



## OPINION

on the materials submitted for participation in a competition for „Associate Professor“ academic position in the higher education field 6. Agricultural sciences and veterinary medicine, professional field 6.5. Forestry, scientific degree “Technology, mechanization and automation of the woodworking and furniture industry”, in the subject area “Woodworking machines“

In the competition for associate professor degree, as published in the State Gazette, Issue 102 dated 08.12.2023 and on the website of the University of Forestry with code WWI-AsP-1123-116, for the needs of the Department of „Woodworking machines“ at the Faculty of Forest Industry, as a candidate participates Chief Assistant Professor Valentin Atanasov Atanasov Ph.D., Faculty of Forestry, Department of „Woodworking machines“.

**Prepared by:** Dimitar Hristov Angelski, Ph.D., Prof. in Professional Field 6.5. Forestry

### 1. Brief biographical data for the candidate

Chief Assistant Professor Valentin Atanasov Atanasov PhD, was born in the city of Kazanlak in 1981. From 2004 he entered the University of Forestry as a student, graduating in 2008 as an engineer-bachelor majoring in "Woodworking and furniture production". In 2008, he completed his master's degree at University of Forestry, as a master's engineer, majoring in "Woodworking and furniture production", "Furniture Production" module. In 2011, after a competitive exam, he was enrolled as a full-time doctoral student at the "Woodworking Machines" department, majoring in "Machines and equipment for forestry, logging, woodworking and furniture industry". In 2014, he defended his dissertation work on the topic "A study on operational indicators of mobile horizontal band saws" and received the educational and scientific degree "doctor". After successfully passing a competitive exam in 2014, he was a regular "assistant" at the "Woodworking machines" department. After participating in a competition in 2016, he was selected as a "chief assistant" at the "Woodworking Machines" department, with which academic position he applied for an “associate professor” in the current competition. In 2017, he obtained a master's degree at the Technical University - Sofia, majoring in "Computer Design and Technologies in Mechanical Engineering". Since 2018, he has been performing engineering and design work for SUBCOMM (USA), and his main activity is related to computer-aided design and calculations. Since 2019, he has been a part-time teacher at the Department of Mechanical Engineering and Metal Cutting Machines at the “Technical University” - Sofia. He participated in a number of international scientific conferences and trainings. He has good language skills, having an independent level of proficiency in English, Spanish and Russian. He has experience in translations of technical literature from English. Also, since 2016, actively supports the participation of University of Forestry in the “Expomebel” and “Technomebel” exhibitions. In addition, he actively participated in the candidate student campaign of University of Forestry and, respectively Faculty of Forest Industry since 2017.

## **2. Correspondence of the submitted documents and materials of the applicant according to the Rules of the Development of academic staff at the University of Forestry.**

All provided materials for participation in the competition have been prepared properly, being clearly arranged. They all comply to the recommended requirements as per the Law on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the rules for implementing that law. All the terms and conditions for occupation of academic positions are met as specified under the Rules on development of the academic staff (PRAS) at the University of Forestry.

Chief Assist. Prof. Valentin Atanasov meets the mandatory requirements for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor". He has been "Chief Assistant Professor" since 2016, has published monographic work, which topic differs from the dissertation subject. He presents list of all his publications (scientific works) ever since he has occupied the academic degree "Chief Assistant Professor". Enclosed are also copy of his diploma for the scientific "Doctor" degree, document for the occupied academic degree "Chief Assistant Professor", reference for his contributions at scientific publications and reflections of his paperwork by other authors, report on his academic employment at the University of Forestry. According to the requirements are presented also other materials and supporting documents.

## **3. Assessment of the candidate's educational and pedagogical activities (work with students and PhD students)**

The following more important indicators are characteristic of the candidate's overall educational and teaching activity: a wide range of technical knowledge and a high professional level. He presents himself as an established teacher with a won authority among colleagues and students not only at the Forestry University, but also at the Technical University, Sofia. This opinion is confirmed by available facts, duly presented in the documentation for this competition. Ch. Assistant Professor Valentin Atanasov already has more than 10 years of experience as a university teacher, and for 8 years he has held the academic position of "Ch. assistant". Over the years, he was the holder of lecture courses in 6 academic disciplines. From 2016 until now, he leads lectures in the discipline "Woodworking machines", for which the competition was announced. He was the thesis supervisor of 4 diploma theses of bachelor's degree students (Reference No. ФГП-127#6/10.01.2024). He is the author or co-author of 6 approved and used in the education of students' study programs for disciplines from the Bachelor's College of Education and the Master's College of Education (ФГП-127#3/10.01.2024). Over the years, Assistant Professor Dr. V. Atanasov has carried out his academic workload in accordance with the Regulations for the Activities of University of Forestry (Reference No. ФГП-127#8/10.01.2024). During the current academic year 2023 /24 year has a planned study load of 551 hours. Chief assistant Valentin Atanasov participated in an infrastructure project related to the creation of a teaching laboratory "Laser processing of wood and wood-based materials". He enjoys authority among the academic community at the University of Forestry, being recognizable also in the international scientific community.

