

EVALUATION OPINION

by

Assoc. Prof. Zhan Stefanov Pehlivanov, PhD
Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts “Prof. Assen Diamandiev” – Plovdiv

In connection with the submitted documents of
Senior Lecturer Kalina Decheva-Petkova, PhD

concerning the competition for occupying the academic position of

Associate Professor

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

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

at the **Faculty of Music Pedagogy**, Department of **Music Pedagogy and Conducting**,
at the **Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts “Prof. Assen Diamandiev” – Plovdiv**,
pursuant to Rector’s Order No. PД -27-119/12.09.2025 – decision of the Faculty Council of
the Faculty of Music Pedagogy (Protocol No. 17 of 12.09.2025).

Kalina Decheva-Petkova, PhD, was born in the city of Plovdiv, where she completed her secondary education at the English Language High School. She subsequently continued her academic advancement by earning Master’s degrees from **Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”** and **Veliko Tarnovo University “St. St. Cyril and Methodius.”** In 2025, she successfully defended her doctoral dissertation and was awarded the PhD educational and scientific degree.

Dr. Decheva-Petkova is a scholar with an extensive academic, research, and methodological portfolio, whose professional development is distinguished by consistency, innovation, and scholarly rigour. The submitted documentation fully meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its Implementation, as well as the Internal regulatory framework of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts “Prof. Assen Diamandiev” – Plovdiv.

- **Group A:** Dissertation thesis titled *“Language as a Bonding Factor in Musical-stage Arts”* and doctoral diploma No. 121 / 18 February 2025, academic advisor: Prof. Toni Shekerdzhieva–Novak, PhD.
- **Group B:** Habilitation work – published monograph titled *“Language in Musical Activities and the Field of Psychological Well-being”*, Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts “Prof. Assen Diamandiev” – Plovdiv, 2025, 193 pages, ISBN 978-619-7682-48-9 (print), ISBN 978-619-7682-49-6 (PDF).
- **Group Г:** **Presents 225 credits out of the required 120.** A published book based on the defended dissertation — *Language as a Bonding Factor in Musical-stage Arts*, Delta T Publishing House, Plovdiv, 2025, ISBN 978-619-7579-03-1.

- **Group Д:** Review of the monograph *Language as a Bonding Factor in Musical-stage Arts*, with an author Assoc. Prof. Zhan Pehlivanov, PhD, *Art Spektrum*, no. 66, May 2025.

Additionally, 12 scholarly publications in specialized journals and edited volumes, including: Jubilee Collection: Music-Theoretical Training in Higher Music Education (2017); Proceedings of the Spring Scientific Readings (2017–2024); International Conference Science, Education, and Innovation in the Arts (2017, 2021, 2023); Multidisciplinary Journal of Science, Education, and Art (2024); National Conference Digital Transformation of Education – Challenges and Solutions (Russe University, 2025).

Citations in peer-reviewed monographs and collective volumes:

Asst. Prof. S. Ruseva, PhD, – *On the Teaching of the Discipline “Bulgarian Folk Music” to Students of the Major “Bulgarian Folk Choreography”*, Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, 2024; Dr. A. Hanse – *The Academic Opera Theatre of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts “Prof. Assen Diamandiev” as a Workshop for Students’ Ideas and Collaborations*, Academic Publishing House “Za Bukvite – O Pismenah”, 2024.

Citations in non-peer-reviewed publications: E. Mateva – *Knowledge: International Journal*, 2024; L. Petkov – *e-Journal VFU*, 2025.

- **Group E: Presents 145 credits out of the required 50.**

Participation in the national scientific, educational, and creative project *Modernization of the Educational Process at NMA and AMDFA* (BG05M2OP001-2.016-0034).

Participation in Project No. 20/2023 at AMDFA – consultant on speech technique for the production of *Blue Monday* by G. Gershwin (Bulgarian premiere).

Coordinator of Project No. 24/2024 at AMDFA – *Implementation and Study of the Microlearning Concept in English Language Instruction for Vocal Class Students*.

Published university textbook: *ESP Handbook for Arts Students*, AMDFA “Prof. Assen Diamandiev,” 2024, ISBN 978-619-7682-43-4 (PDF), ISBN 978-619-7682-44-1 (print).

Delivered four public lectures/workshops for PhD art students (19th February 2024, 26th February 2024, 21st February 2025, and 28th February 2025) on topics related to language preparation for the final language doctoral qualifying examination.

The candidate has defended a doctoral dissertation entitled “*Language as a Bonding Factor in Musical-stage Arts*”, prepared under the supervision of Prof. Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak, PhD. The topic demonstrates an interdisciplinary approach that brings together music pedagogy, stage practice, and linguistic communication—an area that has so far remained insufficiently explored in Bulgaria.

The monograph “*Language in Musical Activities and the Field of Psychological Well-Being*” (Plovdiv, AMDFA, 2025, ISBN 978-619-7682-48-9), submitted as a habilitation work,

exhibits a clearly identifiable contribution to the field. The author elucidates the connections between the linguistic, musical, and psycho-emotional dimensions of the creative process, offering defined methodological solutions for working with students in the field of arts. The content is precise and analytical, combining theoretical depth with practical applicability.

Dr. Decheva-Petkova demonstrates impressive scholarly productivity, with **a total of 12 articles and papers** published in specialized academic issues, alongside numerous contributions to proceedings of international conferences and scientific forums. Her thematic scope encompasses the role of music in foreign language education, the impact of cultural context on language acquisition, and contemporary educational concepts such as microlearning and motivational attitudes in the learning process.

The citations in peer-reviewed publications and collective volumes attest to the candidate's **scholarly visibility and authority** within the academic community.

Particularly significant is the contribution of Dr. Decheva-Petkova to the field of higher music education and teaching methodology. She participates actively in national and international projects, among them the project “*Modernization of the Educational Process at the National Music Academy and AMDFA*” (BG05M2OP001-2.016-0034), as well as other initiatives dedicated to the application of microlearning among students specializing in classical singing. Also noteworthy is the published teaching aid “*ESP Handbook for Arts Students*” (AMDFA, 2024), which serves as a valuable supplement to instruction in specialized English for students in the arts.

The candidate has also demonstrated active engagement in conducting workshops and masterclasses for doctoral students, focused on language training and the methodology of academic communication. Through this work, she contributes to the enhancement of the educational process and to the cultivation of academic culture among emerging researchers.

Dr. Decheva-Petkova's work reveals a consistent effort to integrate linguistic and musical education—particularly in musical-stage majors, where language functions as a mediator between artistic concepts and stage realization. This **contribution is not only pedagogical but also artistically generative**, opening new horizons for interdisciplinary approaches within music education.

Based on the submitted materials, the achieved results, and the candidate's high scientific, pedagogical, and methodological competence, I consider that Kalina Decheva-Petkova, PhD, fully meets the national requirements and the internal criteria of AMDFA “Prof. Assen Diamandiev” for appointment to the academic position of *Associate Professor* in Professional Field 8.3. Music and Dance Arts.

Her work is distinguished by its relevance, interdisciplinarity, and tangible practical contributions to contemporary higher music education.

All of the above provides sufficient grounds for me to express a positive evaluation and to recommend to the esteemed Academic Jury that Kalina Decheva-Petkova, PhD, be appointed to the academic position of Associate Professor in Professional Field 8.3. Music and Dance Arts, in the specialty “*Foreign Language Interpretation of the Musical Piece*”, at the Faculty of Music Pedagogy, Department of Music Pedagogy and Conducting.

Date: 10 November 2025

Reviewer:

Assoc. Prof. Zhan Pehlivanov, PhD