

## Ambitious College Admissions, Charging and Remissions Policy for Admission September 2022

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## 1. Introduction

This policy applies to Ambitious College which is an Independent Specialist College (ISP) registered with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)<sup>1</sup> as an approved Section 41 post-16 institution.<sup>2</sup>

The college is owned and run by the national charity Ambitious about Autism (AaA). AaA is a national charity for children and young people with autism. AaA's vision is to make the ordinary possible for children and young people with autism and our mission is to help them to learn, thrive and achieve.

The college is funded through a combination of fees paid by Local Authorities, the ESFA and also voluntary income to fund the college's development, research, evaluation, providing support and additional resources.

Ambitious College has relationships with Local Authorities across London and the Home Counties.

The college complies with the SEND Code of Practice 2015.<sup>3</sup>

Ambitious College is located in the London Boroughs of Haringey and Hounslow. The college is co-located with two general Further Education colleges, the Pears Campus at CONEL (College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London) and the Pears Campus at West Thames (West Thames College). This model offers our learners extended opportunities to access mainstream learning, social and work experience. The Pears Campus at CONEL has a satellite campus within the Whittington Hospital which provides a supported internship programme.

The purpose of the college is to support young people to live ordinary lives as part of their home community. We know that with the right opportunity and support they can achieve great things. We measure outcomes toward this goal in the following areas:

- Independent living;
- Employment;
- Good health and wellbeing;
- Friends, relationships, and community inclusion.

Ambitious College provides its learners with a specialist curriculum that meets their needs and interests. The curriculum prioritises the development of the communication, vocational and independent living skills learners need to make a successful transition to adult life.

### Supported Internships

Supported internships were introduced by the Government in 2013 to prepare young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) with the skills needed for adulthood and employment.

Ambitious College is working with the Whittington Hospital and DFN Project Search and has provided supported internships since September 2019.

Benefits of a supported internship include:

- Learning new skills that could be used in future employment;
- Building confidence and life skills;
- Increase social networks.

Ambitious College Supported Internship is located within the Whittington Hospital and is a satellite campus of the Pears Campus at CONEL.

<sup>1</sup> Education Funding Agency is an executive agency, sponsored by the [Department for Education](#).

<sup>2</sup> Section 41 of the Children and Families Act, Secretary of State publishes a list of approved institutions.

<sup>3</sup> SEND Code of Practice 2015 Department of Education Reference: DFE-00205-2013

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Ambitious College works with the Whittington Hospital to support interns develop work skills within the workplace. Interns are fully immersed in the workplace, five days a week (09.30 to 15.30) for an academic year. There is also some classroom-based learning which takes place in the base room, situated on the hospital grounds. There may be some instances for the safety of the interns where the base room needs to be temporarily relocated away from the hospital, such as a health alert.

There will be a wide variety of skills to learn in place. This may include:

- Housekeeping;
- Grounds Maintenance;
- Administration;
- Computers and Information Technology (IT);
- Post room assistant;
- Kitchen assistant;
- Meeting rooms/facilities assistant;
- Laboratory work.

Most of the time learners will be in the workplace learning the necessary work skills. At the start and end of each day there will be some classroom time. Learners will be given training and support in the internship rotations and the opportunity to work in three different departments as the learners build skills towards real job descriptions. Learners are supported by a college teacher and a job coach who are based on site, full time.

Learners will learn employability skills such as:

- Customer service;
- Confidentiality;
- Time keeping;
- Planning and Preparation;
- Teamwork;
- IT skills;
- Way finding/orientation skills;
- Communication;
- Job search skills;
- Interview skills;
- Health and safety in the workplace;
- Maintaining a healthy working lifestyle.

Supported internships also benefit employers to learn what young people with additional needs can contribute and achieve.

## 2. Admissions Criteria

Ambitious College will admit to the main campus sites young people aged 16 to 25 with a primary diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Condition<sup>4</sup> (ASC) and who may also have a Learning Difficulty, where Ambitious College is named on the young person’s Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and who require special education. The college may on an exceptional basis admit a young person who has a similar social communication difficulty to ASC.

