical Data

Dr. Preslav Plamenov Penev graduated from the Medical University – Varna in 2010. Since 2017, he has been an Assistant Professor at the Department of Orthopedics and Traumatology, MU – Varna. In January 2018, he acquired the specialty in Orthopedics and Traumatology. Since 2022, he has been working at the Clinic of Orthopedics and Traumatology at University Hospital "St. Marina" – Varna as a specialist in orthopedics and traumatology.

In October 2016, he defended his PhD thesis entitled “Contemporary Aspects of the Diagnosis and Treatment of Ligament Injuries of the Lateral Column of the Ankle Joint.” Since 2019, he has held the position of Chief Assistant Professor. In 2018, he completed a Master’s degree in Health Management.

II. Research Activity

Publications

The total number of scientific works by Preslav Penev includes:

Abstract of PhD dissertation – 1

Habilitation thesis (monograph) – 1

Scientific publications in journals with/without SJR and/or IF – 19

Participation in scientific forums – 84

In the present competition for Associate Professor, the candidate participates with a total of 19 publications, as follows:

Habilitation thesis (monograph) – 1

Scientific publications in journals with SJR and/or IF (indexed in Scopus and/or Web of Science) – 8

Scientific publications referenced in Web of Science – 8

Articles published in peer-reviewed, non-indexed journals or conference proceedings without IF and SJR – 11

Of the submitted publications, the candidate is first author in 10 and second or third author in 9, demonstrating independence both in defining the scientific problems and in presenting and publishing the research results.

The total impact factor (IF) of the journals in which the candidate has published exceeds 11. The candidate has an h-index of 2 according to ResearchGate.

The main research topics of Dr. Penev are primarily related to the ankle and foot, including:

Ligamentous Lisfranc injury

Minimally invasive intramedullary fixation in fibular fractures

Treatment of chondral defects of the ankle joint

Gravity radiography as a method for classification of ankle fractures

Other research topics include:

Personalized approach in selecting surgical techniques for the treatment of carpal tunnel syndrome

Conservative treatment of lateral epicondylitis using shockwave therapy

Reduction of infections associated with the use of external fixators

Citations

The total number of citations is 27, mainly in peer-reviewed journals. No self-citations were identified. The annual distribution of citations is illustrated in Figure 1.

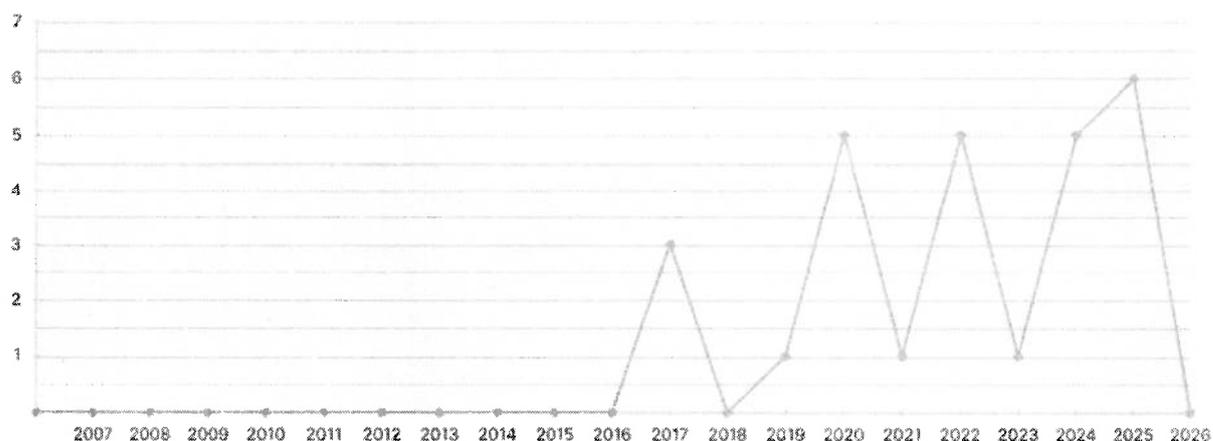


Figure 1. Number of citations from the ResearchGate database by year throughout the candidate's research career.

III. Teaching Activity

Dr. Penev has been actively engaged in teaching since 2017, when he was appointed Assistant Professor at the Department of Orthopedics and Traumatology, MU – Varna, and since 2019 has served as Chief Assistant Professor. He has 8 years and 3 months of teaching experience.

He has submitted a report from the Academic Affairs Office for the last three years as Chief Assistant Professor. For the 2024/2025 academic year, he fulfills the mandatory 200 teaching hours, in compliance with the national requirements under the Academic Staff Development Act.

IV. Diagnostic and Therapeutic Activity

Dr. Penev has 13 years of practical experience in orthopedics and traumatology (since 2013 in the Department of Orthopedics and Traumatology at the Hospital – Targovishte; 2011–2022 at the Clinic of Orthopedics and Traumatology, “St. Anna” Hospital – Varna; and since 2022 to present at the Clinic of Orthopedics and Traumatology, University Hospital "St. Marina" – Varna), of which the last 8 years as a certified specialist in orthopedics and traumatology.

V. Compliance with the Minimum National Requirements

Dr. Penev has submitted a completed evaluation table in accordance with the Regulations for the Implementation of the Academic Staff Development Act.

The fulfillment of the minimum national requirements by groups of indicators is as follows:

Group A – fulfilled – 50 points

Group B – not required for the position of Associate Professor

Group C – fulfilled: habilitation thesis – 100 points (meeting the required 100 points)

Group D – fulfilled: calculated total points 291,57

Group E – fulfilled: calculated total points 30

The total number of calculated points (451,57) meets the minimum national requirements for participation in procedures under the Academic Staff Development Act for the academic position of “Associate Professor.”

VI. Conclusion

Based on the above data, Dr. Preslav Plamenov Penev, MD, PhD, can be characterized as an established specialist in his field, with broad medical expertise and practical skills; a researcher capable of independent and creative scientific work; and a lecturer with substantial teaching workload and sufficient experience as Chief Assistant Professor.

He has the required number of publications and citations, which attest to the value of his scientific work. Dr. Penev fulfills the minimum scientometric indicators required by the Academic Staff Development Act.

For these reasons, I will vote positively for awarding Dr. Preslav Plamenov Penev, MD, PhD the academic position of "Associate Professor" in Orthopedics and Traumatology for the needs of the Medical University – Varna.

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