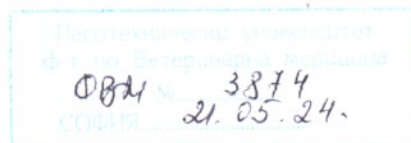


OPINION



on the materials for participation in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor", Field of higher education 6. Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Professional field 6.4. Veterinary Medicine, scientific specialty "Animal Pathology", in the discipline "Pathology (General Pathomorphology)", announced by University of Forestry in State newspaper no. 18/1.3.2024, procedure code VM-AsP-0224-126.

Applicant for participation in the competition:

1. The only candidate in the announced competition is **Chief Assistant Professor Georgi Stoichev Popov**, Ph.D. lecturer at the "Internal non-infectious diseases, pathology and pharmacology" department of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Forestry of Sofia.

The statement was prepared by: **Associate Professor Georgi Ivanov Georgiev, Ph.D.** Field higher education Department 6. Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Professional field 6.4. Veterinary medicine, scientific specialty "Morphology", lecturer in the discipline "Anatomy of domestic animals", Department of "Anatomy, Physiology and Animal Sciences", Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Forestry - Sofia, internal member of the Scientific Jury, approved by Order 202/ 15.04.2024 of the Rector of University of Forestry.

1. Brief biographical data about the candidate

Dr. Georgi Stoychev Popov was born on 03.08.1990 in Gotse Delchev.

In 2009 completed his secondary education at "Yane Sandanski" High School of Natural Sciences, Gotse Delchev, profile Natural Mathematics.

In May 2015 Dr. Georgi Stoichev Popov completed his higher education at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Forestry, Sofia, and was awarded a master's degree in veterinary medicine. From the same month until January 2016, he practiced veterinary medicine at the "Ami Vet" veterinary clinic.

In January 2016 Dr. Georgi Stoychev Popov, after winning a competition, was appointed to the position of assistant in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at University of Forestry, Department of "Internal Non-infectious Diseases, Pathology and Pharmacology", as his main teaching activity is related to "Veterinary Medicine" students, in particular preparation and conducting of exercises, seminars, practical, semester exams in the disciplines of Pathology /General Pathomorphology/ and Pathology /Special Pathological Anatomy/.

beginning of the 2020-2021 academic year; member of the Bulgarian Veterinary Union.

2. Conformity of the applicant's submitted documents and materials with the requirements according to the Regulations on the Development of Academic Staff at University of Forestry.

The applicant's documents have been submitted fully in accordance with the requirements and according to the 2019 Regulations on the Development of Academic Staff at University of Forestry, as according to member 60, line 4 the required documents are 12, and the candidate participates with 22 documents, to which corresponding and sufficient evidentiary material is attached. Diplomas for higher education and "Ph.D." are notarized, and all paper documents are attached to electronic ones and to a link in an Internet platform.

According to the minimum national requirements and the Regulations on the Development of Academic Staff at University of Forestry for academic position "Associate professor", the indicators are:

Indicator A for associate professor requires 50 points, the candidate has 50 points

Indicator C for associate professor requires 100 points, the candidate has 104.89 points

Indicator D for associate professor requires 200 points, the candidate has 216 points

Indicator E for associate professor requires 50 points, the candidate has 265 points

The candidate has also covered the minimum national requirements for "Ph.D." by declaring 30.8 out of the required 30 points.

According to all required 4 indicators chief assistant Georgi Stoichev Popov, Ph.D. exceeds or fulfills the number of points. The candidate's total number of points is 635.89, which is one and a half times more than the 400 points required for the academic position associate professor, he also fulfilled the minimum national requirements for the Ph.D., his documents were submitted in full compliance and order according to the Regulations on the Development of Academic Staff from 2019, they are even more than the required ones, which gives me a reason for a very high rating according to this indicator.