Ambitious College will admit to the supported internship programme young people aged 16 to 24 with a primary diagnosis of ASC and who may also have a Learning Difficulty, where the college is named on the young person’s EHCP and who want to move into work and need extra support to do so. The college may on an exceptional basis admit a young person who has a similar social

<sup>4</sup> Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is the designation used by the Department of Education

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communication difficulty to ASC. Interns are expected to be able to travel independently. There will be the chance of some travel training prior to the start of the programme.

Section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014 allows the Secretary of State to publish a list of approved institutions, for the purposes of enabling the institution to be the subject of a request, for it to be named in an Education, Health and Care plan.

Places are commissioned by the Local Authority in which the young person resides. Prior to naming the college on the young person's EHCP, the Local Authority will have consulted with the college in line with their statutory obligations as set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

Places are taken up at the start of the academic year. By arrangement with the Head of College places may be accessed at any time of the year based on the suitability for a young person.

Each application is considered on an individual basis. In every case, our admissions process evaluates the needs of the individual young person and determines whether the college can provide the Special Educational Provision (SEP) and meet the outcomes in their EHCP, with particular reference to the following factors set out in the SEND Code 2015:

- The college is suitable for the young person's age, ability, aptitude and special educational needs;
- The attendance of the young person at the college would be compatible with the efficient education of others and the efficient use of resources.

Additionally the following factors will be considered:

- The parents/carers or the young person have expressed a preference for the college (or in the case of dispute the Local Authority intends to name the college);
- The needs of the young person will be assessed to take into account the cohort and environment to enable the efficient education of others with whom they would directly come into contact on a regular day-to-day basis;
- The college may need to provide additional support for a young person whose safety or that of others is unusually at risk. This would not necessarily prevent admission. The additional support would be determined by assessment with the cost of the placement adjusted accordingly;
- The distance from the college and the time of travel to college will be considered during the admissions process.

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice 2015, for places for young people during a transition year (moving from a secondary school to a post-16 institution) and for planned moves between secondary or post-16 institutions, the Local Authority must review and make any amendments to the EHCP by 31<sup>st</sup> March in the calendar year of the transfer or at least 5 months before the transfer takes place.

The college reserves the right to delay commencement of the place until after the start of the academic year, should the Local Authority name the college on an EHCP or confirm funding of the place after the 31<sup>st</sup> March in any given year.

The college will provide the Local Authority with the prospectus and the link to the college to be provided on the Local Authority's Local Offer.

Each learner has a personalised timetable with a focus on outcomes. Learners attend for 5 days per week during the academic year. The college term dates are available on the college's website.

### 3. Admissions Process

We encourage parents/carers to visit our college, prior to making an application. The details of our parent/carer 'visit and tours' events and how to book a space are published on our website. A visit

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and tour for a potential learner can be accommodated on request, the preference is for 'visit and tours' events to be conducted in groups, to minimise the impact on learners attending the college. From time to time there may be situations where we are not able to provide onsite visits. In this situation virtual visits and/or question and answer sessions would be provided.

Following a visit, we ask the parent/carer to inform their Local Authority that they wish to request a place at Ambitious College.

Applications can be made either by the parent/carer, the potential learner or by the Local Authority.

Applications by Parent/Carer or potential learner for the main college campus sites

- The parent/carer/potential learner completes a 'Pre Entry Self-Referral form and returns it with relevant documentation such as a finalised EHCP;
- The parent/carer/potential learner requests completion of a 'Professionals Pre Entry Assessment' form a professional associated with the young person, such as within their current educational placement and consents to share information with the college;
- If required, and with consent to information sharing from the parent/carer/potential learner, the college will send to the aforementioned professional a 'Professionals Pre Entry Assessment' form to be completed by the professional and returned;
- Following receipt of the completed forms, and if a conditional offer is made, the college will inform the parent/carer/potential learner of the conditional offer, and also the Local Authority in which the family lives to advise them that the parents/carers/potential learner are seeking funding.

