

Westwood College Borrower Defense Executive Summary Employment Prospects Representations

Pursuant to 34 C.F.R. Section 685.222(e)(3), the Department of Education (“Department”) is charged with conducting a fact-finding process to determine whether each borrower defense application states a basis for a borrower defense. In adjudicating each individual borrower defense application, the Department must consider not only the borrower’s application and accompanying evidence, but also any relevant information in records in the possession of the Department and in submissions from the school, as well as any other information obtained in connection with the fact-finding process.

The Borrower Defense Group (“BDG”) has completed a review of the evidence within the Department’s possession relating to Westwood College (“Westwood”) as it relates to representations regarding employment prospects. Additional summaries regarding other specific types of borrower claims, if any, will be submitted for approval separately.

Westwood operated campuses in six states and an online program attended by students in all fifty states. At its peak in 2010, Westwood enrolled approximately 19,190 students.

Applying a preponderance of the evidence standard, BDG has prepared a series of summaries of the evidence relating to Westwood. Together, these summaries form a common statement of facts that will be applied in the individual adjudication of borrower defense applications from Westwood borrowers that are adjudicated pursuant to 34 C.F.R. Sections 685.206(c), 685.206(d), and/or 685.206(e) based on the dates of the loans relating to the borrowers’ claims.

Westwood Misrepresented Students’ Ability to Obtain Employment Upon Graduation and Students’ Salary Potential

This section discusses three types of misrepresentations Westwood made to prospective students about their employment and salary prospects. The evidence in BDG’s possession relating to this conduct establishes by a preponderance of the evidence that from at least 2002 until Westwood stopped enrolling new students in 2015:

- Westwood, through its admissions representatives and in its marketing materials, guaranteed, promised, or otherwise assured prospective students that they would obtain employment in their field of study;
- Westwood misrepresented to prospective students the likelihood that they would obtain employment in their fields of study after graduation, including by inflating the job placement rates it presented to prospective students; and
- Westwood exaggerated the salaries prospective students could expect to earn with a Westwood degree, including by presenting national salary data compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics or U.S. Census Bureau as though Westwood graduates could expect similar salary outcomes.