3. Evaluation of the candidate's educational and teaching activities

Chief Assistant Professor Georgi Stoichev Popov regularly and actively participates in the educational and pedagogical activities mainly in 2 obligatory

In 2019 Dr. Georgi Stoichev Popov obtained the educational and scientific degree "Ph.D. of Veterinary Medicine", field of higher education 6. Agricultural sciences and veterinary medicine, professional field 6.4. Veterinary medicine, scientific specialty "Animal pathology" with the topic of the dissertation: *"Pathomorphological and pharmacological studies on the protective effect of biologically active substances from medicinal plants"*.

In September 2020 won a competition for the position of chief assistant in the indicated direction and scientific specialty and is currently in this academic position in the same department.

To date, Dr. Georgi Stoichev Popov has a total of more than 8 years of work experience at the University of Forestry, of which almost 4 years as a chief assistant.

Along with his direct daily teaching work, Chief Assistant Professor Georgi Staiychev Popov, Ph.D. constantly improves his professional academic qualification, additional skills and competences in the field of the most modern information and medical technologies, speaks English (level B2), has a professional qualification in the protection and humane treatment of experimental animals used for scientific and educational purposes. He is constantly involved in the preparation, making of temporary and permanent macroscopic and microscopic preparations, both for the annual training of veterinary students in the disciplines "General Pathomorphology" and "Special Pathological Anatomy", as well as for completing and improving the exhibits and models in the equipment and the development of the pathohistology laboratory and the macroscopic specimen museum laboratory.

Chief Assistant Professor Gerogi Stoychev Popov, Ph.D., participates in a number of administrative and other activities, namely: member of the Academic Council of University of Forestry; member of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at University of Forestry; member of the Faculty Commission at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine on "Organization and conduct of practices and internships"; member of the Organizing Committee of the International Scientific Conference "Tradition and Modernity in Veterinary Medicine"; member of the Editorial Board for creating a collection of abstracts and program of the International Scientific Conference "Tradition and Modernity in Veterinary Medicine"; materially responsible person at the "Internal Non-infectious Diseases, Pathology and Pharmacology" department; course supervisor of the first-year students (studying in Bulgarian and English), starting from the

disciplines, fulfilling the mandatory total annual workload of 360 academic hours by teaching "General Pathomorphology" and "Special Pathological Anatomy" with the students of 2nd, 3th, 4th year, and in case of shortage, he supplemented with classes in "Veterinary hygiene" and "Clinical Laboratory" with the students of the 2nd, 3rd and 5th year.

Chief assistant professor Georgi Stoichev Popov, Ph.D. regularly held lectures and participated in conducting practical and theoretical exams in the disciplines "General Pathomorphology" and "Special Pathological Anatomy"

Chief assistant professor Georgi Stoichev Popov, Ph.D. participates in the organization and conduct of practical classes in English with foreign language training in the mentioned disciplines, as well as in the conduct of practical and theoretical exams in the relevant subjects.

Chief assistant professor Dr. Georgi Stoichev Popov, supported the development by actively participating in the processing, preparation and reading of microscopic preparations in 4 different dissertations in scientific specialties of Ph.D. students from other departments of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine.

Chief assistant professor Georgi Stoichev Popov, participated together with students in two scientific developments, as a trainer in a group specialization in "Veterinary dermatology of small and exotic animals" and in an individual specialization in "Veterinary dermatology".

The candidate has been awarded multiple times at internationally recognized forums, namely "Tradition and Modernity in Veterinary Medicine", 2021, 2022, 2023 winning two first, one second and two third places.

The exceptional activity of Dr. Gerogi Stoychev Popov in his educational and teaching activities together with his constant energy to improve himself through his active and applied work in various Ph.D. theses, student developments and important specializations required by veterinary medical practice gives me grounds for a high evaluation and this point.