Applications by Local Authority for the main college campus sites

- The Local Authority will consult with the college prior to naming it, in line with their statutory obligations;
- If a referral is made by the Local Authority then the college will respond within the statutory 15-day period from receipt.

The college's response is determined by the documentation received (i.e. draft EHCP, Annual Review reports, professional assessments) and by the assessment visit or visits. The assessment will ideally be conducted in the young person's current school or education placement. Where this is not possible, individual arrangements can be made including assessment via a home visit or where appropriate a virtual assessment.

In most cases there is no charge raised for the assessment. If the current education placement is a significant distance outside the Greater London area, requiring extended travel and a potential overnight stay, the college reserves the right to charge the Authority for costs incurred for the assessment using a 'best value' model for travel and subsistence, in line with our Staff Expenses Policy.

Ambitious College will then consider an applicant's profile such as but not limited to:

- Learning levels;
- Barriers to learning;
- Method of communication used.

Diagrams showing the admissions process can be found in Appendix A: parent/carer/potential learner initiated or Appendix B: local authority initiated.

The College's Admissions Panel will consider each application/consultation prior to making a response, and will comply with the 15-day requirement as applicable unless agreed otherwise with the Local Authority.

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If agreed that the College can meet the needs of the young person, a conditional place is offered and the costs for the place are provided to the Local Authority, to be considered and approved by the Local Authority.

When funding has been approved by the Local Authority and after enrolment, new learners are provided with a 6-week assessment period on entry to the college to determine baseline learning levels and to confirm the level of resource required to meet the young person's needs.

#### Applications by Parent/Carer or potential intern for the supported internship

- The potential intern completes an application form;
- Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend a Skills Assessment / Interview Day at the host employer premises or where appropriate via a virtual assessment;
- A selection panel comprising of the partners will make the final decision;
- An offer letter will be sent to the successful candidates and copied to their Local Authority to consider funding the internship.

#### Applications by Local Authority for the supported internship

- The Local Authority will consult with the college for a supported internship place prior to naming it, in line with their statutory obligations;
- If a referral is made by the Local Authority then the college will respond within the statutory 15-day period from receipt.

The College's Admissions Panel will consider each application/consultation prior to making a response, and will comply with the 15-day requirement as applicable unless agreed otherwise with the Local Authority.

If agreed that the College can meet the needs of the young person, a conditional place is offered and the costs for the place are provided to the Local Authority, to be considered and approved by the Local Authority.

Diagrams showing the admissions process for supported internship programme can be found in Appendix C: potential intern/parent/carer initiated or Appendix D: local authority initiated.

When funding has been approved by the Local Authority and after enrolment new interns are provided with a 6-week assessment period on entry to the internship to determine baseline learning levels and to confirm the level of resource required to meet the young person's needs.

In the event that further information becomes available, either before or after admission of the young person, then Ambitious College reserves the right to review whether or not it can be/remains a suitable and appropriate educational placement for them.

#### **4. Oversubscription Criteria**

Oversubscription criteria is not applicable to Ambitious College.

#### **5. Waiting List**

A waiting list may be established should all places be allocated at an Ambitious College campus. Ambitious College may limit the number of places on a waiting list or dissolve a waiting list.

#### **6. Appeal Arrangements**

Appeal arrangements are not applicable to Ambitious College.

#### **7. Funding and Contracting**

##### **7.1 Funding**

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Ambitious College receives funding from Department for Education (DfE) through the allocation from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). As an approved post-16 institution, Ambitious College is included on the Secretary of State's list of eligible colleges, in accordance with Section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

ESFA funding is provided, in line with the ESFA 16 to 25 high needs funding principals, in two Elements:

- Element 1 funding is provided to all qualifying placements<sup>5</sup>.
- Element 2 is provided to all qualifying placements. The funding is not reserved for a specific learner or Local Authority. The college receives Element 2 funding for a limited number of learners at the start of the academic year. The college should receive additional Element 2 funding for the additional learners during the academic year.

