
STATEMENT
by Assoc. Prof. Nikolay Nedev, PhD

Deputy Director, Medical College – Varna, Medical University "Prof. Dr. P. Stoyanov" – Varna,

E-mail: nikolay.nedev@mu-varna.bg

Chairman and member of the Academic Advancement Board, appointed by Order No P-109-174/23.04.2021. of the Rector of the Medical University – Varna

Subject

Procedure for holding the academic position of Associate Professor in 7. Health-care and sport – higher education area, 7.4. Public Health – professional field; Public Health Management speciality, opened for Medical College – Varna, Rehabilitation Training Sector, at the Medical University of Varna.

I. Information about the procedure

The current competition for filling the academic position of Associate Professor has been published in the State Gazette, No. 17/26.02.2021. **Silvia Ivanova Filkova, PhD, Chief Assist. Prof. at the Rehabilitation Training Sector, Medical College – Varna at the Medical University of Varna**, is the only applicant for filling the academic position. I have been appointed as a Member of the Academic Advancement Board, pursuant to Order No. P-109-174/23.04.2021 of the Rector of the Medical University – Varna, and I was elected a Chairman of the Academic Advancement Board under the Minutes Summary No.1 of its first meeting. Under Minutes Summary No.1, I was appointed to make a position statement on the procedure for holding the academic position of Associate Professor.

The applicant has submitted all relevant documents in accordance with the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA) and the ones specified in the Rules and Regulations of MU-Varna for academic staff development.

II. Brief information about the applicant

Silvia Filkova has graduated the Yordanka Filaretova Medical College – Sofia in 1992. Her career development in Rehabilitation started at the University Paediatric Hospital – Bankya. After two years, her professional experience continued at the Specialized Rehabilitation Clinic – (1994), Air Transport Clinic at TMI - Sofia (1994 – 1998), Pulse Health Centre – Varna (1999 – 2004), View Style – Varna (2004 – 2007), Dr. Nikolay Nikolov Outpatient Clinic for Specialised Medical Care – Varna (2007 – 2011) and as an assistant professor at the Rehabilitation Training Sector, Medical College – Varna (2012 – 2018). In 2018, after acquiring a PhD in Public Health Management,

Silvia Filkova won a competition for filling the academic position of Chief Assistant. Currently (since 2020), she is head of the Rehabilitation Training Sector at the Medical College – Varna.

Silvia Filkova continued her education, successively acquiring a Master's degree in Healthcare Management at MU-Varna, 2013, a Master's degree in Rehabilitation, Sea Treatment, Wellness and SPA at MU-Varna, 2016, and a PhD in Public Health Management at MU-Varna, 2017.

She is involved in the practical training of students majoring in Rehabilitator conducting training exercises, seminars and clinical practice. Silvia Filkova actively engages her students in research projects, the results of which are presented jointly at science forums and conferences.

Silvia Filkova is a member of the Bulgarian Association of Physiotherapists and the Bulgarian Scientific Society for Public Health. She is a dynamic research force with active participation in national and international scientific conferences and forums.

The applicant seeks to expand her theoretical and practical knowledge by undertaking different post-graduate trainings, which help her expand her research and tutoring skills.

The list of specialisations and additional qualifications throughout the applicant's career development is impressive!

The applicant speaks English and Russian (level B2).

III. Evaluation of the research, academic and administrative achievements of Ch. Assist. Prof. Silvia Ivanova Filkova, PhD

❖ Overview of the academic and applied research of the applicant

The applicant has submitted her research and publication record (**17 research papers, including a PhD thesis and a monograph**) as relevant documentation, thus specified in the competition procedure of the Medical University of Varna for filling the academic position of Associate Professor (State Gazette, No. 17/26.02.2021). The table presents the **applicant's research papers** referenced as meeting the minimum requirements for holding the academic position of Associate Professor in accordance with the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (2018) – 12 pcs, and **research publications exceeding the minimum requirements** for holding the academic position of Associate Professor – **3 pcs**.

INDICATORS	Single-authored papers	1 st author	2 nd author	3 rd and next author	Total
Indicators included in the reference template for meeting the minimum requirements for holding the academic position of Associate Professor in accordance with the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (2018).					
Monographs	1				1

Full-text publications in research journals referenced and indexed in <i>WOS/Scopus</i>	International research journals	-	-	-	-	3
	Bulgarian research journals	-	1	2	-	
Full-text publications in peer-reviewed journals not referenced in the top list of the world's academic research databases	International research journals	-	2	3	1	9
	Bulgarian research journals	1	1	1	-	
Total						12
Research publications exceeding the minimum requirements for holding the academic position of Associate Professor						
Full-text publications in peer-reviewed journals not referenced in the top list of the world's academic research databases	International research journals	-	1	-	-	3
	Bulgarian research journals	1	-	1	-	
Total						3

The ratio of publications listed in the author's research and publication record is almost equal in terms of publications in Bulgarian and international journals. Silvia Filkova is a single author in 8% of the presented papers; she is the first author in 33% of **the total number of the published papers**; the second author in 50% of the publications, and the third or consecutive author in 8% of the works. They present the author's ability to write in a team, thus demonstrating her proficiency in teamwork.

