Stages 1 and 2: Foster carer assessment & approval process

1. Applicant (X) contacts fostering service (FS) indicating they wish to be assessed to foster.
   - FS is recruiting and X’s ‘offer’ is in line with recruitment objectives
     - Apply for stage 1 information as soon as possible
     - If 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
     - 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
         - Qualifying Determination to end assessment
           - X can apply to the IRM or make representations to the FS provider
             - Decision to end assessment (taking account of panel and any IRM recommendations)
               - Process Ends
         - Decision to continue assessment
           - 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 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)
                 - X is approved to foster
                   - Process Ends
           - Decision to continue assessment
             - 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 end assessment (taking account of panel and any IRM recommendations)
                     - Process Ends
               - 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 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)
                     - X is approved to foster
                       - Process Ends
   - FS is not recruiting or X’s ‘offer’ is not in line with recruitment objectives
     - Process ends

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).