ESFA funding is allocated based on the date that funding was agreed by the Local Authority and the admission date for the young person. The college prefers for confirmations of funding to be sent by email to [admissions@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](mailto:admissions@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk).

The college will negotiate the additional (top-up) funding from the Local Authority commissioning a place and these fees are paid by the Local Authority.

Ambitious College assumes, by being named on an EHCP that the Local Authority has agreed to fund the college place for the academic year. The Local Authority will need to name Ambitious College on an EHCP by 31<sup>st</sup> March for a guaranteed commencement of the academic year in September of the same year. A contract for services will follow approval.

## 7.2 Contracting

Our college use the 'National Schools and College Contract' with the Schedule 2 (shortform version) and the Schedule 6 for a variation due to General Data Protection Regulation for the contracting of placements together with the Schedule 4 (Arrangements for the Provision of Education, Health and Care in Colleges).

In accordance with the ESFA requirements, a contract signed by all parties must be in place prior to the commencement of the placement.

## 8. Charging and Remissions

During the college's day, all activities that are a necessary part of the curriculum will be provided free of charge as this is included within the fee paid for the education placement. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take young people between the school and the activity. There will be no charge for any activity that is an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination or accredited course of study.

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the college's day which entail additional costs, for example visits to a museum. In these circumstances no young person will be prevented from participating because his/her parents/carers cannot or will not contribute. (If insufficient funds are available, it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities)

From time to time we may invite a non-educational organisation to arrange an activity during the college's day. Such organisations may charge the college who may then ask parents/carers to make a voluntary contribution. Again, no young person will be prevented from participating

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<sup>5</sup> A qualifying placement is funded by the Education Department of the Local Authority, above the minimum annualised timetabled hours, commences before the date of the February statutory return and the learner has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

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because his/her parents/carers cannot or will not contribute. (If insufficient funds are available, it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities.)

### **8.1 Optional activities outside of the school day**

We will charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the college's day, for example a visit to the theatre. Such activities are not part of the curriculum nor are they part of an examination syllabus.

### **8.2 Education partly during the school day**

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the college's day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the college's day. Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal day, charges may be made. When such activities are arranged, parents/carers will be told how the charges were calculated.

### **8.3 Residential Visits**

Charges will be made towards board and lodging, except for young people whose parents/carers are in receipt of eligible benefits, however, no young person will be prevented from participating because his/her parents/carers cannot or will not contribute. On many occasions, donations from funders have enabled the educational establishment to heavily subsidise educational visits and significantly reduce the charge to parents/carers.

### **8.4 Minibus**

Travel in the college's mini-bus is free.

### **8.5 College Meals**

Learners usually bring into college a packed lunch. Catering facilities are available within the co-located college campus.

The government provides funding for the provision of free meals for learners who qualify for the assistance please see 'Ambitious College Provision of Free Meals Policy' for further information.

### **8.6 Calculating charges**

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the college's day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of learners participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who cannot or will not. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising.

Parents/carers who would qualify for support are those who are in receipt of eligible benefits.

Eligible benefits are:

- Income support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit;
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190);
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit; or
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get).

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the educational establishment and/or charges to parents/carers.

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## 9. New learner induction

When a place has been confirmed and the funding agreed by the Local Authority, we will:

- Send out a welcome pack which includes information and forms for the parent/carer/learner to complete and return. The fully completed forms should be returned as early as possible but at least three weeks in advance of the start date;
- Allocate a college staff member to be the point of contact for parents/carers/learner;
- Agree a transition plan with all parties concerned.

