

I am currently living in North Wales as a refugee from Ukraine.

I arrived in the UK in July 2022 with my two daughters. We were fleeing the war that Russia started on 24 February 2022. Not feeling safe in my home, I was forced to make a tough decision: to leave my husband, parents, sister, and my lovely home.

At first, everything was complicated. This country has its own traditions, culture, mentality, strange and unusual food, and a different climate. This was the first thing we encountered, and then we were surprised and frightened by the number of things we had to do, filling out many different forms linked to each other. Everything seemed too slow to me; you received each letter by post, and only then could you move on to the next issue. But everything needed to be faster. I was in a hurry because I realised that autumn would soon come when children go to school, and I had no idea where I would live with them. Time was playing against us. But I am incredibly grateful to the government for their full support and assistance, especially my caseworker, Phil Jones. He always tried to help and anticipate what help we would need. His support and care have been endless. He went beyond the call of duty. He found us a host family. They are a lovely couple who live in Hope, Wrexham. They took us in for 6 months, and living with them was a wonderful experience. They took care of me and my children like no other. It was from them that I first heard about this university. They were graduates of this university and now work together at Airbus.

I have hopes for the future; it was challenging initially because we had to change our mind-set while we were here. Because we all just expected that the war would end soon, and we would be able to return home. Once we realised that we would not return soon, I had to explain to my children and myself that we needed to adapt to the new realities and conditions. And this was the next crucial step. My eldest daughter is now studying both Welsh and English, French and Japanese. This is in addition to her knowledge of Russian and Ukrainian. She chose to study these subjects at school because she is in the 10th grade and dreams of attending university. My younger daughter has made many new friends and even said she would like to stay here.

I decided to continue my studies at Wrexham University. After graduation, I plan to find a job related to my chosen course. I am studying for an MSc in data science and big data analytics. So, although I am still determining when I will be able to return, I am eager to take advantage of the opportunities we have in this league; I need not to sit around waiting and strive to achieve something more. And to persevere towards my goal. Yes, it's hard. Yes, I'm emotional but I have a goal I'm working towards.