## **4. Assessment of candidate's scientific, scientific-applied and publishing activities**

General description of the presented materials

Candidate Chief Assistant Prof. Valentin Atanasov Ph.D. participated in the competition with:

- Monographic work - 1 unit;

- Publications - 33 items
- The candidate's publications are divided as follows:  
Publications in scientific journals – 12 items, including:

- in journals with an impact factor – 1 item;
- in foreign journals referenced in Web of Science and Scopus – 3 items;

Based on the presented documents and materials, it's quite clear that the scientific, applied science and publishing activities are fully compliant with the requirements for occupation of the academic position "Associate Professor" as specified in the Rulebook for the Academic Staff Development at the University of Forestry. I appreciate the publishing activity of Chief Assist. Prof. Valentin Atanasov. The style of the author is professional, academic, clear and readable.

#### **4.1 Participation in scientific, scientific-applied and educational projects**

The candidate Ch. Assistant Professor Valentin Atanasov presented in the competition documentation a total of 9 projects (reference НИС-75-1/08.01.2024). One of them can be classified as a national scientific project, and the rest are topics related to forestry holdings at University of Forestry. The candidate did not include projects in the self-assessment report for the fulfilment of the minimum national requirements for academic position "associate professor" and accordingly they were not counted as a point asset.

#### **4.2 Characterization of published scientific results**

Chief Assist. Prof. Valentin Atanasov, develops in-depth scientific and scientific-applied activities. His scientific interests are entirely focused on the subject of the competition and are directly related to the discipline "Woodworking machines". Most of the publications are the result of collective developments, for which there are no protocols presented for the individual participation of individual authors. The monograph and three articles are independent developments of Ch. assistant Valentin Atanasov. The applicant's materials are published mainly in English.

#### **4.3 Reflection of Candidate's Scientific Publications in Literature (known citations)**

- Total - 27 citations.
- **By type of citations:**
- In reference journals and proceedings of scientific forums - 13 citations;
- In non-refereed journals and proceedings of scientific forums – 11 citations.

#### **4.4 Contributions to the candidate's work (scientific, scientific-applied, applied)**

The candidate's scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions are related to solving problems in the field of power-energy parameters, kinematics and dynamics of woodworking machines. The review of the materials for the announced competition shows that the overall production of the candidate contains contributions that, in terms of volume and significance for science and practice, exceed the normative requirements for the academic position of "associate professor".

### **5. Assessment of the applicant's personal candidate**

The documentation lacks information about the Candidate's percentage or other shareholding in the collective publications and developments. However, the co-author collectives are relatively small and the contribution of individual members is clearly discernible. A review of the publications in which Chief Assistant Atanasov is an independent author shows that he has his own "writing style".

This style of his writing can easily be found in many other collective works, which gives me reason to say that his personal involvement in them is well noticeable.

## 6. Critical remarks

I have no specific critical remarks regarding the content of the publications and the included additional materials in this contest. However, it should be noted that the Applicant's Statement of Contributions admitted repetitions and unnecessarily presented data analyses. The precise truncation of the contributions would lead to a clearer idea of the candidate's scientific achievements and a more precise distinction between scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions. Furthermore, the contributions lack explanations regarding the methodology developed or refined. Some of the contributions talk about "different methodology", but do not specify the differences. Also, it is good to present specific details about the particular conditions and claims. Otherwise, there may be a contradiction with basic principles and regularities. For example, in Scientific Contribution No. 3 of Section I (Force-Energy Parameters of Milling Machines and Their Influence on the Design of Main Working Bodies), the following is claimed: "it was experimentally proven that the dependences existing in the literature relating to forces and power of cutting are applicable under ideal machine operating conditions' and 'this makes them practically inapplicable as woodworking machines are designed to operate in production rather than laboratory conditions'. Taken literally, this means that specific dependencies on literary sources are rejected or questioned. On the other hand, a self-evaluative character is noticeable in some of the contributions, which should be avoided. In this regard, my collegial recommendation to the candidate is to present in a shorter and more precise form his future research contributions.

## 7. Personal impressions

I have many years of immediate personal impressions of the personality of Ch. assistant Valentin Atanasov. I can state that he is an outstanding teacher and colleague with well-expressed positive qualities. I know him as a conscientious, purposeful and energetic person. He is precise in his work, with a clear desire to provide quality and comprehensive training to students. Able to work and create both independently and in a team. The review of the fulfillment of the criteria for the academic position "associate professor" shows that he fully meets the set requirements. All this gives me sufficient reason to express my positive opinion and my conviction about the merits that he possesses not only as a teacher, scientist and specialist, but also as a person with clearly expressed positive qualities.

## 8. Conclusion

**In relation to all above, I propose that Chief Assistant Professor Ph.D. Valentin Atanasov Atanasov is selected for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the discipline „Woodworking machines“ in the Professional field 6.5. Forestry, scientific specialty „Technology, mechanization and automation of the woodworking and furniture industry“.**

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