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OPINION

from

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of the materials submitted for participation in a competition for the academic position of "associate professor" in the professional direction "Veterinary Medicine", scientific speciality "Animal Pathology"

Candidates for participation in the competition: In the competition for "Docent", announced in the State Gazette, no. 18/01/03/2024 and on the website of the Forestry University for the needs of the department "Internal non-communicable diseases, pathology and pharmacology" in the discipline "Pathology/General pathomorphology/", faculty "Veterinary Medicine", as a candidate participates chap. Assistant Professor Georgi Stoichev Popov, PhD, from Forestry University - Sofia.

1. A brief assessment of the candidate's qualifications and teaching activities ch. Georgi Stoychev Popov, assistant professor, Ph.D.

Chief Assistant Dr. Georgi Stoichev Popov graduated from the Forestry University of Sofia - Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in 2015 with a Master's degree in Veterinary Medicine. In the same year, he began his professional career at "AMI VET 2010" Ltd., Sofia, as a veterinarian performing veterinary medical activities. In January 2016, Dr. G. Popov participated in a competition for the academic position of Assistant at the Department of "Internal Non-Communicable Diseases, Pathology and Pharmacology" in the discipline "Pathology/General Pathomorphology/", Faculty of "Veterinary Medicine", at Forestry University, where he currently works. From 30.09.2020 until now, he holds the position of chief assistant in the same department in the discipline "Pathology/General Pathomorphology/". Based on a successfully defended dissertation on the topic: "Pathomorphological and pharmacological studies on the protective effect of biologically active substances from medicinal plants", in 2019 he was awarded the educational and scientific degree - ONS "Doctor", Diploma No. LTU-ONS-2019- 17 in the scientific speciality "Animal Pathology".

Dr. Popov's teaching experience as assistant and chief assistant until the announcement of the competition for "Docent" was a total of 8 years and 2 months. he main activities and responsibilities of Dr. Popov as a university teacher are mainly reduced to the preparation and conduct of exercises, seminars, consultations and practical semester exams in the disciplines of Animal Pathology - /General Pathomorphology/ and /Special Pathological Anatomy/ with students of " Veterinary Medicine" in Bulgarian and English, as well as carrying out research activities. He also participates in the control of the students during the implementation of the classroom and extra-auditory activities, the updates and the organization of the material base for training in the Pathomorphology discipline in Bulgarian and English "Veterinary

Medicine", OKS "Master". Ch. assistant professor Popov has presented a guaranteed minimum of 360 hours of annual classroom employment. His annual individual employment during the academic year 2022-2023 is 362 hours with Bulgarian students and 285 hours with English-speaking students. Dr. Popov actively participates in conducting lectures with the students in Bulgarian and English. In the period of the Covid pandemic, during the academic year 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, it conducts classes and exams in an electronic environment through Google classroom and Microsoft Teams. In addition, Dr. Popov also participates as a "Trainer" in the group specialization of students in "Veterinary Dermatology of Small and Exotic Animals" and "Trainer" in the specialization in "Veterinary Dermatology" of masters at the department: "Internal non-infectious diseases, pathology and pharmacology".

