

Procedure for Application for Academic Positions According to the Bulgarian Legislation

(Habilitation Procedure)

1. Recognition of academic position acquired elsewhere

- 1.1 After consultation with the department concerned, the Provost may propose to the Faculty Council to consider the recognition of Associate or Professor academic position acquired at another academic institution, recognized and accredited by the relevant competent state authorities, including from outside the Republic of Bulgaria. The Faculty Council discusses the proposal and votes on it.
- 1.2 Upon recognition according to 1.1, the transition to the same or corresponding academic position is done after the vote of the Faculty Council and its endorsement by the President or his/her designee.

2. Eligibility for Admission to Habilitation Procedure

- 2.1 General requirements for admission to habilitation procedure
 - 2.1.1. The applicants should have teaching experience from recognized and accredited higher education liberal arts institution(s) and student-centered environment, and should have passed at least one successful evaluation in teaching, research and service at a recognized and accredited higher education liberal arts institution, including positive student evaluations of teaching. The applicants should have at least two years of experience in teaching in English at a higher education institution with English language instruction.
 - 2.1.2 The candidates for the academic position should be in compliance with the relevant minimal national requirements to the research and teaching as defined for their respective area of higher education in Annex 1 to Art. 1, paragraph 1 of the Rules for Implementation of The Habilitation Law¹.

¹ "Habilitation Law" in this document refers to **Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (Закон за развитието на академичния състав в Република България)**, and "The Rules for Its Implementation" refer to **The Rules for Implementation of The Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (Правилник за прилагане на закона за развитието на академичния състав в Република България)**

2.2 Specific requirements for admission to habilitation procedure for the academic position of Associate Professor

2.2.1 To be eligible to apply for an Associate Professor academic position, the candidates are required:

- a) To have acquired a doctoral degree;
- b) To have at least five years of experience as Assistant Professor or Senior Assistant Professor² at a recognized and accredited academic institution in Bulgaria or abroad, or (for internal candidates) to have received a positive final decision for promotion to Associate Professor after evaluation according to the internal AUBG rules based on the US legislation as defined in the Faculty Handbook.
- c) To have a published monograph or publications of equal standing in specialized academic editions, or evidence for equivalent artistic or creative achievements in the area of arts. None of the publications presented for the procedure should repeat those based on which doctoral degree or Doctor of Science degree was granted;
- d) To have original research works and publications and other academic and applied works, which are evaluated in their entirety;
- e) Not to have been found responsible for plagiarism in their works under a statutory procedure.

2.2.2. The candidates should present information, organized according to the state research indicators, evidencing the fulfillment of the minimal state requirements to the research and teaching activities.

2.3 Specific requirements for admission to habilitation procedure for the academic position of Professor

2.3.1. To be eligible to apply for a Professor academic position, the candidates are required:

- a) To have acquired a doctoral degree;
- b) To have at least six years of experience as Associate Professor at a recognized and accredited academic institution in Bulgaria or abroad, or (for internal candidates) to have received a positive final decision for promotion to

² Assistant or Senior Assistant as defined by the Habilitation Law and the Rules for Its Implementation

Professor after evaluation according to the internal AUBG rules based on the US legislation as defined in the Faculty Handbook;

- c) To have a published monograph or publications of equal standing in specialized academic editions, or evidence for equivalent artistic or creative achievements in the area of arts. None of the publications presented for the procedure should repeat those based on which doctoral degree, Doctor of Science degree, or Associate Professor academic position was granted;
- d) To have original research works and publications and other academic and applied works, which are evaluated in their entirety;
- e) Not to have been found responsible for plagiarism in their works under a statutory procedure.

2.3.2. The candidates should present information, organized according to the state research indicators, evidencing the fulfillment of the minimal state requirements to the research and teaching activities.

2.3.3 If the applicant for a Professor has not held the position of Associate Professor, the minimal national requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor are added to the minimal national requirements for the academic position of Professor, while the doctoral degree is accounted for just once.