4. Evaluation of the candidate's scientific, applied scientific and publication activity

4.1. Participation in scientific, scientific-applied and educational projects

The candidate has participated in 4 (2 for the Ph.D. and 2 for the competition for associate professor) in number of university research projects: *"Application of BM (bone marrow) and PRP (platelet-enriched plasma) in osteoarthritis of the knee joint in sheep"*; *"Prevalence, diagnosis, prognosis,*

therapy and prevention of cardiac Dirofilaria immitis in cats in Bulgaria"; "Investigation of the influence of plant extracts on the qualitative indicators of seminal fluid of ram, during different reproductive periods"; "Investigation of serum amyloid A in cats as a diagnostic and prognostic marker of inflammation in different disease groups".

Dr. Gerogi Popov is very active in his scientific and applied activities, having participated in 23 scientific forums in Bulgaria and abroad (5 of which are pending the award of Ph.D., and 18 for the competition for associate professor). Participated in the organization, management and implementation of 8 scientific conferences in Bulgaria.

4.2. Characteristics of published scientific results

Scientific works to date - **a total of 25**, including a dissertation and an abstract of the dissertation work for the Ph.D. and 7 publications to cover the minimum national requirements for the Ph.D.

According to the submitted documents, the candidate, Dr. Gerogi Stoychev Popov, Ph.D., participated in the competition for academic position "**Associate professor**" with the following scientific works, as follows:

D.5. Published monograph, which is not presented as the main habilitation work, monograph - one on the topic: "*Pathological-anatomical characteristics of poisoning in domestic animals*", *PANEV Publishing, Sofia, 136 pages*

D.6. Published book based on a protected dissertation work for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Ph.D.", a book on a protected dissertation work - one with the title: "*Pathomorphological and pharmacological studies on the protective effect of biologically active substances of species of the genus Astragalus*", *PANEV Publishing, Sofia, 136 pages*

Fourteen (14) scientific articles published in full text, which are distributed by indicators as follows:

C. 4. Habilitation thesis - scientific publications (not less than 10) in publications that are referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information - ten (10) issues.

D.7. Articles and reports published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information - four (4) issues.

Textbooks - not provided, but not required

Seven (7) were published in Bulgarian periodicals, and **seven (7)** in foreign magazines.

Fourteen (14) are referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information, of which **seven (7)** have an **impact factor (IF)**, one has an **impact rank (SJR)** and **six (6)** have no impact factor and rank, but are in refereed world journals in Web of Sciences and Scopus.

Its total impact factor (**IF, 7 articles**) value from publications is **24.115**. The article published in *Acta Morphologica et Anthropologica* has an **impact rank (SJR) of 0.156**.

The scientific works by the language in which they were written: 14 publications in English, and the monograph and the dissertation book are in Bulgarian.

Scientific works by number of co-authors are: 4 independent, 1 with two, 3 with three co-authors and eight (8) with more than three co-authors.

The candidate can be evaluated highly according to his active publication activity, with the highest evaluation deserving of the large number of articles in referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases focused on pathomorphological research and the effect of plant substances on processes in the animal organism. It is noteworthy that all the articles are in English (14), which is of great importance for the growth and recognition of a young scientist. His interest is mostly related to the pathoanatomical picture in poisonings, pathomorphological changes and pharmacological studies of the protective effect of biologically active substances, which I greatly admire and fully correspond to the scientific specialty of the competition, namely "Animal Pathology", and will also greatly enriched the material in the disciplines taught by him, especially in the discipline "General Pathomorphology", which arguments strengthen my convictions for the high evaluation.

4.3. Reflection of the candidate's scientific activity in the literature (cited) - a total of 19 issues.

- Citations in referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information - **17** issues.

- Citations in non-refereed journals with scientific review – **2** issues.

Reflection in the literature is the highest certificate for the successful work of a scientist, which exceeds five times the minimum requirements for citations, and 14 of them are in journals with an impact factor, which makes it easy to give an excellent rating on this point as well.