The academic contribution of the applicant's publications in the national and international research literature is presented in a bibliographic and scientometrics summary provided by the Research Library of MU-Varna: 8 citations granting 85 points and fully meeting the requirements of the competition.

A confirmation reference that Silvia Filkova has an active Google Scholar, Research Gate, Researcher ID, and eLibrary account has been presented.

Silvia Filkova's research area is illustrated in the submitted for review scholarly papers and can be summarised in the following main areas:

❖ **Main research areas of academic papers:**

1. 1. Health promotion

(G_7-1; G_7-3; G_8-4; G_8-7; G_8-8; off-2)

2. Prevention of spinal deformities and low back pain

(A_1; B_3; G_8-1; G_8-3; G_8-5; G_8-6)

3. Innovative approaches in recreation and rehabilitation

(G_7-2; G_8-2; G_8-9; off-1, off-3)

❖ **Contributions identified with the main areas of scholarly works:**

RESEARCH AREA 1: Health promotion

The author's research in this area reflects her interest in studying the awareness of people of different age groups about the factors influencing a healthy lifestyle. In order to evaluate their impact, it is necessary to know the norm-bounded disturbances, the benefits of following recommendations, as well as the consequences of not following them. That is why health education is essential. It begins immediately after childbirth and continues throughout the entire lifespan. Health education is a set of conscious human actions aimed at maintaining health and improving the quality of life.

The applicant has presented contributions of cognitive and applied nature in this research area.

RESEARCH AREA 2: Prevention of spinal deformities and low back pain

Research is focused on prevention, early diagnosis, and limiting the development of spinal deformities in children and adolescents. It is presented in the applicant's doctoral thesis, in a monograph and four research papers. The topic is important because it refers to the period of active growth and development in children. Current research literature sources on the topic have been analysed in the presented publications in this research area. The results of questionnaires establishing reduced levels of physical activity and dissatisfactory ergonomic conditions of the learning environment and the workplace have been discussed. A number of conditions and diseases, such as functional blockage, myositis, tendonitis, and disc herniation, arise from prolonged pelvic instability. Adequate prophylactic and therapeutic measures have proven effective in improving patients' quality of life with spinal deformities.

There are contributions of cognitive and applied nature in this research area.

RESEARCH AREA 3: Innovative approaches in recreation and rehabilitation

The scholarly papers referring to Research area 3 stand out for original advances in studying innovations in recreational and rehabilitation approaches aimed at improving and perfecting prevention and recovery and opportunities for their application and promotion.

There are **contributions of cognitive and applied nature in this research area.**

Silvia Filkova's teaching activity spans over 9 years. She conducts clinical practice, lectures and exercises in the Rehabilitation speciality of Medical College – Varna. For the last five years, her teaching workload accounts for an average of 466.2 hours, which exceeds the benchmark for

Head/Chief Assistant, i.e. her current position at MU-Varna. Silvia Filkova lectures and conducts exercises in two main disciplines of the curriculum of Rehabilitation speciality: Kinesiotherapy and Healing massage.

The applicant has worked on various projects, including projects involving students. Her tutorial interaction with students includes active participation in students' academic sessions as a consultant and research supervisor.

My recommendation to the applicant is to intensify her publication activity by publishing the research results in specialised scholarly journals – national and international, thus amplifying their impact and visibility to a broader range of rehabilitation specialists.

I consider it necessary to share my **personal impressions** of the applicant.

I have known Silvia Filkova for 9 years since she started as an Assistant Professor in the Rehabilitation speciality at Medical College – Varna. I have been familiar with the choice of topic for her doctoral thesis, research efforts and PhD procedure. Her openness of character and candour, curiosity, and consistency have established Silvia Filkova as a respected professor and colleague. She is an excellent team player – hardworking, patient and dedicated. She is respected by her students and, with her kindness, gains the attention and trust of the practitioners she works with.

Conclusion

Presented publications show a sufficient volume and genre diversity which attests Silvia Filkova as an established lecturer in the field of rehabilitation care. The applied contributions have been summarised. The applicant demonstrates a wide range of interests in the disciplines she teaches. International experience in the field challenges the applicant's pursuit to analyse and search for original methods for applying healthcare innovations consistent with the national context. Silvia Filkova studies the application of good practices in the field of rehabilitation and the application of innovative training methods for future rehabilitators.

Considering the undoubtedly high level of professionalism of the applicant, I put forth to the Academic Advancement Board my recommendation to propose to the Rector of Medical University – Varna the candidacy of Ch. Assist. Prof. Silvia Ivanova Filkova, PhD, for the academic position of Associate Professor in 7. Health-care and sport – higher education area, 7.4. Public Health – professional field; Public Health Management speciality, opened for Medical College – Varna, Rehabilitation Training Sector, at the MU-Varna.

Date: 04.06.2021

A Statement by:
/ Assoc. Prof. Nikolay Nedev, PhD/

