As theme for this year's Cumberland Lodge residential weekend, we chose to reflect on (and celebrate) those faculties, attributes or behaviours that are characteristically, if not exclusively, human. Our personal, social and professional lives are increasingly encroached upon by machines, presented to us with the beguiling sale pitch that they can do better and faster those tedious and unrewarding activities which prevent us from pursuing what we consider truly meaningful; and that they may as well assist, or even lead, us in these more meaningful pursuits. The availability and purported omnicompetence of machines, coupled with the widespread user perception that machines are sentient, conscious, beings, mean that many of us struggle to decide what is the appropriate role of machines in our life and, especially, whether and when reliance on machines should be avoided to leave space for deploying, developing and enjoying human faculties and human interactions. In essence, the challenge we are forced to confront, as individuals and as a society, is to determine the extent to which humans and machines are fungible.

Stimulated by this challenge, we wish to invite speakers and students to reflect on five characteristically human faculties, attributes or behaviours. To clarify, we do not expect speakers to address the challenge head-on – or even to mention machines in their talks! Reflecting on what is characteristically human is helpful enough; indeed, while machines are useful foils for understanding who we are, talk of machines can sometimes be distracting (moreover, ignoring them may well be, for some, a valuable act of resistance to their domination). So, what are the five faculties, attributes or behaviours we wish to focus on? First is *reasoning* or *judgement*, understood as the ability to recognise and weigh reasons, with the aim of reaching considerate decisions about goals and means to achieve them. Second is the ability to feel *emotions* in response to our environment, and to be driven by them in our engagement with it. Third is *action*, our conscious and deliberate way of interacting with the environment, stimulated by reasons and affects. Fourth is *dignity*, widely considered the attribute that best distinguishes us from other beings, and derived, in the Kantian tradition, from our ability to 'self-legislate'. Fifth is our *social engagement*, understood as a mode of being together that can be rationalised (i.e., it is not just a matter of unreflective instinct) and that allows for the sharing of plans, emotions, values, beliefs and scripts that feed into that communal repository that is a culture.

Of course, being a law school, our main interest is in these faculties, attributes and behaviours *as they are deployed in, or simply are relevant to, the legal system or aspects of it*. But we also welcome talks and reflections that are not centred around law.

Emily and Federico