2.4 Specific requirements for individual procedures

For each procedure the relevant requirements reflecting the specific needs of the professional field at AUBG and published on its website are applied.

3 Procedure and Bodies for Initiating a Habilitation Procedure and Application for Habilitation

- 3.1 At the beginning of the academic year, the Provost consults with the AUBG Faculty departments regarding the necessity for initiation of habilitation procedures in the following academic year. Habilitation procedure is initiated in case teaching and research load can be ensured for the academic position according to the internal rules and regulations of the University.
- 3.2 In case of need for initiation of habilitation procedure(s), the Provost, with the knowledge and consent of the President, makes a decision to initiate habilitation procedure(s).

- 3.3 The Provost in consultation with the Department concerned of the habilitation procedure devises the text of an advertisement regarding the start of the habilitation procedure. The advertisement is published on a specialized section of the AUBG website and in the Bulgarian State Gazette on one and the same date and provides for a two-month deadline for applications. Information about the initiated procedure is also sent to the National Information and Documentation Center not later than seven days after the decision for initiation of a procedure.
- 3.4 Not later than two months after the date of the advertisement, the candidates submit to the Office of the Provost habilitation dossiers. The required contents is listed in a separate document and provides evidence that the criteria for eligibility for admission to a procedure for academic position as outlined in this procedure, the Habilitation Law, and the Rules for its implementation are met. The Provost's Office checks the submitted dossier(s) for completeness and accepts it (them) for further consideration.
- 3.5 The bodies involved in the habilitation procedure, in addition to the permanent AUBG bodies, include: Faculty Council, Academic Jury, Committee on Verification of the Minimal Required Research Credentials ("Verification Committee"), and a Habilitation Screening Committee.
- 3.6 The Faculty Council is elected and appointed according to the Faculty Council Eligibility and Selection Procedure (section four of this document).
- 3.7 The Academic Jury is selected and appointed according to the procedure for eligibility and selection of Academic Jury (section five of this document).
- 3.8 The Habilitation Screening Committee is appointed by the President or his designee in accordance with the requirements of the Bulgarian legislation.
- 3.9 The Committee on Verification is appointed according to the internal AUBG rules regarding university committees.

4 Faculty Council Eligibility and Selection Procedure

- 4.1 The responsibilities of the Faculty Council are to make decisions related to procedures for appointment to academic positions: approval of the Academic Jury membership, consideration and voting on the Academic Jury's recommendations, or consideration and making decisions regarding transition from academic positions at other higher education institutions to the same or respective academic position at AUBG.
- 4.2 In case Faculty Council action is needed, the Provost contacts the Faculty Assembly Chairperson(s) and requests that Faculty Council is elected based on an eligibility list prepared by the Office of the Provost.
- 4.3 The Faculty Council is a sub-structure to the AUBG Faculty Assembly consisting of not less than 21 members who have acquired a Doctoral degree or a Doctor of Science degree, and at least three-quarters of whom are habilitated. The Chairperson of the Faculty Council is appointed by the Provost.
- 4.4 The habilitated professors who are eligible to be members of the Faculty Council include those AUBG full-time faculty who are habilitated in Bulgaria or recognized³ as such according to the Bulgarian legislation and this procedure. If the number of these faculty is smaller than the required minimal number of habilitated professors, the Provost, in consultation with the Departments, proposes supplemental members for the Council. They will be habilitated faculty drawn from AUBG part-time faculty and/or other recognized academic institutions in Bulgaria or abroad.
- 4.5 After the necessary number of habilitated professors on the Faculty Council eligibility list is ensured, the list is supplemented with faculty who have acquired Doctoral degree or Doctor of Science degree and are appointed to academic positions of Associate Professor or Professor according to the internal promotion procedure at AUBG. Whenever possible, faculty are proposed for members of the Faculty Council in view of the academic fields, in which the current procedures are conducted.
- 4.6 The FA endorses the proposed Faculty Council's membership based on the requirements above.
- 4.7 The quorum and the majority needed for making decisions are defined according to the Bulgarian Higher Education Act.