4.4. Contributions in the works of the candidate (scientific, scientific-applied, applied)

The contributions submitted by the candidate from his scientific works, submitted for participation in the competition for "Associate Professor", are classified into 4 main areas:

A) Pathological-anatomical characteristics of changes in the animal organism, caused by the intake of toxic substances and others - are two presented in connection monography and a book on the dissertation.

B) Pathological-anatomical and pharmacological studies of samples of plant origin - 8 original contributions.

C) Clinical and pathomorphological assessment of infectious and non-infectious diseases in domestic and captive animals - a total of 6 items, 4 of which are original and two of a confirmatory nature.

D) Studies of a scientific and applied nature - 5 pieces.

I accept all contributions of the candidate, valuing the most related to the reflection of the pathomorphological macroscopic and microscopic changes in specific intoxications, the selection and correct sampling during the patho-anatomical examination and in toxicological analysis, as well as the comparison of differential-diagnostic options between poisonings with other diseases. The applicant's contributions based on the pharmacological effects in a state of intoxication of the protective properties of two types of flavonoids are unappealable. The declared data are invaluable for future macroscopic and microscopic studies, both for the visualization of pathological structures in intoxications, and for the identification of pathological changes in the relevant organs in domestic and exotic animals, which are the subject of modern veterinary medical practice.

5. Evaluation of the candidate's personal contribution

In all the reflected directions, in connection with the candidate's participation in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor", I define a very well-expressed scientific activity, with an outstanding personal contribution of Chief Assistant Professor Georgi Stoichev Popov, Ph.D., which is

confirmed by the fact that the candidate is the lead author in 3 publications, and in second place in 2. Independent participation in the published monography and dissertation book, where 80 author figures totally are presented by him, is important. No less important is his work in collectives with diverse clinical, morphological and pharmaceutical specialists, which is proof of the understanding, stability and responsibility of the candidate.

6. Critical notes and recommendations

The materials presented for the competition by Dr. Georgi Stoychev Popov, Ph.D. are comprehensive and detailed, and from the review of all of them I was not able to notice any omissions, and I haven't critical remarks, which is due to the precise work of the candidate himself and his work in collaboration with their established team with Professor Vasil Manov, Ph.D.

I recommend that he continue his research on the pathoanatomical picture in poisonings, the pathomorphological changes of various organs and structures in various pathological conditions, as well as pharmacological studies of the protective action of biologically active substances in domestic and exotic animals, which are a real object of work in modern veterinary medical practice.

7. Personal impressions

I know Dr. Georgi Stoychev Popov as my student, teacher and colleague. I would characterize him as an extremely good, respectful and highly representative of modern theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of "Special Pathology" and "General Pathomorphology". He has a pronounced affinity for scientific activity, being responsible, precise and responsive to the assigned tasks, knows how to work in a team and shows flexibility in terms of priorities, which makes the candidate a promising young, constantly searching and goal-oriented scientist.

8. Conclusion

The documents and materials presented by Chief Assistant Professor Georgi Stoichev Popov, Ph.D., meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its Implementation at the University of Forestry, having fulfilled the minimum national requirements for academic position "Associate Professor". Bearing in mind the relevance of the presented problems and the modern methodology and approach in the developed and presented scientific works, the necessity of the developed scientific problems and contributions, as well as the candidate's impeccable experience in research and teaching activities in his chosen scientific specialty - "Animal Pathology", I find it reasonable to give my

ultimate **positive assessment** and recommend to the respected Scientific Jury, chief Assistant Professor Georgi Stoychev Popov, Ph.D., **to be ranked to occupy** the academic position of "**Associate Professor**" under the announced competition by University of Forestry in Field of higher education **6. Agricultural sciences and veterinary medicine**, Professional field **6.4. Veterinary medicine, scientific specialty "Animal Pathology"**.

21.05.2024

Prepared the opinion:  ...

(associate prof. Georgi Ivanov Georgiev, Ph.D.)