2. Scientific and applied scientific activity.

In the announced competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty "Animal Pathology", ch. assistant Dr. Georgi Popov has presented a list of significant scientific production - a total of 25 scientific works, of which 9 nos., submitted for the acquisition of the ONS "Doctor" (including dissertation work and abstract) and 16 nos. presented in the competition for JSC "Docent" (14 publications, 1 monograph and 1 book), distributed by indicators as follows: 10 nos. scientific publications (not less than 10) in publications that are referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information (indicator "B", item 4); 4 pcs. articles and reports published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information - (indicator "D", item 7); 3 pcs. articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes (indicator "D", item 8); citations in scientific publications - 20 items, of which 17 items in journals referenced on Scopus and Web of Science. (index "D -13"); Monograph – 1 pc. (indicator "G -5"); Book based on a protected dissertation work 1 pc. (indicator "G -6"). All presented scientific publications are outside the topic of his dissertation for the acquisition of the ONS "Doctor". In addition to these materials, Dr. G. Popov also participated in the competition as the author of an independent publication of a research-themed monograph entitled "Pathological-anatomical characterization of poisonings in domestic animals" (2024), which is both theoretical and applied. In it, the author has included his own scientific research and summarized data on the pathogenesis, clinical appearance, pathological findings and diagnosis of some of the common poisonings in domestic animals. Of the presented scientific publications in the competition for associate professor in 6 nos. Dr. Popov is the lead author, and in the remaining 12 he is in second or subsequent place. Of the scientific works, 14 are printed in refereed and indexed editions in world-famous databases with scientific information. Of them, 8 pcs. were published in journals with IF., and the other 8 scientific publications - in specialized journals without IF, referenced on Scopus and Web of Science. 3 publications were published in non-refereed scientific journals. Of the total number of scientific publications, 14 are in English and 7 in Cyrillic. 18 published summaries of participation in scientific forums are also presented - respectively in 9 oral presentations and 9 posters. The total impact factor of the presented scientific works in the competition for the appointment of JSC "Docent" is **24.115**.

Thus, the scientific works presented by the candidate for associate professor, Dr. G. Popov, and the rest of the publication material fully meet the requirements of ZRASRB and the minimum requirements for scientific and teaching activities in the FVM of the Forestry University, Sofia.

Dr. G. Popov also carried out an active scientific and applied activity. He also actively participates in the development of the following scientific projects of current importance for veterinary science and practice:

- Scientific project - Contract: No. 151/08.03.2017.
- Scientific project - Contract: B27/07.03.2018.
- Scientific project - Contract: B1288/19.10.2023
- Scientific project - Contract No. B 1333/ 05.03.2024

Simultaneously with his scientific and teaching activity, Ch. assistant Dr. G. Popov, works hard to increase his professional qualification and personal competence. He presents evidence of increasing his language qualification - written and spoken use of English, level B2, as well as additional activities at the faculty, incl. Course leader. Has a good command of Microsoft Office products, document and image processing, graphic techniques, working with design software and graphic design, creation and maintenance of audio and conferencing real-time network training, lectures and practice.

Dr. Popov also has good communication skills, the ability to work in a team and work independently, as well as theoretical and practical skills and knowledge in the formation of experimental design, training and demonstration techniques and methods, laboratory projects and equipment. He presents written evidence of active participation in many national and international events - seminars, symposia, conferences, etc., where he reports his scientific achievements to the relevant scientific audience - the total number of participations in scientific forums is 23, of which 18 after awarding the ONS "Doctor". He is also the independent author of a book on a protected dissertation entitled "Pathomorphological and pharmacological studies on the protective effect of biologically active substances of species of the genus *Astragalus*", Sofia, (2024). In it, based on the pharmacological and pathomorphological effects in the state of intoxication, the protective properties of two flavonoids isolated from *Astragalus monspessulanus*, purified saponin fraction and a mixture obtained from *Astragalus glycyphyllos* and *Astragalus glycyphylloides* were characterized. Some of the studies are illustrated with 62 author's macroscopic and microscopic photographs.

Dr. Popov is a member of the Academic Council of LTU, during the term 2020-2024 and 2024-2028, a member of the General Assembly of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at LTU; Member of the organizing committee of international scientific conferences: International Scientific Conference "Tradition and modernity in veterinary medicine", Yundola, Bulgaria. Possesses an acquired professional qualification in "Protection and humane treatment of experimental animals used for scientific or educational purposes"; Member of the Bulgarian Veterinary Union. Ch. assistant Popov also has good communication and organizational skills, ability to work independently and in a team, communicativeness, quick adaptation to new

environments, excellent self-discipline, skills for prioritizing tasks, competencies for coordinating activities and dealing with problem situations, responsible and loyal, as well as theoretical and practical skills and knowledge of laboratory projects and equipment.

