

EVALUATION OPINION

by

Prof. Lyudmil Borisov Petkov, PhD

In connection with the competition for occupying the academic position of

Associate Professor,

announced in the *State Gazette*, issue No. 57 / July 15, 2025,

in professional field **8.3. Music and Dance Arts,**

specialty **“Foreign Language Interpretation of the Musical Piece,”**

for the needs of the **Department of Music Pedagogy and Conducting**

at the **Faculty of Music Pedagogy,**

Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts “Prof. Asen Diamandiev” – Plovdiv

I was appointed as a member of the *Academic Jury* following the Order of the Rector No. ПД-27-119, issued in Plovdiv on 12th September, 2025, pursuant to Article 25 of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and in accordance with the decision of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Music Pedagogy (Protocol No. 17 of 12th September, 2025).

The sole applicant in the competition is Senior Lecturer Dr. Kalina Ivanova Decheva-Petkova.

The documentation submitted for my examination is complete and duly prepared, containing all required components in compliance with the provisions of:

- The Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria;
- The Regulations for the Implementation of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria;
- The Statute and Regulations of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts “Prof. Asen Diamandiev – Plovdiv.

Brief Biography Information

Kalina Decheva was born in Plovdiv, where she completed her secondary education at the English Language School. She subsequently enhanced her linguistic education through Master’s programs at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” and Veliko Tarnovo University “St. St. Cyril and Methodius.”

She has been a lecturer in English at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts “Prof. Asen Diamandiev” – Plovdiv for over eighteen years, working with students from a wide

range of performing arts disciplines, including opera singing, visual arts, music, and dance.

Dr. Decheva acquired her doctoral degree with a dissertation paper focusing on language as a bonding factor in the musical-stage arts. She is the author of the book “Language as a Bonding Factor in Musical-stage Arts” and has published numerous academic articles exploring language as a performative element, phonetic challenges in singing and the confident interpretation of foreign-language texts from an artistic perspective.

She has participated in numerous seminars, academic conferences, workshops and other professional forums that foster the exchange of experience and ideas among colleagues in education and the performing arts.

Parameters of the Submitted Materials

Kalina Decheva-Petkova’s research interests are focused on the investigation of the constructs *musical activity*, *verbal text*, and *psychological well-being*. These constructs, established as central in her habilitation thesis “*Language in Musical Activities and the Field of Psychological Well-being*”, are developed within a logically coherent framework. The framework encompasses the influence of language on the individual’s inner world, its instrumentalization in the generation of emotions, personal memories, and social connectedness, as well as its unifying role within the performing musical arts.

The concept of linguistic development, articulated in the context of training future musical performers, is intrinsically linked to emerging opportunities and perspectives for cultural, social, and emotional growth. This concept is further synchronized with the challenges and achievements characteristic of the digital era. Decheva-Petkova’s linguistic expertise elucidates the mechanisms through which music operates as a determinant of psychological well-being and demonstrates the function of language in reinforcing music’s emotional impact. These relationships are explored not in a scholastic but in a creative manner, preserving the connection between motivational dynamics and the practical benefits for art students. This connection strengthens students’ applied skills and dispositions through a coherent motivational strategy.

Decheva-Petkova provides a comprehensive analysis of both established and contemporary theories of psychological well-being. Her theses are convincingly substantiated through an extensive empirical base that includes diagnostic tests, evaluative scales, and surveys. These instruments are further adapted into didactic materials designed to complement her lecture courses.

Through an in-depth examination of the specificities of musical-stage genres, the author delineates the intrinsic unity between text and music and substantiates the cohesive function of language within this unity—linking the concept of the author, performers, and audience. She offers a well-grounded theoretical and methodological perspective on linguistic development within the pedagogical training of future vocal performers. The models proposed for mastering the phonetic features and semantics of a foreign language, and for understanding their reflection in stage performance, incorporate practical approaches for overcoming singers' articulatory difficulties. Particular attention is devoted to the challenges faced by Chinese vocal students in articulating specific English phonemes. The criteria for linguistic proficiency are aligned with the developmental levels of both Bulgarian and international students.

All proposed models for achieving the stated objectives are supported by empirical evidence of their effectiveness. Furthermore, Decheva-Petkova identifies algorithms that facilitate the encoding and expressive functions of language and speech, enabling their constant and dynamic interaction to unfold the full potential of these flexible, complex, and evolving systems.

Personal Impressions and Conclusions

According to me, of particular value is the series of workshops entitled "*Doctoral School*", in which strategies for both micro- and macro-level instruction are systematically shared. The sessions address a range of pedagogical and methodological topics, including the role of musical background in English language classes, effective preparation for English language examinations, the selection of appropriate translation materials required for the doctoral minimum, and the design of self-assessment modules and exercises. Collectively, these initiatives constitute a set of valuable components integrated into the language classroom, ensuring a coherent and result-oriented educational process.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that I have been a direct witness to the ways in which the innovative practices, rigorous scholarly approach and creative professional attitude of Kalina Decheva-Petkova have fostered strong collegial empathy and stimulated a new, autonomous, and self-regulated form of artistic motivation among students. This development was particularly evident during the concert cycle "*Quinta da Regaleira*", in which Kalina Decheva-Petkova took part as a language consultant.

Based on my thorough and comprehensive review of the materials and activities presented by Kalina Decheva-Petkova, I am convinced that she is a serious and dedicated scholar within her field of expertise. Her work demonstrates innovative thinking, methodological precision, and a consistently high level of academic professionalism.

Conclusion

Based on the materials presented in the Reference Report and the detailed study I have personally conducted, I consider the candidature of **Kalina Decheva-Petkova** to be defended at an exceptionally high and substantive academic level. Her overall professional and scholarly activity is extensive in scope and deeply impressive in both its methodological rigour and its intellectual coherence.

Therefore, I am convinced and unreservedly recommend that the esteemed academic committee confer upon **Senior Lecturer Kalina Ivanova Decheva-Petkova, PhD** the academic title of **Associate Professor** in the professional field **8.3. Music and Dance Arts**, specialty **“Foreign Language Interpretation of the Musical Piece.”**

Date: 23 October 2025

Place: Plovdiv

Reviewer:

Prof. Lyudmil Petkov, PhD

(signature)