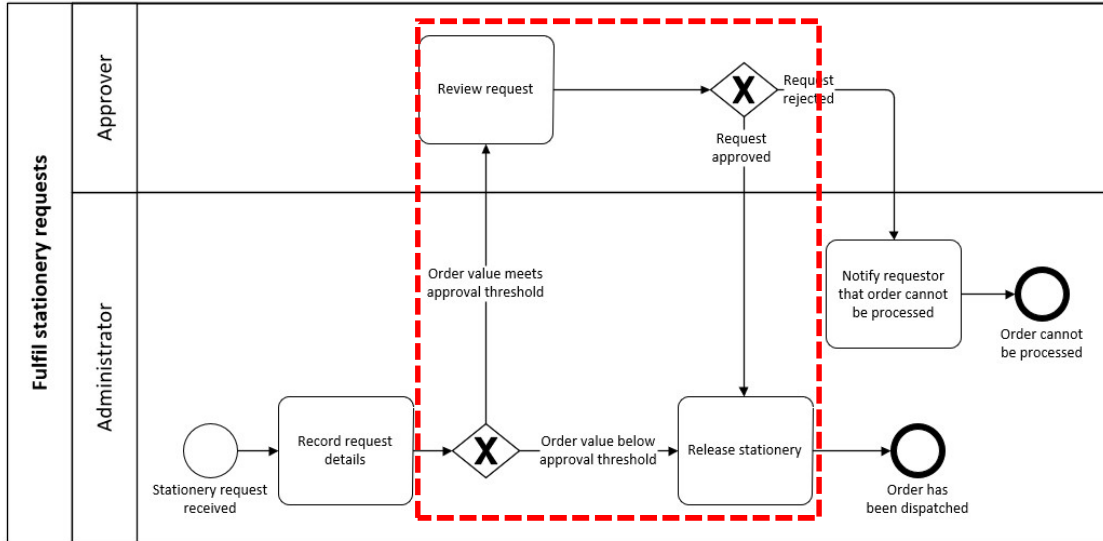


# Modelling common process patterns with BPMN

## Pattern #2 – Approval thresholds

Approval by someone senior is a typical control in processes across every industry. In many processes, something only gets sent for approval if a certain threshold is met, such as a monetary value.

When it comes to modelling, this scenario seems to encourage over-thinking on the part of the business analyst! In most cases, all you need is two tasks and two gateways:



An Exclusive Gateway divides the process into its “happy path” (where no approval is needed) or an alternate path if the threshold is met. A further Exclusive Gateway directs the process to rejoin the main flow if approval is granted. The rejection route goes off to be handled as required.

Note that we have a lane in the pool for the “approver”. We don’t really care what their job title is – in this process, their role is to approve or reject something. This same person might be fulfilling other roles in the process, but that does not matter here. Each *role* should have its own lane, not each person.

I usually avoid hard-wiring a threshold amount or number into the model. If the threshold changes, the model becomes out-of-date. By simply referring to an “approval threshold” instead of a number, the model is future-proofed against such changes. I would only start including numbers if there are different thresholds requiring different approvers.