There are eight categories in the Classification, which are determined according to the following gemmological principles. These principles relate to whether the Opal is natural, treated, absorbent, precious, or homogenous.

**Natural Precious Opal**

Is opal in its natural state apart from cutting and polishing, it is impervious, has play of colour, and is of substantially homogeneous chemical composition.

[Note 1. Discussion arose with the words “…and is of substantially homogeneous chemical composition” – this was changed to “… and is homogenous.”]

*Examples include Types such as Black opal, Light Opal and Fire Opal*

**Natural Precious Opal on Host Rock**

Is opal in its natural state apart from cutting and polishing, it is impervious, has play of colour, and is naturally attached to the host rock as a layer or where there is a substantial amount of opal on the presentation face.

*Examples include Types such as Boulder opal (Opal on Ironstone), Opal on Sandstone, quartzite, basalt , Rhyolite and Andesite.*

**Natural Precious Opal in Host Rock (Matrix)**

Is opal in its natural state apart from cutting and polishing, it is impervious, has play of colour, and is naturally attached as infillings of veins, pores, holes or between grains of the host rock.

*Examples include Types such as Boulder Opal Matrix, Andamooka Opal Matrix, and Cantera Opal.*

**Natural Common Opal**

[Note 2. Discussion was to replace word Common with something else like Decorative]

Is opal in its natural state apart from cutting and polishing, it is impervious, without play of colour and it could be homogeneous or naturally attached to the host rock.

*Examples of Types include Fire Opal, Pink, Blue and Green Opal.*

**Natural Hydrophane Opal**

Is opal in its natural state apart from cutting and polishing, it is absorbent, with or without play of colour, it could be homogeneous or naturally attached to the host rock.

*Examples of Types include Precious Hydrophane Opal, Hydrophane Opal in Matrix, Hydrophane Fire Opal.*

**Treated Opal**

Is natural opal which has been treated in any way other than by cutting and polishing.

*Examples of Treatments include but not limited to dying, painting, coating, impregnation, filling, stabilization, or enhancement process of any kind.*

**Composite Opal**

Is natural opal which has been manually attached to any material.

*Examples of Composites include but not limited to products such as doublets, triplets, mosaics, inlay and plastic embedded opal.*

**Synthetic & Imitation**

Is any material that simulates or resembles natural opal but is either manufactured or does not have the chemical formula SiO2.nH2O.

*Examples include Synthetic Light Opal, Plastic Imitation, and iridescent materials used to imitate.*