³ based on academic rank acquired at a recognized and accredited higher education or research institution

5 Jury Eligibility and Selection Procedure

- 5.1 The evaluation of the candidates for appointment to academic position is conducted by an Academic Jury. As members of the Academic Jury are elected persons who are habilitated at Bulgarian higher education or research institutions and have achieved results in the professional field in which the habilitation procedure is initiated, or, if that's not possible – in the relevant academic area, and/or scholars from international higher education or research institutions who have achieved results in the relevant professional field or academic area. If habilitation is initiated in an interdisciplinary area, at least one member of the Jury should be from the other academic area to which the habilitation procedure is related.
- 5.2 The Jury consists of seven members, at least three of whom are external to AUBG, and two alternate members – one internal and one external. As external members are regarded the persons who on the date of the endorsement of the jury and for at least 5 years before this date haven't been in a labor contract relation with AUBG for the purposes of teaching or research activity. For evaluation of a candidate for Associate Professor academic position, at least three of the Jury members should hold the academic position of Professor. For evaluation of a candidate for the academic position of Professor, at least four of the Jury members should hold the academic position of Professor.
- 5.3 The members of the Academic Jury should be in compliance with the requirements of the Habilitation Law and the Rules for its implementation, including the relevant minimal national requirements for habilitation.
- 5.4 At the request of the Provost, for each individual procedure the Jury membership is nominated by the Department concerned with the procedure. The evaluation of the compliance of the proposed members of the Academic Jury members with the applicable Bulgarian legal requirements, including the minimal research indicators, is conducted by the AUBG Verification Committee and is documented in writing to the Office of the Provost. The membership of the Academic Jury is endorsed by the Faculty Council, and is appointed by the President.

6. Academic Jury and Administrative Procedures

- 6.1 The fulfillment of the eligibility requirements, except for the minimal national requirements and the AUBG-specific additional requirements, is evaluated by the Habilitation Screening Committee.
- 6.2 The compliance of the individual research indicators of the candidates for habilitation with the national minimal requirements is evaluated by the AUBG Verification Committee and is documented in writing to the Academic Jury.
- 6.3 The compliance with the minimal national requirements and with the additional requirements envisaged by this procedure, of the results, academic contribution, and originality of the works presented for participation in a procedure for appointment to academic position is conducted by an Academic Jury, appointed and functioning according to the Habilitation Law, the Rules for its implementation, and this procedure.
- 6.4 The Jury makes decisions with open vote and simple majority. The Jury decisions are valid only if all of its members have been involved in making them. The meetings of the Jury may be conducted in person or through technical means.
- 6.5 The first meeting of the Jury occurs not later than seven days after the application deadline. During its first meeting the Jury elects a Chairperson and referees. For Associate Professor procedure the referees are two. For Professor procedure the referees are three. At least one of the referees is a Full Professor. At least one of the referees is typically selected among the external members of the Jury.
- 6.6 Within fourteen days after the appointment of the Academic Jury the candidates are informed in writing as to whether they are admitted to participate in the habilitation procedure; those who are not admitted are informed about the reasons for the refusal.
- 6.7 The referees prepare reviews and the rest of the Jury members prepare opinions. The reviews and the opinions conclude with a positive or negative recommendation. The members of the Academic Jury submit their reviews and opinions to the Provost with copies to the Department Chair and the candidates within two months after the referees have been elected.
- 6.8 The Jury evaluates the candidate(s) according to the requirements of the Habilitation Law, the Rules for its implementation and this procedure.

