Stages 1 and 2: Foster carer assessment & approval process

Applicant (X) contacts fostering service (FS)

FS is recruiting and X’s ‘offer’ is in line with recruitment objectives

Process ends

FS is not recruiting or X’s ‘offer’ is not in line with recruitment objectives

Apply for stage 1 information as soon as possible

Stage 1 information indicates X is unsuitable

X is notified at any time (on the basis of full or partial stage 1 information) that they’re unsuitable, but no more than 10 working days after all stage 1 information has been received

Process ends and X is informed that they can complain via the FS’s complaints mechanism

Stage 1 information indicates assessment should continue

More than 10 working days has elapsed since receipt of all stage 1 information and X has not been notified that they are unsuitable

Brief report

Before the full assessment is completed, stage 2 information indicates X is unsuitable

Qualifying Determination to end assessment

X can apply to the IRM or make representations to the FS provider

Decision to continue assessment

Decision to end assessment (taking account of panel and any IRM recommendations)

Decision to continue assessment (taking account of panel and any IRM recommendations)

Full assessment (stages 1 & 2) completed

Qualifying Determination that X is unsuitable

X can apply to the IRM or make representations to the FS provider

Decision that X is suitable

X is approved to foster

Decision that X is not suitable (taking account of panel and any IRM recommendations)

Process Ends

Decision that X is suitable (taking account of panel and any IRM recommendations)

NB - This diagram illustrates how stages 1 & 2 of the assessment process fit together. It is not intended to cover all actions a FS must undertake as part of the process - FSs must refer to the regulations and statutory guidance for this information. It should be noted that at any point in the process applicants (1) can withdraw, in which case the process ends; and (2) can complain to the FS (and must be informed of their right to do so if they are turned down in stage 1).