## 10. Further information

Visit our website: [www.ambitiouscollege.org.uk/](http://www.ambitiouscollege.org.uk/)

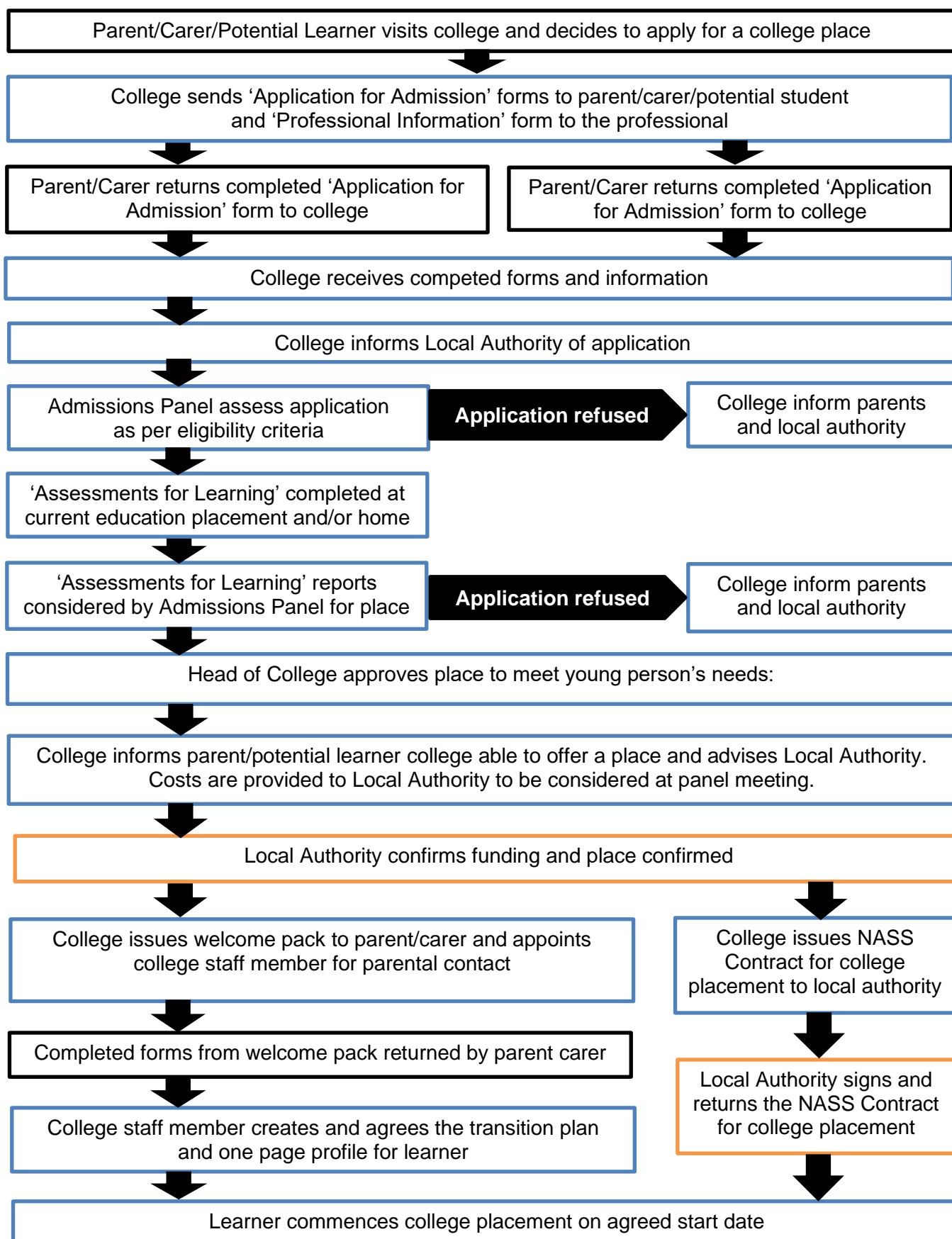
For Admissions information <http://www.ambitiouscollege.org.uk/about-us/admissions>

To contact the Admissions Team

- Phone: 020 8815 5428
- Email: [admissions@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](mailto:admissions@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk)