- 6.9 When, during evaluation of works presented for participation in habilitation procedure, a member of the Jury raises the question about presence of plagiarism, or a signal regarding plagiarism, which is in writing, not anonymous, and motivated, is referred to the Jury, the Academic Jury must make a decision regarding the presence or absence of plagiarism in the works presented. In such cases, before making a decision, the Academic Jury gives the candidate an opportunity to present their standpoint. If a plagiarism signal has been received during a habilitation procedure, it cannot be terminated due to withdrawal of the applicant's documents. The decision of the Academic Jury may be challenged before the faculty council by a substantiated written objection.
- 6.10 The Jury members' reviews and opinions are published on the AUBG website not later than one month before the closing meeting of the Jury, along with abstracts of the candidates' publications submitted for the procedure. If a hypothesis arises under paragraph 6.9, the decision regarding the presence or absence of plagiarism is also published on the university website.
- 6.11 The candidates have the right to respond in writing to the reviews and opinions. The response is submitted to the Office of the Provost and to the Academic Jury prior to its last meeting and becomes part of the record on the procedure.
- 6.12 Not later than 6 months after the date of the advertisement, the Academic Jury holds its last meeting. At the beginning of the meeting the candidates make a short presentation on a topic of their choice relevant to the habilitation procedure, and respond to the notes included in the reviews and opinions, as well as to the questions of the Academic Jury. The Academic Jury presents a written proposal for election to academic position based on the reviews and opinions of its individual members and on the assessment of the participating candidates and their presented academic works. Within seven days after the last meeting the proposal is signed by all of the Jury members and is submitted to the Provost and the Faculty Council.
- 6.13 Not later than one month after the Jury has submitted its proposal the Faculty Council votes on it. The Faculty Council has the right to reject the proposal of the Academic Jury on the basis of a substantiated decision. The Faculty Council submits its decision for election to academic position in writing to the Provost within two working days after it has been made.
- 6.14 The Faculty Council has the right to vote on procedures for appointment to the academic position of Professor only if not less than one third of the voting members hold the academic position of Professor or have acquired the degree of Doctor of Science. If

AUBG's own faculty does not include the necessary number of Professors or Doctors of Science, to satisfy this requirement, outside members could be appointed for the purposes of the specific procedure following the rules outlined in paragraph 4.4 of this procedure.

- 6.15 Within fourteen days from the date of the Faculty Council's voting, if all requirements of the Habilitation Law, the Rules for its implementation, and this procedure are adhered to, the President or his/her designee endorses the decision, and the candidates are informed about the results.
- 6.16 Within 14 days from the date of Faculty Council's voting information about the individuals elected to be appointed to academic positions is sent to the National Center for Information and Documentation.
- 6.17 Within fourteen days from the date of Faculty Council's voting, a copy of the published monograph based on which habilitation was granted is sent to the National Library.
- 6.18 The approved candidates deliver public lectures at the University.
- 6.19 In case a control procedure is initiated regarding the implementation of the faculty habilitation regulations at AUBG, the relevant stipulations of the Habilitation Law are applied

7. Areas of Higher Education and Professional Fields

- 7.1 AUBG conducts habilitation procedures for the needs of the professional fields accredited by the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.
- 7.2 The Jury members' academic areas correspond to the area in which a habilitation procedure is announced. The correspondence is established by professional field and by scientific/higher education area as defined according to the Classifier of the Areas of Higher Education and Professional Fields approved with Decree № 125, 2002, of the Council of Ministers.
- 7.3 Information about the professional fields for which AUBG holds accreditation, their corresponding areas of higher education and AUBG departments is provided by the Office of the Provost.

8. Amendment

- 8.1 Substantive amendments to this document are initiated through the AUBG Accreditation Committee and are subject to vote by the Faculty Assembly. Prior consultation with the Provost is required to ensure adherence to the current legislation.
- 8.2 The set of documents supporting habilitation procedures, such as habilitation dossier contents, review/opinion template, Academic Jury guidelines and procedural steps, etc., include information that is not subject to vote. The requirement for such information may be amended by the Office of the Provost, preferably in consultation with faculty. Consultation with faculty is strongly recommended regarding the dates of the process.
- 8.3 The Board of Trustees authorized the administration to make changes to the procedure when needed as it is appropriate in view of compliance with the applicable laws (motion of the BOT May 2013 meeting).

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