3. Contributions (scientific, scientific-applied, applied).

I positively evaluate the self-assessment of the contributions of the candidate for "Associate Professor" of all scientific publications. The main part of the conducted research is in the field of pathology caused by toxic substances, neoplasias and infectious diseases. The studies were carried out using modern and routine morphological methods and analysis, aimed at clarifying the pathogenesis and morphogenesis, as well as systematizing the patho-anatomical findings and the diagnosis of some known and new, increasingly topical intoxications, problematic for domestic animals.

The scientific contributions show a clearly defined scientific profile and are well grouped into 4 independent thematic areas, which I consider to be correctly and logically separated, namely:

I. Contributions related to the study of the pathoanatomical characteristics of changes in the animal organism, in diseases related to endocrinological disorders, neurological changes, etc. caused by taking toxic substances and others.

II. Pathologoanatomical and pharmacological studies of samples of plant origin.

In this regard, studies were conducted to confirm the pharmacological activity of medicinal plants using pathomorphological methods. For this purpose, extracts, saponin fractions and secondary metabolites were studied for antioxidant, hepatoprotective, neuroprotective, nephroprotective, antitumor and antiosteoporotic activity.

III. Clinical and pathological assessment of infectious and non-infectious diseases in domestic and captive animals.

Research is aimed at clarifying the pathogenesis and morphogenesis, systematizing the patho-anatomical finding and diagnosing some known and new infectious and non-infectious diseases problematic for domestic animals.

IV. Research of a scientific and applied nature.

They are related to the development of an *in silico* protocol for predicting pharmacological activity, a differential-diagnostic scheme of diseases accompanied by endocrinological disorders, neurological changes, etc. Basic research was carried out with the aim of putting into operation cytological methods for diagnosing reproductive changes in productive animals. The obtained results for the protective effect of medicinal plants are the basis for the development of phytoproducts with the aim of their application in humane and veterinary-medical practice.

4. Evaluation of the candidate's personal contribution.

All publications of ch. assistant G. Popov are current, purposeful and perspective developments, which present him as a very well-prepared theoretical and practical scientist,

with very good opportunities for independent and collective research activities in the field of pathology, toxicology and clinical analysis. In all scientific developments, the personal contribution of Dr. Popov undoubtedly stands out, which is why I consider that the mentioned contributions are largely his personal work. All contributions are competently justified and formulated, highly informative and fully consistent with the obtained experimental results. From the presented reference for the minimum requirements for the academic position "Associate Professor", it can be seen that the candidate fully meets and even exceeds the mandatory requirements for "Associate Professor". For some of the mandatory minimum requirements, the candidate ch. assistant Georgi Popov not only meets, but also exceeds the same requirements of the FVM at LTU - Sofia. This is also confirmed by the total number of points referred to the minimum requirements for "Docent" in FVM at LTU, which he presents - **635.00**.

Bearing in mind the scientific output of the candidate Dr. Georgi Popov for the academic position "Associate Professor" presented for evaluation, I am convinced that it definitely defines his established professional appearance as a researcher and scientist in the field of pathology, toxicology.

5. Conclusion.

Based on the presented evidence of teaching and research activity, the relevance of the problems on which he works and scientific contributions, publication activity, teaching knowledge and experience, scientific and teaching experience and personal qualities of the candidate in the Competition for the academic position " Associate Professor"; Ch. assistant Dr. Georgi Stoichev Popov, PhD from the Department of "Internal Non-Communicable Diseases, Pathology and Pharmacology" at the Forestry University - Sofia, I highly appreciate his scientific and professional-academic output and I am convinced that it definitely defines his built professional image of researcher and scientist in the field of pathology and toxicology.

In connection with the above, I propose ch. assistant Dr. Georgi Stoychev Popov, PhD, to be elected to the academic position of "**ASSOCIANT PROFESSOR**", professional direction "Veterinary Medicine", scientific specialty "Animal Pathology".

14.05.2024

Sofia

Prepared the opinion:

(Prof. Dr. Ya. Iliev, PhD)