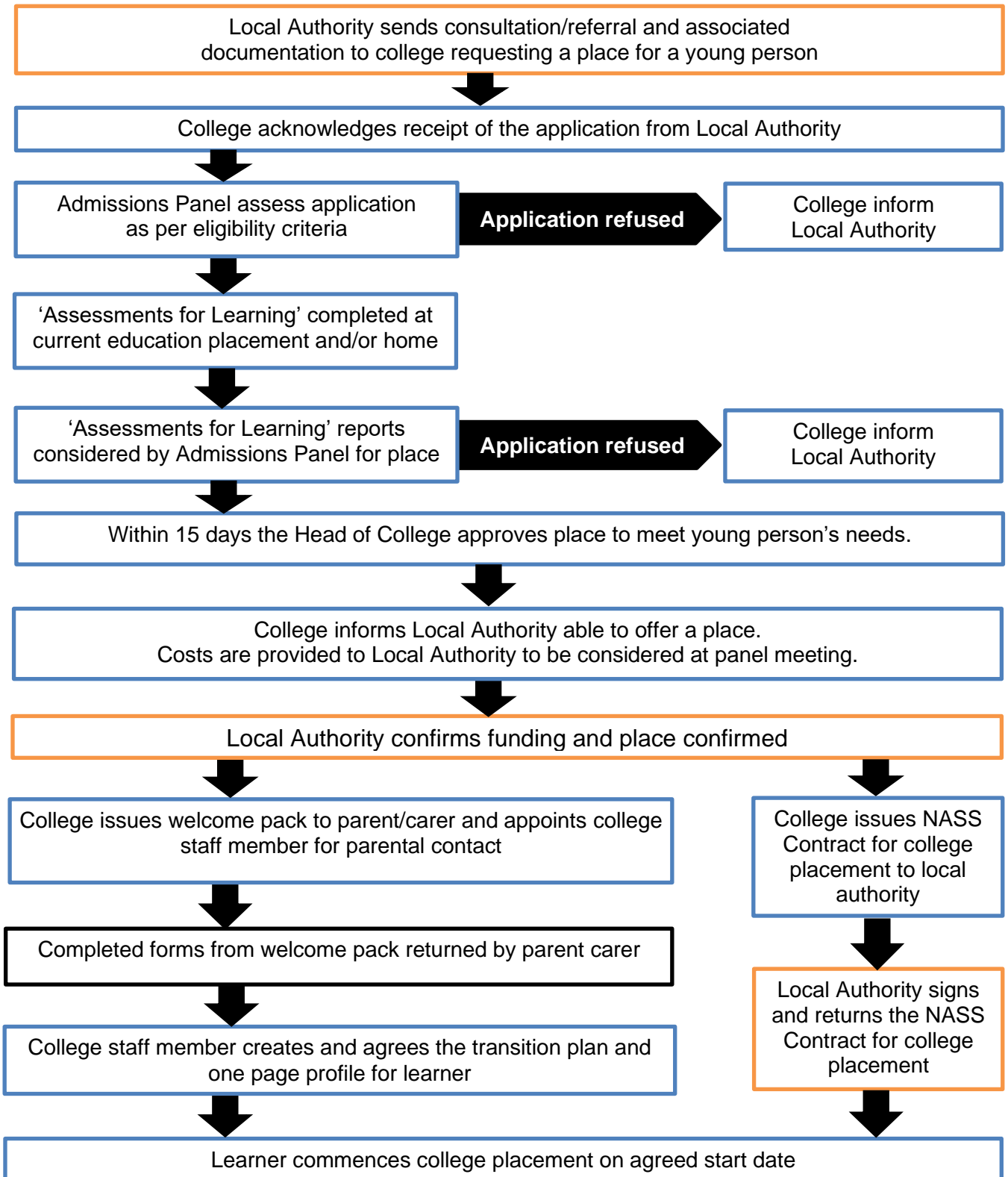
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## Appendix A: Application process for main college campus (Parent/carer/potential learner initiated)



