

To:

The Chairman of the Scientific Jury,

Appointed by Order No. P-4186/16.07.2026

of the Rector of Medical University - Plovdiv

STATEMENT

By Professor Slavi Dimitrov Delchev, MD, PhD

Department of Anatomy, Histology, and Embryology,

Medical University – Plovdiv,

Elected as a member of the Scientific Jury

Subject: Competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in "Physiology", in the Higher Education Area 7. Healthcare and Sports, Professional Field 7.1. Medicine, at the Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine of Medical University - Plovdiv for the teaching in Bulgarian and English, announced in the State Gazette, issue 44 of May 14, 2026.

1. General Presentation of the Procedure and the Candidate

In the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor announced in the State Gazette, issue No. 44 of May 14, 2026, for the needs of the Department of Physiology at the Faculty of Medicine the **sole candidate** is Senior lecturer Penka Angelova-Hristova, MD, PhD.

The set of materials on electronic media submitted to me by Dr. Penka Angelova-Hristova **complies** with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB) and the Regulations for holding the academic position "Associate Professor" at the Medical University of Plovdiv.

The candidate has submitted one monograph, one chapter in a multi-authored monograph, and a total of 27 publications for the "Associate Professor" competition; 23 teaching manuals; and a list of participations in four scientific forums and four research projects.

The distribution of scientific papers by category is as follows: articles in refereed journals – 12 (7 of which have an Impact Factor); articles in non-refereed publications – 15; publications in foreign journals – 3; and citations – 16.

The documents submitted by the candidate for this competition are comprehensive and correctly organized, with no remarks regarding their authenticity.

2. Brief Biographical Data of the Candidate

Dr. Penka Angelova-Hristova, MD, PhD, completed her medical education at the Faculty of Medicine, Medical University – Plovdiv, in 2002. From 2003 to 2009, she worked as a general practitioner. In 2007, she was appointed as an assistant professor at the Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, Medical University – Plovdiv. That same year, she qualified as a specialist in General Medicine, followed by a specialization in Physiology in 2014. In 2015, she obtained her PhD degree in Medicine after successfully defending her dissertation titled "Characterization and Non-pharmacological Treatment of Diet-induced Metabolic Syndrome in Rats." She was appointed as a senior assistant professor at the same department in 2016. In

2025, she completed a Master's degree program in "Sports Physiology, Sports Cardiology, and Sports Traumatology," a joint program between Medical University – Plovdiv and the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski."

The candidate possesses strong teamwork skills, as well as the ability to organize, conduct, and analyse research experiments. Dr. Angelova-Hristova is the principal investigator of one research project and a team member on three internal university research projects. She is proficient in English, successfully applying the language in her research and teaching activities.

Dr. Angelova-Hristova has participated in specialized scientific forums, where she has presented her research findings.

3. General Characteristics of the Candidate's Activities

The candidate, Dr. Angelova-Hristova, has 19 years of teaching experience in the field of Human Physiology at the Department of Physiology within the Faculty of Medicine at Medical University – Plovdiv. The submitted records indicate that her annual teaching workload in recent years has ranged from 954 to 1,229 hours, significantly exceeding the required minimum.

The candidate conducts practical classes and lectures in both Bulgarian and English for compulsory courses across the Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Dental Medicine, Faculty of Pharmacy, Faculty of Public Health, and the Medical College at Medical University – Plovdiv. She has contributed to the authorship and publication of 23 teaching manuals and study aids in Bulgarian and English. In her last performance appraisal, she received the highest grade - "very good".

4. Evaluation of the Candidate's Scientific and Applied Research Activities

The candidate has presented a total of 27 articles. These can be categorized by significance as follows: 7 articles in journals with an Impact Factor, 12 in refereed journals, and 15 in non-refereed publications. Regarding the place of publication: 1 article appeared in the *European Journal of Public Health* (IF=5.2), 1 in the *Muscles, Ligaments and Tendons Journal* (IF=1.1), 5 in the *Journal of IMAB* (IF=0.2), 1 in *Folia Medica*, 1 in *Acta Morphologica et Anthropologica*, 1 in *Endocrinologia*, and 2 in the *Trakia Journal of Science*. The candidate has delivered 2 presentations at international scientific conferences and 2 reports published in the proceedings of national scientific conferences, sessions, and seminars; the candidate is the first author of 4 publications.

Senior lecturer Dr. Angelova-Hristova **has fulfilled** all and significantly exceeded the required criteria of MU - Plovdiv for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor".

5. Contributions (scientific, applied science, applied) and citations

The candidate, Dr. Penka Angelova-Hristova, possesses extensive experience in researching metabolic syndrome (MetS) associated with insulin resistance. A new combined dietary model free of added cholesterol has been developed. This model is suitable for studying hypertriglyceridemia and low HDL-cholesterol levels in individuals who restrict their intake of saturated fatty acids and cholesterol, as well as for exploring therapeutic options to address this condition.

Another area of research involves a combined dietary model with added cholesterol to induce MetS accompanied by insulin resistance. A wide range of parameters was examined, revealing a decline in physical work capacity, aerobic capacity, and the experimental animals'

adaptation to physical exertion. A state of reduced resting energy expenditure was observed during the initial stages of dietary, exercise-based, and combined interventions for managing overweight and MetS.

Studies of this nature are labour-intensive and require meticulous planning, organization of the experimental procedures, data processing, and precise analysis of the results.

In another area of research, Dr. Angelova-Hristova has examined the physical condition of professional footballers, swimmers, and aerobic gymnastics athletes. Changes in the aerobic capacity and cardiovascular system parameters of the athletes were analysed in depth.

The candidate's participation in four research projects (serving as lead researcher on one) related to the areas under study demonstrates her professional competence. The research findings have been thoroughly interpreted and published in specialized scientific journals.

The reported citation record - 16 citations (under item D.10) fully meets the required number, with nearly all of them appearing in international scientific publications. These citations pertain exclusively to the research topics addressed by Dr. Angelova-Hristova.

6. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no comments on the scientific papers and materials presented by the candidate.

The area of scientific interests of Senior lecturer Penka Angelova-Hristova is focused on physiology as well as the etiopathogenic mechanisms and markers of socially significant diseases, offering an excellent prospect for the further development and expansion of scientific inquiry. The use of new experimental models relevant to these areas of study will enhance our understanding of the physiological or pathological changes occurring within the organism at various levels.

CONCLUSION

The career development of Senior lecturer Penka Angelova-Hristova, MD, PhD, her scientometric indicators, research contributions, teaching workload, participation in research projects, and development of teaching materials **fully comply** with the requirements set out in the ZRASRB, the Regulations for its implementation, and the regulations of the Medical University - Plovdiv regarding the academic position of Associate Professor. The candidate's work demonstrates original scientific and applied contributions that have received international recognition.

Having reviewed the materials and scientific works submitted for the competition, and having analysed their significance as well as the scientific and applied scientific contributions they contain, I have grounds to provide a **positive assessment** of Dr. Penka Angelova-Hristova, MD, PhD, and to recommend that the members of the esteemed scientific jury **support** her appointment to the academic position of Associate Professor in Human Physiology at the Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, Medical University – Plovdiv (Higher Education Area 7: Healthcare and Sports; Professional Field 7.1: Medicine).

September 10, 2026

Prepared by:

Professor Slavi Delchev, MD, PhD

Заложено на основание
Чл. 5 §1, 6, 7 "Б" Регламент (ЕС) 2016/679