

## STATEMENT

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hrisula Atanas Nedyalkova

regarding a dissertation for the acquisition of an educational and scientific degree  
"Doctor"

**Field of higher education:** 1. Pedagogical sciences

**Professional field:** 1.2 Pedagogy (Media pedagogy)

**University:** Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

**Faculty:** Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts

**Department:** Preschool and media pedagogy

**Dissertation Topic:** The Role of Public Relations (PR) in Soccer to Foster Media Literacy

**Doctoral student:** Dimitar Radoslavov Penev

**Research supervisor:** Prof. Dr. Bozhidar Angelov, DSc

### I. Data on the PhD candidate

Doctoral student Dimitar Radoslavov Penev received a Bachelor's degree in: Public Relations at the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" in 2009, and in 2013 and Master's degree in Sports Journalism. From 2019 to 2022, he is a full-time PhD student at the Preschool and Media Pedagogy Department at the Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts, SU "St. Kliment Ohridski".

His work biography is impressive - from an intern-reporter starting in 2006 in a number of daily newspapers, editor in the agencies Focus, Standard News, in the Sports Department of the city of Standard, head of the department, editor of a sports website, author of "MACHKAST " - podcast of Match-Telegraph, today he is an editor in the same newspaper. For this period there are several hundred publications

in the mentioned media. This success is the result of his creative, analytical and organizational skills, social competences and work and organization of team activities.

All this accumulated professional and personal experience logically leads to the need for its development in the educational and scientific research aspect as well.

## **II. Data for the Ph.D**

By order No. RD 38-410/14.07.2023 of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury in the procedure for the acquisition of the ECD "doctor" by Dimitar Radoslavov Penev. The presented set of documents and materials necessary for the procedure is in accordance with the requirements of the ZRASRB law and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" and proves that the individual stages of the doctoral student's individual plan were implemented successfully and on time.

The dissertation has a total volume of 158 pages, of which 135 pages are the main text. Structurally, the dissertation consists of an introduction, four chapters, conclusion and conclusions, references, 5 appendices, Handbook of Football PR, contributions and publications.

## **III. Dissertation and abstract data**

### **Relevance of the dissertation topic**

The dissertation is dedicated to an important, interesting and unexplored problem in the intended context in the field of: media pedagogy (education of media literacy), sports (specifically - football), journalism (PR - public relations).

The topic chosen by the doctoral student is relevant. The purpose of the research is to present the specifics in the construction and functioning of the relations between the elite football clubs and the media structures in Bulgaria through the role of the PR specialist in the context of creating prerequisites for the formation and development of media literacy. In this sense, the developed dissertation work has a special value in theoretical and scientific-applied terms.

### **Presentation and scientific assessment of the dissertation work**

Dimitar Penev knows very well the state of the researched problem, reflected in the literary sources, critically evaluates what is presented in them. An indisputably sure marker of the theoretical knowledge of the problem is its rich and thorough analysis. Among the variety of definitions of a number of authoritative sources, he finds, researches and formulates the exact characteristic and specificity of the education of media literacy through PR in football.

The chosen methodology and organization of the research are clearly formulated, which allows the achievement of the set goal and an adequate response to the tasks seeking solutions in the dissertation work. It is important here to note the role of the scientific supervisor - Prof. Dr. Bozhidar Angelov, DSc.

The main methods of the research are: theoretical analysis of literary sources on the given issue, survey - with PR-specialists, sports journalists, football players and supporters of football clubs; interview, observation, statistical methods and others.

The highlights of the dissertation work have been selected after a careful study of the problems aimed at optimizing the relationship between professional football clubs, the media and the public space, with an emphasis on the role of PR for the education of media literacy. The analysis is characterized by thoroughness, a personal position and significant conclusions for pedagogical theory and practice (specifically, for the formation of media literacy).

The conclusion is a meaningful summary of the findings presented in the presentation. In it, the author offers clear answers to the research tasks set at the beginning. The proposed at the end of the dissertation work Handbook of football PR, as a main factor for positive relations between football clubs, the media and the public, and education of media literacy, gives the completeness of the work and perspective for future research by the author, based on the content of the accumulated rich research material and professional experience. It is the handbook, as the most beneficial moment of the research, that confirms the hypothesis laid down in the formulation of the research.

No plagiarism was found in the dissertation. In the text, the doctoral student correctly presents authors, results, references.

#### **IV. Assessment of the contributions of the dissertation work**

I accept and confirm the contributions reflected by the doctoral student and emphasize those reflecting the main achievements in the dissertation work:

*Contributions of a theoretical nature:*

- The main concepts on the subject of the dissertation are justified and defined
- The very idea of working in the unexplored enough research territory is a contribution to the contemporary societal requirements for the presence of media literacy and the place of PR in football for this

*Contributions of a practical nature:*

- An author's methodology for researching the orientations of the research respondent groups was developed and tested
- A Football PR Handbook has been developed for the education of media literacy to support optimal media communication with football clubs.

## **V. Evaluation of the abstract and publications on the dissertation work**

The abstract corresponds to the presentation of the dissertation text and adequately, comprehensively and correctly presents the content and main achievements in it.

The author has attached 6 independent publications on the topic of the dissertation. The number, nature and quality of the publications correspond to the requirements of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" for public defense of the dissertation work and reflect the essence and results achieved in the dissertation research.

Dimitar Radoslavov Penev has fulfilled the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of ZRASRB law and the additional university requirements from the Rules for collecting, updating and using scientometric data in SU - at the required number of 80, he has 110 points.

## **Conclusion**

The presented materials and dissertation results fully comply with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of ZRASRB and the relevant Regulations of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" and the specific requirements of the Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski". The dissertation work shows that Dimitar Radoslavov Penev possesses

in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills by demonstrating qualities and skills for independent conduct of scientific research.

Due to the above, I confidently give my positive assessment and propose to the members of the respected scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree "*Doctor*" to *Dimitar Radoslavov Penev* in the field of higher education: 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field: 1.2. Pedagogy (Media pedagogy).

Date: 24.08.2023

Prepared the statement: .....

Associate Professor Dr. Hrisula Nedyalkova