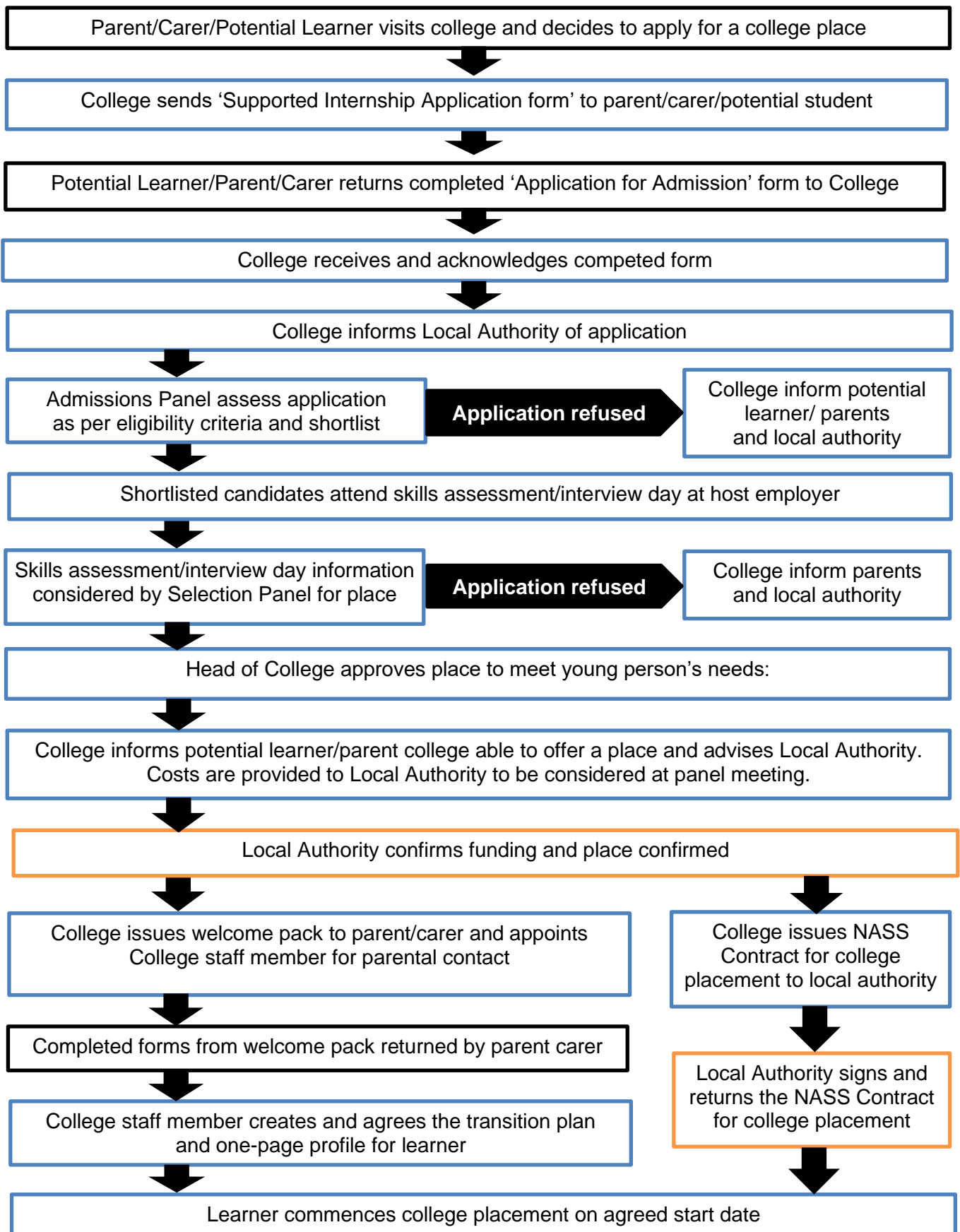
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**Appendix B: Application process for main college campus (Local Authority initiated)**



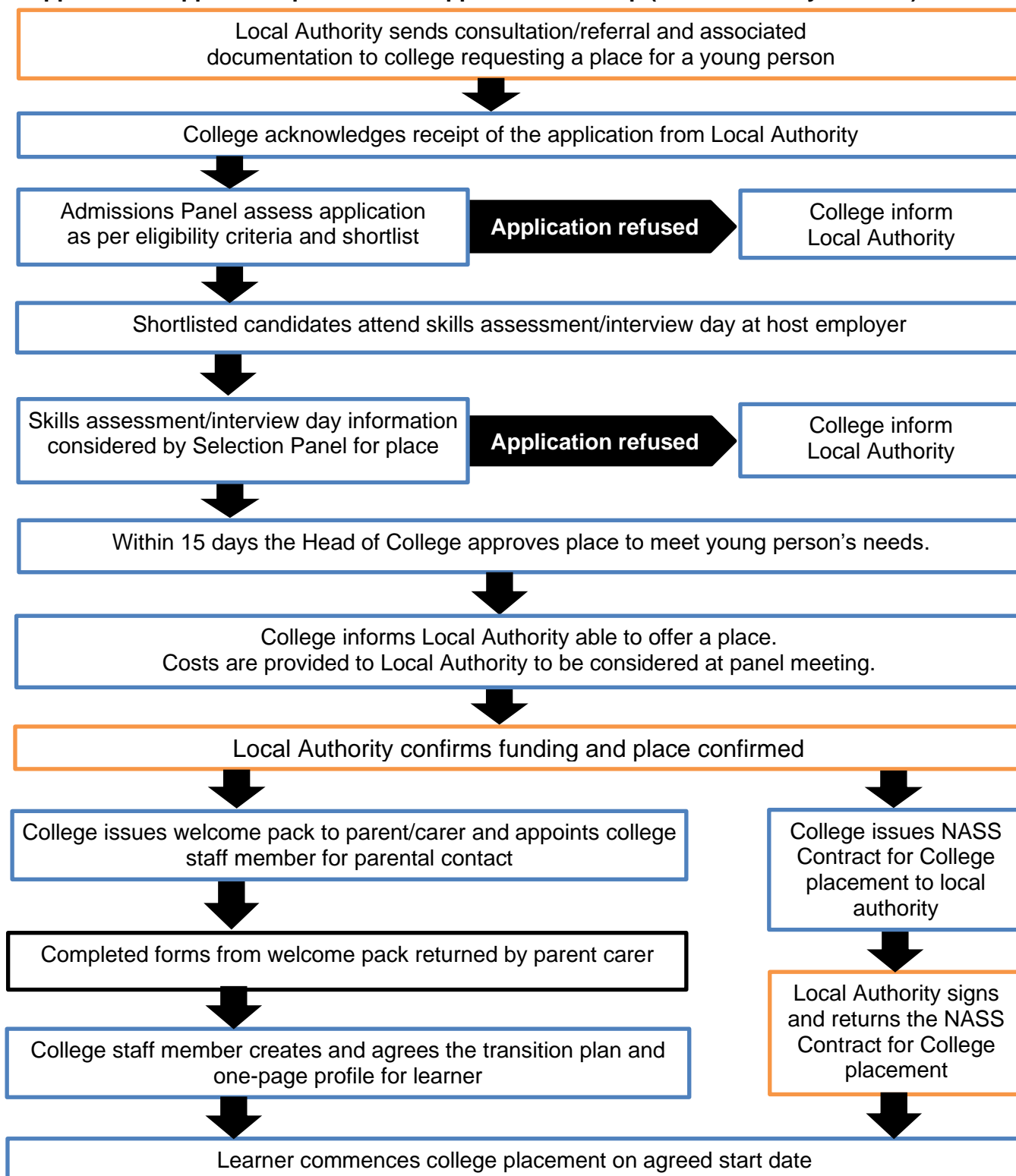
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**Appendix C: Application process for supported internship (parent/carer/potential intern initiated)**



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## Appendix D: Application process for supported internship (Local Authority initiated)



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